

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

This form and the descriptive information in the application package constitute the contents of Initial Study pursuant to County Guidelines under Ordinance 3040 and Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

PROJECT LABEL:

APNs:	0631-201-68	USGS Quad:	Joshua Tree North, CA
Applicant:	Joseph Milburn JT Prospecting, LLC	T, R, Section:	T:2N, R:6E, Section 24
Location	62076 Mercury Drive Joshua Tree CA 92262 Cross Streets: Adele Lane and Mercury Drive		
Project No:	PROJ-2023-00023	Community Plan:	Homestead Valley Community Plan
Rep	Joseph Milburn	LUZD:	Homestead Valley/Rural Living (HV/RL)
Proposal:	CUP to Establish a dry Campground	Overlays:	Desert Tortoise – Medium Population

PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION:

Lead agency: County of San Bernardino
Land Use Services Department
385 N. Arrowhead Avenue, 1st Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0182

Contact person: Luis Rodriguez Jr., Contract Planner
Phone No: (909) 387-4106 **Fax No:** (909) 387-3223

E-mail: Luis.Rodriguez@lus.sbcounty.gov

Project Sponsor: JT Prospecting, LLC 447
Howland Canal
Venice, CA 90291

Prepared by: Jakki Tonkovich
Vista Environmental 1021 Didrickson
Way Laguna Beach, CA 92651
jakki@vistalb.com

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Summary

The proposed project consists of establishing a fifteen (15) campsite dry Campground, with no water service, on one parcel (APN 063-201-68) with a total of 7.5 acres, within the Homestead Valley Community Area of Joshua Tree. Each of the campsites will include space for parking and either tent or contained RV/Trailer camping. The project includes the installation of a shade structure and a picnic table at each campsite. Existing buildings onsite will remain. All campsites are easily accessible through a hard packed soil road and a turnaround within the project site (Figure 1, Project Location, and Figure 2, Site Plan).

Site Access, Circulation and Parking

The proposed project would also include an onsite dirt road system to access the 15 campsites and a few porta potties that would be placed strategically to be shared by multiple campsites and will have a regular pumping/cleaning schedule. The existing small cabin, bathroom, storage structure, and septic tank will remain onsite and will be utilized for owner and maintenance use only.

The proposed Campground would be operated remotely with online bookings, except for scheduled maintenance activities. Automated sliding entry and exit gates will be installed with a keypad for the entry gate and motion detection for the exit gate. No utility connections will be provided to the Campground. All electricity for gates and lighting will be provided by solar panels and batteries. No burning of any material will be permitted in the Campground. Landscaping will consist of the natural desert landscaping that is currently on the project site.

Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

The project site consists mostly of vacant land with three existing structures located on the eastern portion of the site. The site has a disturbed habitat with sparse ornamental and native vegetation and creosote bush scrub on the northern portion of the site. There is evidence of previous grading activities within the disturbed habitat on site. The site is bordered by Napa Road north of the site, Giant Rock Road east of the site, Adele Lane to the west, and Saturn Street south of the site. Open desert occurs north, east, and south of the site. There are a few residential homes located west and north of the site. The site is relatively flat with onsite elevations ranging from 2,857 feet above mean sea-level (AMSL) to 2,870 feet AMSL. The General Plan land use designation and zoning districts of the project site and surrounding area are shown in Figure 3, Land Use and Figure 4, Zoning Districts.

Existing Land Use and Land Use Zoning Districts		
Location	Existing Land Use	Land Use Zoning District
Project site	Vacant and Recreational Cabin	Homestead Valley/Rural Living
North	Recreational Cabin and Single Family Residential	Homestead Valley/Rural Living
South	Vacant Land	Homestead Valley/Rural Living
East	Single Family	Homestead Valley/Rural Living
West	Single Family	Homestead Valley/Rural Living

ADDITIONAL APPROVAL REQUIRED BY OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES

Federal: None.

State of California: California Department of Fish & Wildlife.

County of San Bernardino: Land Use Services Department-Building and Safety, Public Health-Environmental Health Services, Special Districts, and Public Works.

Local: None

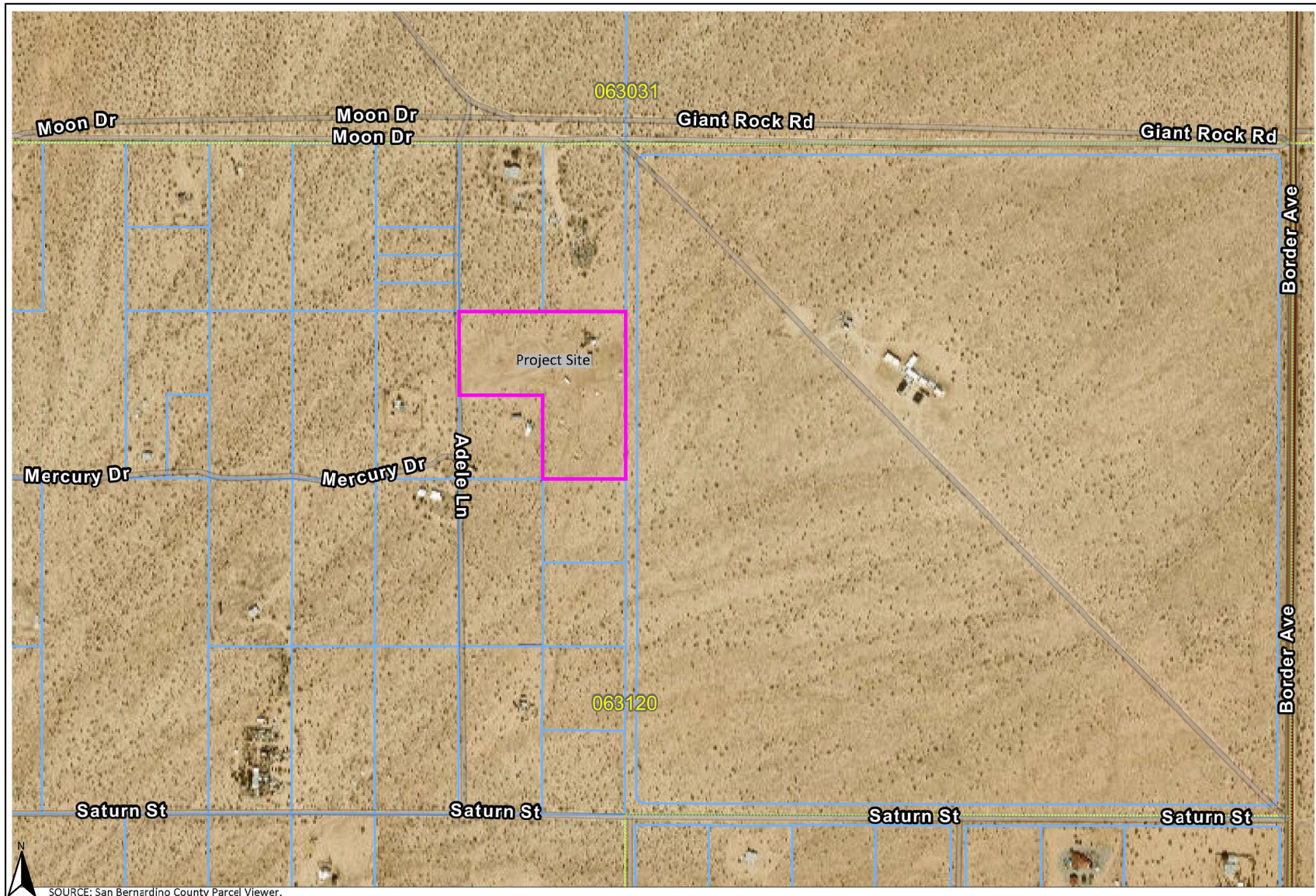


Figure 1
Project Location



Figure 2
Site Plan

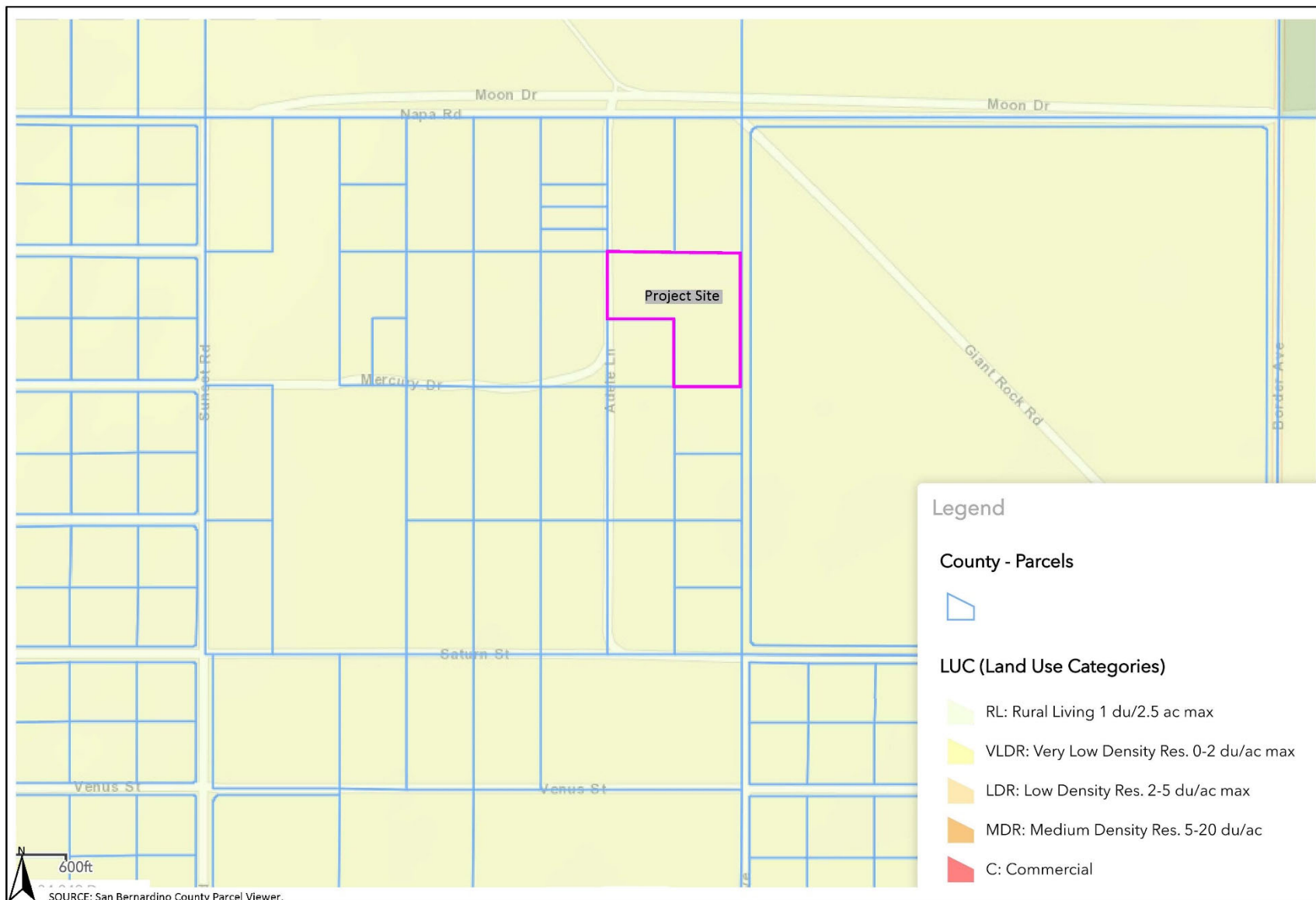


Figure 3
Land Use

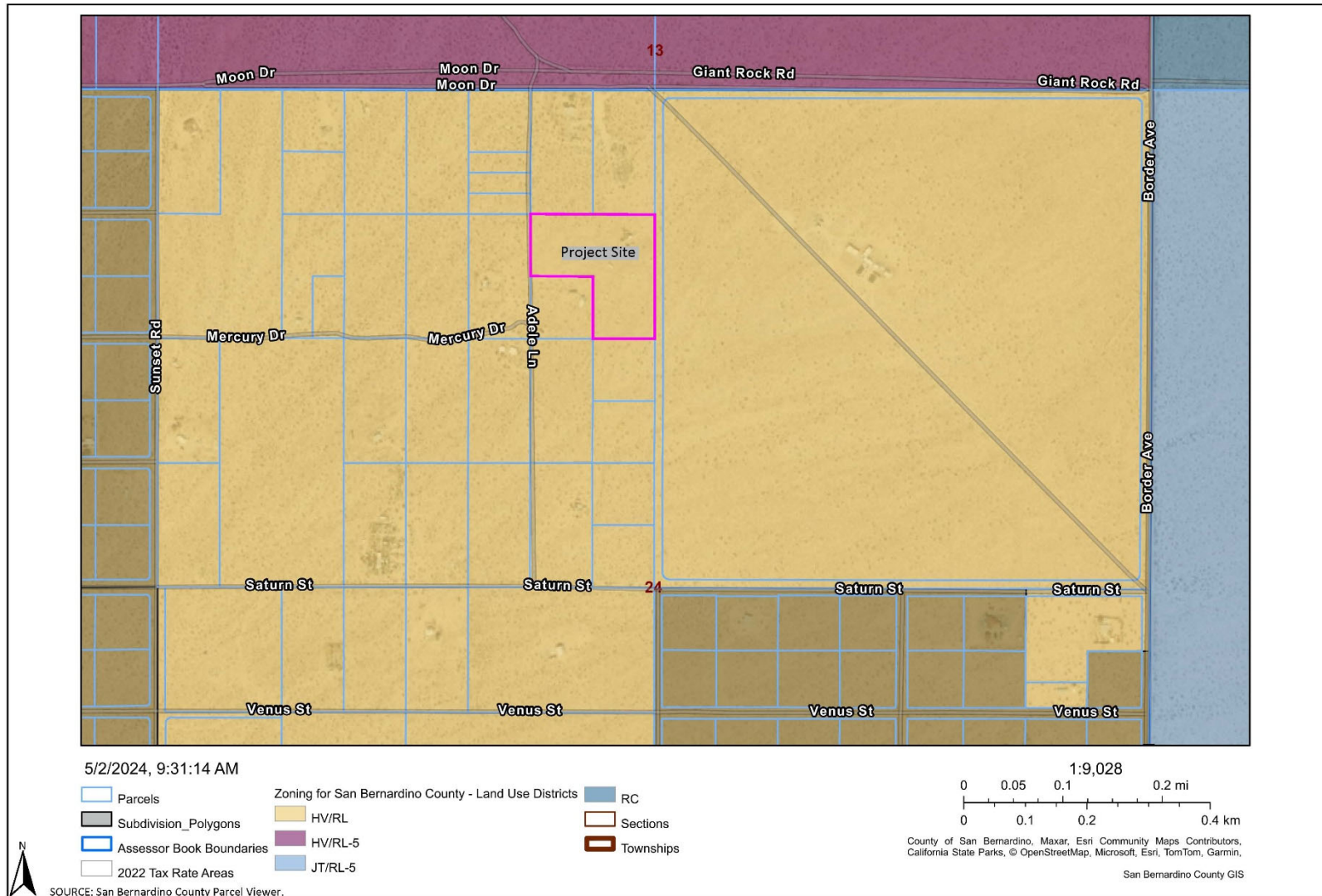


Figure 4
Zoning Districts

CONSULTATION WITH CALIFORNIA NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

Yes, please refer to Section XVIII, Tribal Cultural Resources. (Pending)

Note: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code section 21083.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

EVALUATION FORMAT

This Initial Study is prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq. and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Section 15000, et seq.). Specifically, the preparation of an Initial Study is guided by Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This format of the study is presented as follows. The project is evaluated based on its effect on 20 major categories of environmental factors. Each factor is reviewed by responding to a series of questions regarding the impact of the project on each element of the overall factor. The Initial Study checklist provides a formatted analysis that provides a determination of the effect of the project on the factor and its elements. The effect of the project is categorized into one of the following four categories of possible determinations:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant	No Impact
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Substantiation is then provided to justify each determination. One of the four following conclusions is then provided as a summary of the analysis for each of the major environmental factors.

1. **No Impact:** No impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.
2. **Less than Significant Impact:** No significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.
3. **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated:** Possible significant adverse impacts have been identified or anticipated and the following mitigation measures are required as a condition of project approval to reduce these impacts to a level below significant. The required mitigation measures are: (List of mitigation measures)
4. **Potentially Significant Impact:** Significant adverse impacts have been identified or anticipated. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required to evaluate these impacts, which are (List of the impacts requiring analysis within the EIR).

At the end of the analysis the required mitigation measures are restated and categorized as being either self- monitoring or as requiring a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below will be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

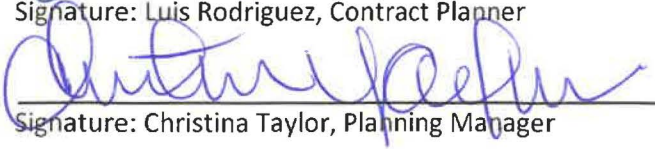
- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Aesthetics | ☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources | ☐ Air Quality |
| ☐ Biological Resources | ☐ Cultural Resources | ☐ Geology/Soils |
| ☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions | ☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials | ☐ Hydrology/Water Quality |
| ☐ Land Use/Planning | ☐ Mineral Resources | ☐ Noise |
| ☐ Population/Housing | ☐ Public Services | ☐ Recreation |
| ☐ Transportation/Traffic | ☐ Utilities/Service Systems | ☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance |

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation, the following finding is made:

☐	The proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION shall be prepared.
☒	Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there shall not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION shall be prepared.
☐	The proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
☐	The proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
☐	Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.


Signature: Luis Rodriguez, Contract Planner


Signature: Christina Taylor, Planning Manager

January 13, 2025

Date

January 13, 2025

Date

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
I. <u>AESTHETICS</u> – Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:					
a)	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c)	In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d)	Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which will adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check ☐ if project is located within the view-shed of any Scenic Route listed in the General Plan):

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project is located on a mostly vacant site containing typical desert Creosote Scrub Vegetation. A review of the project area determined that there are no scenic resources located internally within the area proposed for the development of the Campground. A scenic vista impact can also occur when a scenic vista can be viewed from the project area or immediate vicinity and a proposed development may interfere with public a view to a scenic vista. The project is situated in Homestead Valley portion of the Mojave Desert in an area containing low-density residential uses. Given that there are no pristine viewpoints in the vicinity of the project from which to observe the mountain vistas, the development of the Campground in this area of the County is not considered significant aesthetic impact. As such, implementation of the proposed development, is not expected to cause any substantial adverse effects on any important scenic vistas. This potential impact is considered a less than significant adverse aesthetic impact. No mitigation measures would be required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway corridor. The project site is located on Mercury Drive, and none of the nearby roadways are considered by the State or County to be a scenic highway. The County’s recently adopted General Plan—the “Countywide Plan”¹—identifies several county scenic routes, and Highway 62 is designated as a county scenic route in this area, and as an eligible state scenic highway. Note that Highway 62 is not designated as a state scenic highway in the vicinity of the project site. The proposed project would be compatible with the Countywide Policy Plan visual resource and aesthetic policies including:

Policy ¹	Compatibility
Policy LU-2.1 Compatibility with existing uses. We require that new development is located, scaled, buffered, and designed to minimize negative impacts on existing conforming uses and adjacent neighborhoods. We also require that new residential developments are located, scaled, buffered, and designed so as to not hinder the viability and continuity of existing conforming nonresidential development.	The proposed project is at a similar scale as the surrounding rural residential uses.
Policy LU-2.4 Land use map consistency. We consider proposed development that is consistent with the Land Use Map (i.e., it does not require a change in Land Use Category), to be generally compatible and consistent with surrounding land uses and a community’s identity. Additional site, building, and landscape design treatment, per other policies in the Policy Plan and development standards in the Development Code, may be required to maximize compatibility with surrounding land uses and community identity.	The proposed project is compatible with the land use map designation with the approval of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The CUP is required for the dry Campground.
Policy LU-4.1 Context-sensitive design in the Mountain/Desert regions. We require new development to employ site and building design techniques and use building materials that reflect the natural mountain or desert environment and preserve scenic resources.	The proposed project does not include development of new buildings. The proposed project is consistent with the natural environment. The proposed project maintains the natural environment by not including buildings and structures, but leaving the Campground open and natural with the environment.

¹ <https://countywideplan.com/>. Accessed March 28, 2024 <https://countywideplan.com/>. Accessed March 28, 2024

Policy LU-4.7 Dark skies. We minimize light pollution and glare to preserve views of the night sky, particularly in the Mountain and Desert regions where dark skies are fundamentally connected to community identities and local economies. We also promote the preservation of dark skies to assist the military in testing, training, and operations.	The proposed project would utilize dark sky approved pathway lighting and would not include extensive night lighting, which would promote dark skies due to the limited nighttime operating hours. The dark sky lights will utilize the five principles of responsible outdoor lighting: Useful, Targeted, Low Level, Controlled, and Warm-Colored. The dark sky lighting proposed by the project applicate will be certified dark sky pathway lighting. Additionally, the lighting will be on automate timers and motion seniors that will enable lights only to be used when needed as reflected under principal one of dark sky lighting – usefulness. Furthermore, the proposed use is one that would benefit from dark skies.
Policy NR-4.1 Preservation of scenic resources. We consider the location and scale of development to preserve regionally significant scenic vistas and natural features, including prominent hillsides, ridgelines, dominant landforms, and reservoirs.	The proposed project would not conflict with the preservation of scenic resources. The proposed project is installed at such a small scale given the open landscape, thus minimizing the views to the site from such things as Highway 62, which is approximately 9 miles away from the project site. Additionally, there are no rock outcroppings that would be impacted by the proposed project and the project has been designed to protect the onsite Joshua Trees.
Policy NR-4.3 Off-site signage. We prohibit new off-site signage and encourage the removal of existing off-site signage along or within view of County Scenic Routes and State Scenic Highways.	The proposed project would not install onsite signage other than providing name and address, thus meeting the provisions of this policy. The proposed project would not result in a significant change in view shed in the vicinity of any County Scenic Route (Highway 62).

A review of the project area suggests that the proposed project would not be visible from Highway 62, which is approximately 9 miles away from the project site. The proposed project would be installed at such a small scale given the open landscape, thus minimizing the views to the site from the Highway to the project site. As described above, the proposed project would comply with the Countywide Policy Plan, and by the standards of the San Bernardino Countywide Plan PEIR, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to damage scenic resources within a state or County scenic highway.

During the field survey one historic-period building was recorded and was temporarily designated, however, the building is not eligible for California Register of Historical Resources, and therefore not an historical resource. No rock outcroppings would be impacted by the proposed project, as none have been observed within the project site or adjacent to the project site. The proposed project site

does have two (2) Joshua Trees located on site. The project is designed to avoid the trees, including the required 40-foot buffer. See Biological Resources section for more details. No other scenic resources have been identified on the site. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant potential to substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. No mitigation measures would be required.

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed Campground is located in a rural desert environment. The proposed project is located in a relatively sparsely developed portion of the County, and according to the State Office of Planning and Research site check, it does not meet the legal criteria for an urbanized area. By developing this mostly vacant site in accordance with the proposed Campground design, this site will provide visitors with an opportunity to inhabit and experience the surrounding desert environment firsthand and intimately. The design elements incorporated in the project will minimize the potential aesthetic impacts to a less than significant level. No mitigation measures would be required.

- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project will create only limited new sources of light during the occupancy phase of the project. Existing sources of light in the project area include nearby rural residences and occasional headlights from the adjacent roadways. The San Bernardino County Development Code requires new projects to adhere to the provisions of the Chapter 83.07.060 Glare and Outdoor Lighting – Mountain and Desert Requirements. The Development Code requires outdoor lighting to meet shielding requirements, light pollution standards, automated control standards, dark sky curfew, and other requirements. The proposed project shall use dark sky lighting that will utilize the five principles of responsible outdoor lighting: Useful, Targeted, Low Level, Controlled, and Warm-Colored. The dark sky lighting proposed by the project applicant will be certified dark sky pathway lighting. Additionally, the lighting will be on automate timers and motion sensors that will enable lights only to be used when needed as reflected under principal one of dark sky lighting – usefulness. While the proposed project will generate a new source of lighting from dark sky approved pathway lighting, the project lighting will occur in a background of rural residences where limited lighting consistent with the County lighting requirements is not considered intrusive or significantly adverse. No mitigation will be required for lighting at this location and with mandatory compliance with the County Development Code, potential light and glare impacts associated with the proposed project will be a less than significant impact. No mitigation measures would be required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
II.	AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES - In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				

- | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) | Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) | Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| c) | Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| d) | Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| e) | Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check ☐ if project is located in the Important Farmlands Overlay):

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project is located in an area that is sparsely developed, which is consistent with the Campground use at this site. Neither the project site nor the adjacent and

surrounding properties are designated for agriculture. No prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance occurs at the project site or within the immediate vicinity. The proposed project would not convert farmland to non-agricultural use. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- b) **No Impact.** The site is zoned Rural Living and is not zoned for agricultural use. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.
- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project is located in an area that is sparsely developed, which is consistent with the Campground use at this site. The project site is zoned Rural Living and does not include forestry zoning. Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned for Timberland Production. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.
- d) **No Impact.** National Timber Tax defines Forest land is defined as land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits². The project site is currently mostly vacant and does not support forest land. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, no impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.
- e) **No Impact.** As indicated in the preceding discussions, implementation of the proposed project would not result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
III. AIR QUALITY - Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district might be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:					
a)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c)	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d)	Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: *(Discuss conformity with the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management Plan, if applicable):*

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials; Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Health Risk Assessment Report (Appendix A)

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) Air Quality Management Plans (AQMPs). The following is the analysis procedure detailed in the MDAQMD Guidelines for Conformity Impacts:

A project is non-conforming if it conflicts with or delays implementation of any applicable attainment or maintenance plan. A project is conforming if it complies with all applicable District rules and regulations, complies with all proposed control measures that are not yet adopted from the applicable plan(s), and is consistent with the growth forecasts in the applicable plan(s) (or is directly included in the applicable plan). Conformity with growth forecasts can be established by demonstrating that the project is consistent with the land use plan that was used to generate the growth forecast. An example of a non-conforming project would be one that increases the gross number of dwelling units, increases the number of trips, and/or increases the overall vehicle miles traveled in an affected area (relative to the applicable land use plan).

For this project, the County of San Bernardino General Plan's Land Use Plan defines the long-range land use assumptions that are represented in the AQMPs. The project site is currently designated as Rural Living (RL) in the General Plan. The proposed Campground is an allowed use within the RL land use designation upon issuance of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) from the County to comply with development code standards for Campground uses. As such, development of the proposed project would require the issuance of a CUP and adherence to the conditions provided in the CUP. The proposed project would consist of a Campground with 15 campsites. According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Trip Generation Manual, Tenth Edition, ITE Land Use Code 416

for Campgrounds found that an occupied campsite would generate 0.48 daily trips in the AM Peak Hour and 0.98 daily trips in the PM Peak Hour, or 1.46 daily trips per campsite, which equates 21.9 daily trips generated by the proposed project at full occupancy. Due to the nominal amount of daily trips generated by the proposed project and the potential for employment opportunities in an area that currently has more housing than jobs that would likely result in a reduction of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) for the future employees that now have to commute long distances for work, the proposed project is anticipated to result in a negligible increase in total VMT for the region that would not have an impact on the growth forecasts for the area. Based on the above, the proposed project will not result in an inconsistency with the SCAQMD AQMP. Therefore, a less than significant impact will occur in relation to implementation of the AQMP.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** Construction of the proposed project would consist of grading of the portion of the project site that would be disturbed, construction and painting of the campsites and possible paving of parking spaces and portions of the campsite areas. Construction activities would create air emissions from the operation of construction equipment as well as from fugitive dust generated from the movement of dirt onsite. Construction emissions would also be created from worker vehicle trips and delivery truck trips to and from the project site. Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to start early 2024 and would take approximately six months to complete. The daily construction-related criteria pollutant emissions from the proposed project are shown below in Table A along with the MDAQMD daily thresholds, which were utilized since construction activities will occur over less than a year period.

Table A – Construction-Related Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Season and Year of Construction	Maximum Daily Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
	VOC	NOx	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer 2025	1.13	0.89	1.32	<0.01	11.8	1.20
Winter 2025	1.13	2.29	3.62	<0.01	63.8	6.47
Maximum Daily Construction Emissions	1.13	2.29	3.62	<0.01	63.8	6.47
MDAQMD Thresholds¹	137	137	548	137	82	65
Exceeds Thresholds?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Notes:

¹ Obtained from: <https://www.mdaqmd.ca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument?id=8510>.

Source: CalEEMod Version 2022.1.

Source: Appendix A, Air Quality

Table A shows that none of the analyzed criteria pollutants would exceed the MDAQMD daily emissions thresholds during construction of the proposed project. Therefore, a less than significant air quality impact would occur from construction of the proposed project.

Toxic Air Contaminants Impacts from Construction

The greatest potential for toxic air contaminant emissions would be related to diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions associated with heavy equipment operations during construction of the proposed project. According to SCAQMD methodology, health effects from carcinogenic air toxics are usually described in terms of “individual cancer risk”. “Individual Cancer Risk” is the likelihood that a person exposed to concentrations of toxic air contaminants over a 70-year lifetime will contract cancer, based on the use of standard risk-assessment methodology. It should be noted that the most current cancer risk assessment methodology recommends analyzing a 30-year exposure period for the nearby sensitive receptors (OEHA, 2015).

Given the relatively limited number of heavy-duty construction equipment, the varying distances that construction equipment would operate to the nearby sensitive receptors, and the short-term

construction schedule, the proposed project would not result in a long-term (i.e., 30 or 70 years) substantial source of toxic air contaminant emissions and corresponding individual cancer risk. In addition, California Code of Regulations Title 13, Article 4.8, Chapter 9, Section 2449 regulates emissions from off-road diesel equipment in California. This regulation limits idling of equipment to no more than five minutes, requires equipment operators to label each piece of equipment and provide annual reports to CARB of their fleet's usage and emissions. This regulation also requires systematic upgrading of the emission Tier level of each fleet, and currently no commercial operator is allowed to purchase Tier 0, Tier 1 or Tier 2 equipment. In addition to the purchase restrictions, equipment operators need to meet fleet average emissions targets that become more stringent each year between years 2014 and 2023. Therefore, due to the limitations in off-road construction equipment DPM emissions from implementation of Section 2448, a less than significant short-term TAC impacts would occur during construction of the proposed project from DPM emissions.

Long-Term Operational Air Quality Impacts

The proposed project would consist of the operation of the proposed Campground. The proposed project would generate air emissions from mobile sources, area sources and off-road equipment. Since the proposed project would not include any electrical, natural gas or water hook ups to utilities, operation of the proposed project would not utilize any energy from the grid and the CalEEMod model inputs for electricity, natural gas and water were all set to zero. In addition, the number of fireplaces was also set to zero, since burning of anything in the Campground will be prohibited. The VOC, NOx, CO, SO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} annual emissions created from the proposed project's long-term operations are summarized below in Table B.

Table B – Operations-Related Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Emissions Source	Pollutant Emissions (tons per year)					
	VOC	NOx	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Mobile Sources¹	0.02	0.02	0.15	<0.01	6.77	0.68
Area Sources²	0.01	<0.01	0.08	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Energy Usage³	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Off-Road Equipment⁴	<0.01	<0.01	0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Total Operational Emissions	0.03	0.02	0.23	<0.01	6.77	0.68
MDAQMD Thresholds⁵	25	25	100	25	15	12
Exceeds Thresholds?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Notes:

¹ Mobile sources consist of emissions from vehicles and road dust. The CalEEMod model analyzed 21.9 daily trips and 20% of the trip length on dirt roads.

² Area sources consist of emissions from consumer products, architectural coatings, and landscaping equipment.

³ Energy usage consists of emissions from natural gas usage. No utility hookups will be provided to the proposed project.

⁴ Off-Road equipment was modeled based on one tractor operating 4 hours per day and 12 days per year.

⁵ Obtained from: <https://www.mdaqmd.ca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument?id=8510>.

Source: CalEEMod Version 2022.1

Source: Appendix A, Air Quality

The data provided in Table B above shows that none of the analyzed criteria pollutants would exceed the MDAQMD annual emissions thresholds during operation of the proposed project. Therefore, a less than significant air quality impacts would occur from operation of the proposed project.

- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. Individual responses to odors are highly variable and can result in a variety of effects. Generally, the impact of an odor results from a variety of factors such as frequency, duration, offensiveness, location, and sensory perception. The frequency is a measure of how often an individual is exposed to an odor in the ambient environment. The intensity refers to an individual's or group's perception of the odor strength or concentration. The duration of an

odor refers to the elapsed time over which an odor is experienced. The offensiveness of the odor is the subjective rating of the pleasantness or unpleasantness of an odor. The location accounts for the type of area in which a potentially affected person lives, works, or visits; the type of activity in which he or she is engaged; and the sensitivity of the impacted receptor.

Sensory perception has four major components: detectability, intensity, character, and hedonic tone. The detection (or threshold) of an odor is based on a panel of responses to the odor. There are two types of thresholds: the odor detection threshold and the recognition threshold. The detection threshold is the lowest concentration of an odor that will elicit a response in a percentage of the people that live and work in the immediate vicinity of the project site and is typically presented as the mean (or 50 percent of the population). The recognition threshold is the minimum concentration that is recognized as having a characteristic odor quality, this is typically represented by recognition by 50 percent of the population. The intensity refers to the perceived strength of the odor. The odor character is what the substance smells like. The hedonic tone is a judgment of the pleasantness or unpleasantness of the odor. The hedonic tone varies in subjective experience, frequency, odor character, odor intensity, and duration. Potential odor impacts have been analyzed separately for construction and operations below.

Construction-Related Odor Impacts

Potential sources that may emit odors during construction activities include the application of coatings such as asphalt pavement, paints and solvents and from emissions from diesel equipment. Standard construction requirements that limit the time of day when construction may occur as well as MDAQMD Rule 442 that limits VOC content in solvents, Rule 1103 that limits VOC content in asphalt and Rule 1113 that limits the VOC content in paints and solvents would minimize odor impacts from construction. As such, the objectionable odors that may be produced during the construction process would be temporary and would not likely be noticeable for extended periods of time beyond the project site's boundaries. Through compliance with the applicable regulations that reduce odors and due to the transitory nature of construction odors, a less than significant odor impact would occur, and no mitigation would be required.

Operations-Related Odor Impacts

The proposed project would consist of the development of a Campground. Operation of the proposed project may create odors from trash storage bins. As detailed in the site plans, there will be no fire pits at the campsites and no burning of anything will be allowed in the Campground, as such no odor impacts would occur from campfires. Pursuant to County regulations, permanent trash enclosures that protect trash bins from rain as well as limit air circulation would be required for the trash storage areas. Through compliance with MDAQMD's Rule 402 and County trash storage regulations, no significant impact related to odors would occur during the on-going operations of the proposed project. Therefore, a less than significant odor impact would occur, and no mitigation would be required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES - Would the project:					
a)	Have substantial adverse effects, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b)	Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c)	Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d)	Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e)	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☒	☐	☐
f)	Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if project is located in the Biological Resources Overlay or contains habitat for any species listed in the California Natural Diversity Database):		☐			

- a) **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** The project site consists mostly of vacant land with three existing structures located on the eastern portion of the site. The site has a disturbed habitat with sparse ornamental and native vegetation and creosote bush scrub on the northern portion of the site. There is evidence of previous grading activities within the disturbed habitat on site. The site is bordered by Napa Road north of the site, Giant Rock Road east of the site, and Saturn Street south of the site. Open desert occurs north, east, and south of the site. The site is relatively flat with onsite elevations ranging from 2,857 feet above mean sea-level (AMSL) to 2,870 feet AMSL.

Sensitive Biological Resources

A total of 2 plant species are listed as state and/or federal Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate species; are 1B.1 listed plants on the CNPS Rare Plant Inventory; below are descriptions of these species:

Triple-ribbed milk-vetch

The triple-ribbed milk-vetch (*Astragalus tricarlinatus*) is a federally listed Endangered Species and ranked 1B.2 in the CNPS Rare Plant Inventory. Its habitat includes desert wash, Joshua tree woodland, and sonoran desert scrub habitats. It is often found on hot, rocky slopes in canyons and along the edge of boulder-strewn desert washes with *Larrea* and *Encelia*. No slopes or canyons occur on site. No habitat for this species exists on the project site. This species is not present.

Parish's daisy

Parish's daisy (*Erigeron parishii*) is a federally Threatened Species and is ranked 1B.1 in the CNPS Rare Plant Inventory. This species is typically found on carbonate; limestone mountain slopes; often associated with drainages and sometimes on granite. Its habitat includes Mojavian desert scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland. The project site is below the elevation range for this species. No habitat for this species exists on the project site. This species is not present.

Western Joshua Tree

The Western Joshua Tree is a state listed Candidate Endangered species. This species is protected under the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act and the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), which prohibits the take of any species of wildlife designated by the California Fish and Game Commission as endangered, threatened, or candidate species. Two individual Joshua trees were found during the Western Joshua Tree census performed in 2024. Implementation of the **Mitigation Measure BIO-1** will ensure impacts to this species are less than significant.

BIO-1: Two (2) Joshua trees were found on site during the focused Western Joshua Tree census survey performed in 2024. Any impacts to the Joshua tree or within forty (40) feet of the Western Joshua Tree shall require compliance with the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act (WJTCA), which was passed in July 2023 to conserve Western Joshua Tree and its habitat while supporting the state's renewable energy and housing priorities. The WJTCA authorizes CDFW to:

- **Permit the trimming and removal of hazardous or dead Western Joshua Trees.**
- **Permit the incidental take of Western Joshua Trees under CESA provided the permittee meets certain conditions.**

The Project shall avoid impacts to the Western Joshua Trees on site through avoiding construction within 40 feet of the trees onsite. If it becomes necessary for construction to occur within 40 feet of the trees onsite (i.e. impact the trees per the WJTCA), any proposed impacts to

the Joshua trees on site shall require prior authorization from CDFW pursuant to the WJCTA.

Removal of onsite Joshua trees or century plants shall be required to comply with Section 88.01 of the San Bernardino Development Code, which requires the issuance of a permit prior to the removal of regulated trees and plants.

Sensitive Plant Resources

A total of 2 plant species are listed as state and/or federal Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate species; are 1B.1 listed plants on the CNPS Rare Plant Inventory; below are descriptions of these species:

Triple-ribbed milk-vetch

The triple-ribbed milk-vetch (*Astragalus tricarlinatus*) is a federally listed Endangered Species and ranked 1B.2 in the CNPS Rare Plant Inventory. Its habitat includes desert wash, Joshua tree woodland, and sonoran desert scrub habitats. It is often found on hot, rocky slopes in canyons and along the edge of boulder-strewn desert washes with *Larrea* and *Encelia*. No slopes or canyons occur on site. No habitat for this species exists on the project site. This species is not present.

Parish's daisy

Parish's daisy (*Erigeron parishii*) is a federally Threatened Species and is ranked 1B.1 in the CNPS Rare Plant Inventory. This species is typically found on carbonate; limestone mountain slopes; often associated with drainages and sometimes on granite. Its habitat includes Mojavean desert scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland. The project site is below the elevation range for this species. No habitat for this species exists on the project site. This species is not present.

Sensitive Animal Resources

A total of 3 animal species are listed as state and/or federal Threatened, Endangered, Candidate will be reviewed in this section. Sensitive species with a potential to occur on site will also be reviewed in this section. Below are descriptions of these species:

Burrowing owl

The burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. This species is a subterranean nester, dependent upon burrowing mammals such as the California ground squirrel. It inhabits open, dry annual or perennial grasslands and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation. The project site is mostly paved. No burrows suitable for burrowing owl were found on site. No ground squirrel or other burrowing mammals was noted on site. No suitable habitat for this species occurs on site. This species is not present.

Crotch bumble bee

Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) is a state Candidate Endangered Species. It's located in coastal California east to the Sierra-Cascade crest and south into Mexico. Its food plant genera include *Antirrhinum*, *Phacelia*, *Clarkia*, *Dendromecon*, *Eschscholzia*, and *Eriogonum*. The food plant genera of this species are not found on site. There is no habitat for this species on the project site. This species is not present.

Desert tortoise

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) is a state listed Endangered Species and federally listed Threatened Species. This species is found in Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub, and Sonoran Desert scrub habitats. It requires friable soil for burrow and nest construction. It prefers creosote bush habitat with large annual wildflower blooms. The site consists of disturbed habitat. The creosote bush scrub habitat on site is minimal and bordered by disturbed areas. No CNDDB

recorded occurrence of desert tortoise within 5 miles of the project site. However, the County's Biotic Resources Overlay indicates that the project is located within an area supporting Desert Tortoise Medium Population. Furthermore, according to the USFWS 5 Year Review, the project is located in an area of high probability for supporting Desert Tortoise.³ No suitable habitat for this species occurs on site. Therefore, the biologist determined that, this species is likely absent from the project site. However, due to the project being located within Desert Tortoise Medium Population overlay, and as the USFWS 5-Year Review indicates that the project is located in an area of high probability for supporting Desert Tortoise, **Mitigation Measure BIO-2** is recommended: prior to grading pre-construction desert tortoise surveys shall be conducted to avoid any impacts to desert tortoise.

MM BIO – 2 No more than 14 calendar days prior to start of Project activities, a qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction surveys for desert tortoise as described in the USFWS Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Field Manual (USFWS 2009 or most recent version). Pre-construction surveys shall be completed using linear survey transects 10-meters apart within the Project area and 500- foot buffer zone. Should desert tortoise presence be confirmed during the survey, the qualified biologist shall immediately notify CDFW and USFWS to determine appropriate avoidance measures. The project will ensure no impacts to desert tortoise by avoiding any direct and indirect take as defined by the California and Federal Endangered Species acts.

Least Bell's vireo

The Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) is a federal and state listed Endangered Species. This species is found in riparian forest, riparian scrub, and riparian woodland. The nesting habitat of this species is restricted to willow and/or mule fat dominated riparian scrub along permanent or nearly permanent streams. No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site. This species is not present.

However, potential impacts to nesting birds may occur if ground disturbing activities or vegetation removal occur during the bird nesting season of February 1 through September 15. Implementation of the **Mitigation Measure BIO-3** would reduce this impact to less than significance.

BIO-3: It is recommended that vegetation removal be conducted outside of the nesting season for migratory birds to avoid direct impacts.

- If vegetation removal occurs during the migratory bird nesting season, between February 1 and September 15, pre-construction nesting bird surveys shall be performed within three days prior to vegetation removal.

If active nests are found during nesting bird surveys, they shall be flagged. A 250- foot buffer shall be fenced around songbird nests and a 500-foot buffer shall be fenced around raptor nests.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project site does not contain any drainage, riparian, or riverine features. There are no CDFW, United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), or Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) jurisdictional waters within the project site boundaries. Therefore, less than significance impact would occur related to jurisdictional resources.

Plant and Habitat Communities

The 7.5-acre project site is made up of two habitats, 1.2 acres of creosote bush scrub and 6.3

³ https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2022%20Mojave%20desert%20tortoise%205YR_FINAL.pdf

acres of disturbed habitat.

Creosote bush scrub

The project site has 1.2 acres of disturbed creosote bush scrub habitat on site. The dominant plant species is creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*). Other plant species found within this habitat include branched pencil cholla (*Cylindropuntia ramosissima*), white bursage (*Ambrosia dumosa*), and white ratany (*Krameria grayi*). The creosote bush scrub habitat is present on the northwest and southwest corners of the site. The vegetation within these areas on site is not dense and there are some areas that appear to have been previously graded or disturbed by motor vehicles.

Disturbed

The project site has 6.3 acres of disturbed habitat on site. Three existing structures occur within this habitat. This vegetation within these areas is sparse and includes ornamental species such as American century plant (*Agave americana*), saguaro (*Carnegiea gigantea*), and senita cactus (*Pachycereus schottii*).

Critical Habitat

Critical habitat is designated by USFWS for endangered and threatened species per the federal ESA (16 U.S.C. § 1533 (a)(3)), and to the extent prudent and determinable. Special management of critical habitat, including measures for water quality and quantity, host animals and plants, food availability, pollinators, sunlight, and specific soil types is required to ensure the long-term survival and recovery of the identified species. Critical habitat designation delineates all suitable habitat for the species. The project site is not located within or adjacent to federally designated critical habitat for endangered species and no mitigation measures are required.

- c) **No Impact.** The project site does not contain any drainage, riparian, or riverine features. There are no CDFW, United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), or Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) jurisdictional waters within the project site boundaries. As a result, there would be no impact to jurisdictional waters or wetlands would occur and no mitigation measures are required.
- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** Wildlife movement corridors can be local or regional in scale; their functions may vary temporally and spatially based on conditions and species present. Wildlife corridors represent areas where wildlife movement is concentrated due to natural or anthropogenic constraints. Local corridors provide access to resources such as food, water, and shelter. Animals use these corridors, which are often hillsides or riparian areas, to move between different habitats. Regional corridors provide these functions and link two or more large habitat areas. They provide avenues for wildlife dispersal, migration, and contact between otherwise distinct populations. The project area was evaluated for its function as a wildlife corridor that species use to move between wildlife habitat zones within Appendix B. The project area consists of mostly vacant land with residential areas nearby. No drainages, woodlands, canyons, or other features commonly used as wildlife corridors occur on the project site. The project site would not function as a wildlife corridor. Furthermore, there is vacant land to the south of the site that can continue to be used. No wildlife movement corridors were found to be present on the project site. Therefore, the development of the project site will not block any wildlife corridors or prevent species from moving between wildlife habitat zones.
- e) **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** The Project would not be anticipated to conflict with the provisions of local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Should the proposed project result in the removal of trees, it will be required to comply with the County of San Bernardino's Plant Protection and Management

Ordinances. The San Bernardino County Development Code Section 88.01.060 provides regulations for the removal or harvesting of specified desert native plants in order to preserve and protect the plants and to provide for the conservation and wise use of desert resources. Per Section 88.01.060 of the San Bernardino County Development Code the following desert native plants or any part of them, except the fruit shall not be removed except under a Tree or Plant Removal Permit:

1. The following desert native plants with stems two inches or greater in diameter or six feet or greater in height:
 - a. *Dalea spinosa* (smoketree).
 - b. All species of the genus *Prosopis* (mesquites).
2. All species of the family Agavaceae (century plants, nolinias, yuccas).
3. Creosote Rings, ten feet or greater in diameter.
4. All Joshua trees.
5. Any part of any of the following species, whether living or dead:
 - a. *Olneya tesota* (desert ironwood).
 - b. All species of the genus *Prosopis* (mesquites).
 - c. All species of the genus *Cercidium* (palos verdes).

Three Joshua trees are located on or adjacent to the project site. The American century plants on site are ornamental and will not be impacted by the proposed project. No other desert native plants regulated under Section 88.01.060 of the San Bernardino Development Code are present on the site. Section 88.01 requires the issuance of a permit prior to the removal of regulated trees and plants.

The project site does include Joshua Trees on site. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-1** (above) will ensure that any the project would not impact the trees, and thereby result in a less than significant impact under this issue.

- f) **No Impact.** The project is not located within any applicable habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, no impacts associated with an adopted conservation plan would occur and no mitigation measures would be required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with the inclusion of mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-3.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES - Would the project:					

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) | Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| b) | Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| c) | Disturb any human remains, including those outside of formal cemeteries? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if the project is located in the Cultural ☐ or Paleontological ☐ Resources overlays or cite results of cultural resource review):
<i>San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Cultural Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), South Central Coast Information Center, California State University, Fullerton; Submitted Project Materials; Cultural Resources Report (Appendix C)</i>

a, b) **Less than Significant with Mitigation.** Cultural resource work has been conducted in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as amended (Public Resources Code §21000 et seq.) and pursuant to the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (California Code of Regulations, Title 14 §15000 et seq.). The results of this cultural resources inventory will be used to assess potential impacts to sensitive resources. For the purposes of this documentation, the lead CEQA agency for the project is the County of San Bernardino.

BCR Consulting conducted a cultural resources assessment of the Assessor Parcel Numbers 0631-201-25 and -60 Project in unincorporated San Bernardino County, California. One historic- period building was recorded (temporarily designated JTP2401-H-1), but is recommended not eligible for California Register listing. As such it is not recommended a historical resource under CEQA. No other cultural resources of any kind (including historic-period or prehistoric archaeological resources, or historic-period architectural resources) were identified within the project site boundaries. Based on these results, no significant impact related to historical resources is anticipated.

Due to the absence of intact cultural resources, and the anticipation that potential minor subsurface components, that include grading the campsite pads and the road, that would not hold sufficient integrity, an archaeological monitor is not recommended for the project. However, if during the course of the project, there are any changes that would result in a deviation then an archaeological monitor or formal evaluation may be required to avoid potential inadvertent impacts to cultural resources.

As concluded in the Cultural Resource Assessment, due to the absence of intact cultural resources,

and the anticipation that potential subsurface components would not hold sufficient integrity, an archaeological monitor is not required for the project as described. However, if there are any changes to the project that would result in a deviation, then an archaeological monitor or formal evaluation may be required to avoid potential inadvertent impacts to cultural resources. Although, no historic or archaeological resources are anticipated on the project site, to ensure potential impacts from the proposed project are reduced to a less than significant level, the following **Mitigation Measure CR-1 through CR-7** shall be implemented:

CR-1: Tribal Monitoring Services Agreement Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the applicant shall enter into a Tribal Monitoring Services Agreement with the Morongo Band of Mission Indians (MBMI) for the Project. The Tribal Monitor shall be on-site during all ground-disturbing activities (including, but not limited to, clearing, grubbing, tree and bush removal, grading, trenching, fence post placement and removal, construction excavation, excavation for all utility and irrigation lines, and landscaping phases of any kind). The Tribal Monitor shall have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect, or halt the ground-disturbing activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources.

CR-2: Retention of Archaeologist Prior to any ground-disturbing activities (including, but not limited to, clearing, grubbing, tree and bush removal, grading, trenching, fence post replacement and removal, construction excavation, excavation for all utility and irrigation lines, and landscaping phases of any kind), and prior to the issuance of grading permits, the Applicant shall retain a Qualified Archaeologist who meets the U.S. Secretary of the Interior Standards (SOI). The Archaeologist shall be present during all ground disturbing activities to identify any known or suspected archaeological and/or cultural resources. The Archaeologist will conduct a Cultural Resource Sensitivity Training, in conjunction with the Tribe[s] Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), and/or designated Tribal Representative. The training session will focus on the archaeological and tribal cultural resources that may be encountered during ground-disturbing activities as well as the procedures to be followed in such an event.

CR-3: Cultural Resource Management Plan Prior to any ground-disturbing activities the project Archaeologist shall develop a Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP) and/or Archaeological Monitoring and Treatment Plan (AMTP) to address the details, timing, and responsibilities of all archaeological and cultural resource activities that occur on the project site. This Plan shall be written in consultation with the consulting Tribe[s] and shall include the following: approved Mitigation Measures (MM)/Conditions of Approval (COA), contact information for all pertinent parties, parties' responsibilities, procedures for each MM or COA, and an overview of the project schedule.

CR-4: Pre-Grade Meeting The retained Qualified Archeologist and Consulting Tribe[s] representative shall attend the pre-grade meeting with the grading contractors to explain and coordinate the requirements of the monitoring plan.

CR-5: On-site Monitoring During all ground-disturbing activities the Qualified Archaeologist and the Tribal Monitor shall be on-site full-time. The frequency of inspections shall depend on the rate of excavation, the materials excavated, and any discoveries of Tribal Cultural Resources as defined in California Public Resources Code Section 21074. Archaeological and Tribal Monitoring will be discontinued when the depth of grading and the soil conditions no longer retain the potential to contain cultural deposits. The Qualified Archaeologist, in consultation with the Tribal Monitor, shall be responsible for determining the duration and frequency of monitoring.

CR-6: Inadvertent Discovery of Cultural Resources In the event that previously unidentified cultural resources are unearthed during construction, the Qualified Archaeologist and the Tribal

Monitor shall have the authority to temporarily divert and/or temporarily halt ground-disturbance operations in the area of discovery to allow for the evaluation of potentially significant cultural resources. Isolates and clearly nonsignificant deposits shall be minimally documented in the field and collected so the monitored grading can proceed.

If a potentially significant cultural resource(s) is discovered, work shall stop within a 60-foot perimeter of the discovery and an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) physical demarcation/barrier constructed. All work shall be diverted away from the vicinity of the find, so that the find can be evaluated by the Qualified Archaeologist and Tribal Monitor[s]. The Archaeologist shall notify the Lead Agency and consulting Tribe[s] of said discovery. The Qualified Archaeologist, in consultation with the Lead Agency, the consulting Tribe[s], and the Tribal Monitor, shall determine the significance of the discovered resource. A recommendation for the treatment and disposition of the Tribal Cultural Resource shall be made by the Qualified Archaeologist in consultation with the Tribe[s] and the Tribal Monitor[s] and be submitted to the Lead Agency for review and approval. Below are the possible treatments and dispositions of significant cultural resources in order of CEQA preference:

- A. Full avoidance.
 - B. If avoidance is not feasible, Preservation in place.
 - C. If Preservation in place is not feasible, all items shall be reburied in an area away from any future impacts and reside in a permanent conservation easement or Deed Restriction.
 - D. If all other options are proven to be infeasible, data recovery through excavation and then curation in a Curation Facility that meets the Federal Curation Standards (CFR 79.1)
- c) **Less than Significant with Mitigation.** Careful review of available archival information and the preliminary assessments and vicinity suggests that intact buried cultural resources or historic properties would be very unlikely, and due to the disturbances observed, any resources would lack integrity to be considered significant. However, significant adverse impacts may be identified during ground disturbances and the following **Mitigation Measure CR-7 and CR-8** shall be required to ensure potential impacts are reduced to less than significant.

CR-7: Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains - The Morongo Band of Mission Indians requests the following specific conditions to be imposed in order to protect Native American human remains and/or cremations. No photographs are to be taken except by the coroner, with written approval by the consulting Tribe[s]:

- A. Should human remains and/or cremations be encountered on the surface or during any and all ground-disturbing activities (i.e., clearing, grubbing, tree and bush removal, grading, trenching, fence post placement and removal, construction excavation, excavation for all water supply, electrical, and irrigation lines, and landscaping phases of any kind), work in the immediate vicinity of the discovery shall immediately stop within a 100-foot perimeter of the discovery. The area shall be protected; project personnel/observers will be restricted. The County Coroner is to be contacted within 24 hours of discovery. The County Coroner has 48 hours to make his/her determination pursuant to State and Safety Code §7050.5. and Public Resources Code (PRC) § 5097.98.
- B. In the event that the human remains and/or cremations are identified as Native American, the Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours of determination pursuant to subdivision (c) of HSC §7050.5.
- C. The Native American Heritage Commission shall immediately notify the person or

persons it believes to be the Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The MLD has 48 hours, upon being granted access to the project site, to inspect the site of discovery and make his/her recommendation for final treatment and disposition, with appropriate dignity, of the remains and all associated grave goods pursuant to PRC §5097.98.

- D. If the Morongo Band of Mission Indians has been named the Most Likely Descendant (MLD), the Tribe may wish to rebury the human remains and/or cremation and sacred items in their place of discovery with no further disturbance where they will reside in perpetuity. The place(s) of reburial will not be disclosed by any party and is exempt from the California Public Records Act (California Government Code § 6254[r]). Reburial location of human remains and/or cremations will be determined by the Tribe's Most Likely Descendant (MLD), the landowner, and the City Planning Department.

CR-8: FINAL REPORT: The final report[s] created as a part of the project (AMTP, isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be submitted to the Lead Agency and Consulting Tribe[s] for review and comment. After approval of all parties, the final reports are to be submitted to the appropriate Information Center, and the Consulting Tribe[s].

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with the inclusion of Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-8.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
VI.	ENERGY – Would the project:				
a)	Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Materials, Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Health Risk Assessment Report (Appendix A)

- a) **Less than significant impacts.** The proposed project would impact energy resources during construction and operation. Energy resources that would be potentially impacted include petroleum fuel. No electricity, natural gas, or water utilities will be connected to the proposed project. As such, energy consumption from these utilities would be nominal and no further analysis is provided about these energy sources.

Petroleum-based fuels currently account for a majority of California’s transportation energy sources and primarily consist of diesel and gasoline types of fuels. However, the state has been working on developing strategies to reduce petroleum use. Over the last decade California has implemented several policies, rules, and regulations to improve vehicle efficiency, increase the development and use of alternative fuels, reduce air pollutants and GHG emissions from the transportation sector, and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Accordingly, petroleum-based fuel consumption in California has declined and is shown by a comparison of 2017 to 2022 fuel consumption rates. In 2017, 993 million gallons of gasoline and 265 million gallons of diesel was sold in San Bernardino County⁴. In 2022, 915 million gallons of gasoline and 258 million gallons of diesel were sold in San Bernardino County.²

The following section calculates the potential energy consumption associated with the construction and operations of the proposed project and provides a determination if any energy utilized by the proposed project is wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

Construction-Related Petroleum Fuel Use

Petroleum-based fuel usage represents the highest amount of transportation energy potentially consumed during construction, which would be utilized by both off-road equipment operating on the project site and on-road automobiles transporting workers to and from the project site and on-road trucks transporting equipment and supplies to the project site.

⁴ Obtained from: https://ww2.energy.ca.gov/almanac/transportation_data/gasoline/

The off-road construction equipment fuel usage was calculated through use of the off-road equipment assumptions and fuel use assumptions (see Appendix A), which found that construction of the proposed project would consume 378 gallons of gasoline and 1,291 gallons of diesel fuel. This equates to 0.00004 percent increase of the gasoline and 0.0005 percent increase of the diesel used annually in San Bernardino County. As such, the construction-related petroleum use would be nominal, when compared to current county-wide petroleum usage rates.

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would be required to adhere to all State and MDAQMD regulations for off-road equipment and on-road trucks, which provide minimum fuel efficiency standards. As such, construction activities for the proposed project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Impacts regarding transportation energy would be less than significant. Development of the project would not result in the need to manufacture construction materials or create new building material facilities specifically to supply the proposed project. It is difficult to measure the energy used in the production of construction materials such as asphalt, steel, and concrete, it is reasonable to assume that the production of building materials such as concrete, steel, etc., would employ all reasonable energy conservation practices in the interest of minimizing the cost of doing business.

Operations-Related Vehicular Petroleum Fuel Usage

Operation of the proposed project would result in increased consumption of petroleum-based fuels related to vehicular travel to and from the project site. The proposed project would consume 3,620 gallons of gasoline fuel per year from vehicle travel (see attached energy use calculations). This equates to 0.0004 percent increase of the gasoline consumed annually in San Bernardino County. As such, the operations-related petroleum use would be nominal, when compared to current county-wide petroleum usage rates. Therefore, it is anticipated the proposed project will be designed and built to minimize transportation energy and it is anticipated that existing and planned capacity and supplies of transportation fuels would be sufficient to support the proposed project's demand. Thus, impacts with regard to transportation energy supply and infrastructure capacity would be less than significant and no mitigation measures would be required.

In conclusion, the proposed project would comply with regulatory compliance measures outlined by the State and County related to Air Quality, GHG Emissions, Transportation/Circulation, and Water Supply. Additionally, the proposed project would be constructed in accordance with all applicable County Building and Fire Codes. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation. Impacts would be less than significant.

Generation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The proposed project would consist of the development of a Campground. The proposed project is anticipated to generate GHG emissions from area sources, mobile sources, off-road equipment, waste disposal, water usage, and construction equipment. Since the proposed project would not include any electrical, natural gas or water hook ups to utilities, operation of the proposed project would not utilize any energy from the grid.

The MDAQMD shares responsibility with CARB for ensuring that all state and federal GHG standards are achieved and maintained within its jurisdiction. The MDAQMD CEQA Guidelines provides a project level significance threshold of 100,000 tons of CO₂e per year for both construction and operational activities. The MDAQMD developed this threshold in order to comply with the GHG emission reductions required by AB 32.

The project's GHG emissions have been calculated with the CalEEMod model and the output files

are attached to this Memo. A summary of the results is shown below in Table C and the CalEEMod model run is attached to this Memo.

Table C – Project Related Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions

Category	Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Metric Tons per Year)			
	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	CO ₂ e
Construction				
Total Construction Emissions	15.3	<0.01	<0.01	15.4
Amortized Construction Emissions¹ (30 Years)	0.51	<0.01	<0.01	0.51
Operations				
Mobile Sources²	34.5	<0.01	0.00	35.1
Area Sources³	0.19	<0.01	<0.01	0.19
Energy Usage⁴	0	0	0	0
Solid Waste⁵	1.00	0.10	0.00	3.49
Water and Wastewater⁶	0	0	0	0
Off-Road Equipment⁷	0.79	0.00	0.00	0.79
Total Operational Emissions	36.5	0.10	<0.01	39.6
Total Annual Emission (Construction & Operations)	37.0	0.10	<0.01	40.1
MDAQMD Threshold⁸				100,000
Exceed Thresholds?				No

Notes:

¹ Construction emissions amortized over 30 years as recommended in the SCAQMD GHG Working Group on November 19, 2009.

² Mobile sources consist of GHG emissions from vehicles.

³ Area sources consist of GHG emissions from consumer products, architectural coatings, and landscaping equipment.

⁴ Energy usage consists of GHG emissions from electricity natural gas usage. No utility hookups will be provided to the proposed project and generated onsite.

⁵ Waste includes the CO₂ and CH₄ emissions created from the solid waste placed in landfills.

⁶ Water includes GHG emissions from electricity used for transport of water and processing of wastewater.

⁷ Off-Road equipment was modeled based on one tractor operating 4 hours per day and 12 days per year.

⁸ Obtained from: <https://www.mdaqmd.ca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument?id=8510>.

Source: Appendix A

The data provided in Table C shows that the construction activities would create a total of 15.4 MTCO₂e, which equates to 0.51 MTCO₂e per year, when amortized over 30 years. Table C also shows that operational activities would create 39.6 MTCO₂e per year and when combined with the amortized construction emissions, the proposed project would create a total of 40.1 MTCO₂e per year, which is well below the MDAQMD threshold of 100,000 MTCO₂e per year. Therefore, a less than significant generation of greenhouse gas emissions would occur from development of the proposed project. Impacts would be less than significant.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** Based on the analysis of the proposed project in the preceding discussion, it will not conflict with current State energy efficiency or electricity supply requirements or any local plans or programs for renewable energy or energy efficiency requirements. The County of San Bernardino adopted a Renewable Energy and Conservation Element (RECE) as part of the Countywide Plan 2020. The proposed project would be required to meet Title 24 Energy Efficiency requirements. Adherence would ensure that the proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct the recently adopted RECE or any other state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
VII.	GEOLOGY AND SOILS - Would the project:				

a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

- | | | | | | |
|------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| i. | Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map Issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| ii. | Strong seismic ground shaking? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| iii. | Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| iv. | Landslides? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) | Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) | Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on or off site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| d) | Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| e) | Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

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

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check ☐ if project is located in the Geologic Hazards Overlay District): **San Bernardino County General Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials**

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials

- a) i) **No Impact.** The project site is located in the County of San Bernardino within the Mojave Desert region north of the unincorporated community of Joshua Tree, which is located in a highly seismically active area as the Landers Fault traverses the area. The project is located Northwest of the Landers Fault Zone system, which is classified as Alquist-Priolo Special Study Zones under the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act. The Goat Mountain Fault Zone is located to the northeast of the project site. The closest known active fault zones are approximately two miles from the proposed project site. Based on this information, the risk for ground rupture at the site location is considered low; therefore, it is not likely that future visitors and employees of the project will be subject to rupture from a known earthquake fault. Therefore, no impacts associated with fault rupture would occur and no mitigation measures are required.
- ii) **No Impact.** Similar to other areas located in the seismically active Southern California region, the Mojave Desert region north of the unincorporated community of Joshua Tree within the County is susceptible to strong ground shaking during an earthquake. However, as previously addressed in Section VII (a)(i), the project site is not located within an active fault zone, and the site would not be affected by ground shaking more than any other area in this seismic region. Further, the proposed project does not include the development and operation of new buildings. Like all other development projects in the County and throughout the Southern California Region, the proposed project will be developed in accordance with the applicable development code for temporary structures such as those proposed by the Campground Project. This will ensure that structural integrity will be maintained in the event of an earthquake. Therefore, impacts associated with strong seismic ground shaking would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are required.
- iii) **Less than Significant Impact.** Liquefaction occurs when partially saturated soil loses its effective stress and enters a liquid state, which can result in the soil's inability to support structures above. Liquefaction can be induced by ground-shaking events and is dependent on soil saturation conditions. As shown in Policy Map HZ-2, Liquefaction and Landslide Hazards, in the Policy Plan, the project site would not be located in area with susceptibility to liquefaction. The County General Plan EIR stated that most areas in County that are subject to liquefaction include soils along water bodies, areas in and surrounding dry lakes, and areas where the groundwater is near the ground surface. Figure 5.6-3, of the EIR shows that the project is not located in an area identified in as susceptible to liquefaction. Furthermore, no additional structures are proposed as part of the Campground facility. Therefore, impacts associated with liquefaction would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are required.
- iv) **No Impact.** The project site is located in a flat area, and not located adjacent to any potentially unstable topographical feature such as a hillside or riverbank. As shown in Policy Map HZ-2, Liquefaction and Landslide Hazards, in the Policy Plan, the project site would not be located in an area susceptible to landslides. Therefore, no impacts associated with landslides would occur and no mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** Project construction will not include any mass grading at the site, as the proposed project looks to keep the landscape in its natural state as much as possible. The only minor grading that will occur will be for the Campground and onsite road system. This will result in only minor losses of topsoil or erosion. Furthermore, the San Bernardino County

Development Code Chapter 85.11.030 requires standard erosion control practices to be implemented for all construction, including the 85% compaction requirement from the Fire Department on applicable dirt roads and/or easements for safe access. No significant adverse impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required. Therefore, no significant adverse impact is identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** Landslides and slope failure can result from ground motion generated by earthquake. As shown in Policy Map HZ-2, Liquefaction and Landslide Hazards, in the Policy Plan, the project site would not be located in area with susceptibility to liquefaction. The County General Plan EIR stated that most areas in County that are subject to liquefaction include soils along water bodies, areas in and surrounding dry lakes, and areas where the groundwater is near the ground surface. Figure 5.6-3, of the EIR shows that the project is not located in an area identified in as susceptible to liquefaction. Additionally, the potential for landslide at the project site has been determined to be minimal to due to the topography being relatively flat. Landslides typically occur on hillsides or in steep terrain. The San Bernardino Countywide Plan EIR indicates that subsidence due to groundwater extraction affects the Desert Regions, particularly near dry lakebeds in the Mojave and Morongo basins. Areas at high risk of future subsidence include the El Mirage Valley, Lower Mojave, Harper Valley, and Lucerne Valley. Areas at medium-high risk include the Upper Mojave River, Irwin Subbasin, Fremont Valley, and Twentynine Palms. The proposed project has been mapped as being located in an area with low to medium subsidence potential by the San Bernardino Countywide Plan EIR. Thus, as the proposed project would (a) be located outside of the areas at high risk for subsidence within the Desert Region of the County, and (b) would only include the development of temporary structures, the project would have a less than significant potential to be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in onsite or offsite subsidence. According to the San Bernardino Countywide Plan EIR, Desert Regions have the highest potential for collapsible soils due to their aridity, the prevalence of both alluvial and wind- deposited soils, and soils with salts. As previously stated, project construction will not include any mass grading at the site, as the proposed project looks to keep the landscape in its natural state as much as possible. Thus, as only minor grading would be required for the Campground and driveway, and as structures would be temporary in nature, the potential for a significant impact to occur as a result of collapse at the project site would be less than significant. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.
- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project site is not located in an area that has been identified by the County Building and Safety Geologist as having the potential for expansive soils as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property. The soil on site consists of gravel sand which would require compaction and is filterable. Therefore, no adverse significant impacts have been identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required, and no mitigation measures are required.
- e) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project proposes to develop a dry Campground. The site presently has an existing septic tank that will not be utilized by the proposed project as portable toilets will be utilized instead. Therefore, impacts associated with the underlying soils' ability to support septic systems would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are required.

- f) **Less than Significant with Mitigation.** A significant impact may occur if grading or excavation activities would disturb paleontological resources within the project site. The project site is shown on Figure 5.4.-4 Paleontological Sensitivity-East Desert Region in the Countywide Plan EIR as low to high zone. The project site has been subject to previous ground disturbing activities that have affected the entirety of the project site, and as such, it follows that any paleontological resources that may have once been located on the project site could have been previously disturbed. However, the possibility of a paleontological discovery cannot be discounted. Accordingly, destruction of paleontological resources or unique geologic features during site-disturbing activities associated with construction of the proposed project is considered a potentially significant impact. Therefore, **Mitigation Measure GEO-1** is provided and would be implemented to ensure potential impacts during construction activities to paleontological resources or unique geologic features are reduced to a less than significant level.

MM-GEO-1: In the event that paleontological resources (fossil remains) are exposed during construction activities for the proposed project, all construction work occurring within 50 feet of the find shall immediately stop until a qualified paleontologist, as defined by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology's 2010 guidelines, can assess the nature and importance of the find. Depending on the significance of the find, the paleontologist may record the find and allow work to continue or recommend salvage and recovery of the resource. All recommendations will be made in accordance with the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology's 2010 guidelines and shall be subject to review and approval by the County of San Bernardino. Work in the area of the find may only resume upon approval of a qualified paleontologist.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with the inclusion of Mitigation Measure GEO-1.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS – Would the project:					
a)	Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials; Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Health Risk Assessment Report (Appendix A)

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would consist of development of a Campground. The proposed project is anticipated to generate GHG emissions from area sources, mobile sources, off-road equipment, waste disposal, water usage, and construction

equipment. Since the proposed project would not include any electrical, natural gas or water hook ups to utilities, operation of the proposed project would not utilize any energy from the grid.

The MDAQMD shares responsibility with CARB for ensuring that all state and federal GHG standards are achieved and maintained within its jurisdiction. The MDAQMD CEQA Guidelines provides a project level significance threshold of 100,000 tons of CO₂e per year for both construction and operational activities. The MDAQMD developed this threshold in order to comply with the GHG emission reductions required by AB 32.

The project's GHG emissions have been calculated with the CalEEMod model and the results is shown below in Table D.

Table D – Project Related Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions

Category	Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Metric Tons per Year)			
	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	CO ₂ e
Construction				
Total Construction Emissions	15.3	<0.01	<0.01	15.4
Amortized Construction Emissions¹ (30 Years)	0.51	<0.01	<0.01	0.51
Operations				
Mobile Sources²	34.5	<0.01	0.00	35.1
Area Sources³	0.19	<0.01	<0.01	0.19
Energy Usage⁴	0	0	0	0
Solid Waste⁵	1.00	0.10	0.00	3.49
Water and Wastewater⁶	0	0	0	0
Off-Road Equipment⁷	0.79	0.00	0.00	0.79
Total Operational Emissions	36.5	0.10	<0.01	39.6
Total Annual Emission (Construction & Operations)	37.0	0.10	<0.01	40.1
MDAQMD Threshold⁸				100,000
Exceed Thresholds?				No

Notes:

¹ Construction emissions amortized over 30 years as recommended in the SCAQMD GHG Working Group on November 19, 2009.

² Mobile sources consist of GHG emissions from vehicles.

³ Area sources consist of GHG emissions from consumer products, architectural coatings, and landscaping equipment.

⁴ Energy usage consists of GHG emissions from electricity natural gas usage. No utility hookups will be provided to the proposed project and generated onsite.

⁵ Waste includes the CO₂ and CH₄ emissions created from the solid waste placed in landfills.

⁶ Water includes GHG emissions from electricity used for transport of water and processing of wastewater.

⁷ Off-Road equipment was modeled based on one tractor operating 4 hours per day and 12 days per year.

⁸ Obtained from: <https://www.mdaqmd.ca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument?id=8510>.

Source: Appendix A

The data provided in Table D shows that the construction activities would create a total of 15.4 MTCO₂e, which equates to 0.51 MTCO₂e per year, when amortized over 30 years. Table D also shows that operational activities would create 39.6 MTCO₂e per year and when combined with the amortized construction emissions, the proposed project would create a total of 40.1 MTCO₂e per year, which is well below the MDAQMD threshold of 100,000 MTCO₂e per year. Therefore, a less than significant generation of greenhouse gas emissions would occur from development of the proposed project. Impacts would be less than significant.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. The

applicable plan for the proposed project is the County of San Bernardino Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan (GHG Plan), September 2011. In addition, the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Development Review Processes (GHG Review Processes), prepared for the County of San Bernardino, updated March 2015, provide direction for conformity of new development projects to the GHG Plan. The GHG Review Processes determined that projects that do not exceed 3,000 MTCO₂e per year will be consistent with the GHG Plan and determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG emissions. For projects that exceed 3,000 MTCO₂e per year of GHG emissions, the GHG Review Processes has determined that implementation of 100 or greater points associated with mitigation measures listed on its Screen Tables, will adequately reduce the proposed project's GHG emissions, when considered with other future development and existing development to allow the County to meet its 2020 target GHG reductions and support reductions in GHG emissions beyond 2020.

As shown in Impact a) above, the proposed project would create 40.1 MTCO₂e per year, which is well below the 3,000 MTCO₂e per year threshold provided in the GHG Review Processes.

Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Impacts would be less than significant.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS – Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project includes the request for a Conditional Use Permit to allow for the development and operation of a dry Campground. Hazardous or toxic

materials transported in association with construction may include items such as oils, paints, and fuels. All materials required during construction would be kept in compliance with State and local regulations. With implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and compliance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations including all Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) regulations, potential impacts to the public or the environment from the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials during construction are considered to be less than significant. The operational activities of the Campground would not require routine transport or use of hazardous materials. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** As stated in response (a) above, hazardous or toxic materials transported in association with construction of the proposed project may include items such as oils, paints, and fuels. All materials required during construction would be kept in compliance with State and local regulations. The transport of such materials would be in accordance with State and federal regulations. Operation activities would continue to include standard maintenance (i.e., landscape upkeep and similar activities) involving the use of commercially available products (e.g., pesticides, herbicides, gas, oil, paint, etc.) the use of which would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accidental release of hazardous materials into the environment. With implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and compliance with all applicable regulations, potential impacts from the use of hazardous materials would be less than significant. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.
- c) **No Impact.** The nearest school to the project site is Boston School (62126 Canterbury Street), which is located approximately 4.5 miles south of the project site and Joshue Tree Elementary School (4950 Sunburst Avenue), which is located approximately 6 miles from the project site. Further, the project would neither create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, nor would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials. Therefore, no impacts associated with emitting or handling hazardous materials within 0.25 miles of a school would occur.
- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project site is not on the list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control's EnviroStor data management system⁵. EnviroStor tracks cleanup, permitting, enforcement and investigation efforts at hazardous waste facilities and sites with known or suspected contamination issues. No hazardous materials sites are located within or in the vicinity of the Project site. Additionally, no sites were identified in the Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR) Radius Map Report and historical research within the "Area of Concern" that were considered to pose a potential VEC at the subject property based on the Tier 1 Evaluation. Therefore, no impacts associated with being located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962. Would occur and no mitigation measures would be required.
- e) **No Impact.** The nearest operational airport to the project site is Yucca Valley Airport, which is located approximately 10 southwest, well outside of the project area. Therefore, no impacts associated with airport hazards would occur and no mitigation measures would be required.

⁵ https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/search?CMD=search&city=Fontana&zip=&county=&case_number=&business_name=&FEDERAL_SUPERFUND=True&STATE_RESPONSE=True&VOLUNTARY_CLEANUP=True&SCHOOL_CLEANUP=True&CORRECTIVE_ACTION=True&tiered_permit=True&evaluation=True&operating=True&post_closure=True&non_operating=True&inspections=True&inspections_other=True

- f) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project is not anticipated to interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. As shown on the Evacuation Route Map prepared for the San Bernardino Countywide Plan, the adopted evacuation route is Highway 62 to the south of the project site. Development at this location would not interfere with access to any emergency evacuation routes, as the proposed project will be constructed entirely within the boundaries of the project site. The proposed project will not experience substantial conflicts with surrounding traffic. There is a less than significant potential for the development of the project to physically interfere with any adopted emergency response plans, or evacuation plans, and no mitigation measures are required.
- g) **Less than Significant Impact.** As identified on San Bernardino Countywide Plan Map, HZ-5 Fire Hazard Severity Zones, the subject property and surrounding area is identified as having a moderate potential for wildland fires. Moderate, High, and Very High are of concern for residents. The Project site occurs in a region that is developed primarily in a rural manner. The proposed project consists of only 15 dry campsites, as opposed to residences with long-term occupants. Please note that the proposed project does not allow for fire pits. Proposed on-site improvements shall comply with the current Uniform Fire Code requirements and all applicable statutes, codes, ordinances, and standards of the San Bernardino County Fire Department. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands, and no mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY - Would the project:					
a)	Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b)	Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c)	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
	i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
	ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or offsite;	☐	☐	☒	☐
	iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of runoff; or	☐	☐	☒	☐
	iv. impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d)	In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project is located outside of the MS 4 (Municipal Storm Water Program) Map boundaries that define regulated storm water and discharge of storm water. The amount of impervious surface is relatively small with only an existing cabin and existing restroom onsite, along with site paving along identified internal driveways, and 15 dry campsites. The incremental increase in storm water discharge due to these impervious surfaces must be retained on-site. The proposed project does not include a washroom.

The proposed project would disturb more than one-acre and therefore would be subject to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements. The State of California is authorized to administer various aspects of the NPDES. Construction activities covered under the State's General Construction Permit include removal of vegetation, grading, excavating, or any other activity that causes the disturbance of one-acre or more. The General Construction Permit requires recipients to reduce or eliminate non-storm water discharges into storm water systems, and to develop and implement a SWPPP. The amount of roadway paving and parking area, combined with the amount of land disturbed by buildings is potentially more than one acre. This amount of disturbance would be evaluated through the completion of a SWPPP, prior to issuance of a building permit. This is a standard requirement and would address potential environmental effects. Therefore, the project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality and water quality impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a substantial lowering of the local groundwater table level. Additionally, the proposed project will not indirectly deplete groundwater supplies as the project is a dry campsite that would not be connected to municipal water service or an onsite well. The proposed project is not anticipated to significantly reduce the amount of groundwater recharge because most of the site will remain water pervious after development. The proposed development of the project will therefore not substantially interrupt the existing percolation of the site, or any flow of groundwater under the project site. Accordingly, implementation of the proposed project impact to groundwater would be less than significant and no mitigation measures would be required.
- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed drainage improvements for the site would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.
- I. The proposed project will make minor modifications to the project site and is not forecast to include substantial impervious areas onsite. Any surface runoff in the future is not forecast to generate concentrated flows that could result in substantial erosion or siltation, either onsite or downstream (off-site). The design of the internal access drives would conform to existing site topography and would not create an erosive drainage pattern. As such, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required. Therefore, impacts associated with altering the existing drainage pattern of the project site would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are required.
 - II. The Project area is not served by a stormwater system and, as such, this proposed project would not exceed the capacity of that system. The increase in impervious surfaces would generate additional water runoff. However, the installation of retention facilities adequate to capture this additional volume of runoff and the size of the property allowing adequate opportunity for percolation, would combine to minimize the effect of additional runoff. Therefore, impacts associated with altering the existing drainage pattern of the project site would be less than significant and no mitigation measures would be required.
 - III. There are no drainage systems in the project area. The proposed project will make minor modifications to the project site and is not forecast to increase storm water runoff substantially on the site or downstream. The proposed project will not substantially increase the amount or rate of future. Therefore, impacts associated with altering the

existing drainage pattern of the project site would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are required.

- IV. Improvements to the site are relatively minimal due to the size of the property. No notable drainage courses exist through the property, with the site exhibiting a potential sheet flow condition due to its uniform topographic condition within a broad alluvial fan. Therefore, with the interior roadway design adhering to existing topography and the use of on-site retention, the proposed project is not anticipated to impede or redirect flood flows. Therefore, impacts associated with flooding would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are required.

- d) **No Impact.** Implementation of the project will not expose people or structures to a significant risk of inundation by seiche, tsunami, or other flood hazards. According to the Countywide Plan Dam & Basin Hazards Map, the project is not located within the limit of flooded area related to a nearby dam. The project is located more than 50 miles from the Pacific Ocean, which eliminates the potential for a tsunami to impact the project area. Additionally, a seiche would not occur within the vicinity of the project because no lakes or enclosed bodies of water exist near the site that could generate such an event. Accordingly, the Project would not risk the release of pollutants due to inundation. No impact would occur.
- e) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project site is located within the Ames Valley Groundwater Basin, which is categorized by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) as a very low priority basin⁶. The SGMA requires only medium and high priority basins to form groundwater sustainability agencies, develop groundwater sustainability plans, and manage groundwater for long-term sustainability. Therefore, the Ames Valley does not require a sustainable groundwater management plan. This project has a minimal potential to generate pollutants that could degrade surface water and/or groundwater or alter percolation at the project site. Therefore, it has a negligible potential to obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan (in this case the applicable plan is that of the Colorado River Basin Region). Since the site will have minimal impermeable surface area, it will not substantially alter groundwater percolation on site or any sustainable groundwater management plan in the project area. Therefore, a less than significant impact will occur, and no mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

⁶ Accessed 11-4-2024: <https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/bp-dashboard/final/>

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XI.	LAND USE AND PLANNING - Would the project:				
a)	Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b)	Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☒	☐

<i>SUBSTANTIATION:</i>
<i>San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials</i>

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project is located on an approximate 7.5-acre site in the northern portion of the unincorporated Community of Joshua Tree. There are scattered residences located in the project area, but the proposed project will be located on a single, existing parcel of land that will not create any divisions within this established community. Refer to the Figure 1, which depicts the project's regional and site-specific location. The project site is zoned for Rural Living use and the Countywide Plan land use designation is Rural Living. The development of the proposed project would not conflict with the Rural Living land use designation, as it is a conditionally allowed use within this land use designation. Consequently, the development of the project site with the proposed use will not divide any established community in any way. Therefore, no impacts associated with division of an existing community would occur, and no mitigation measures are required.
- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project site is zoned for Rural Living use and the San Bernardino Countywide Plan land use designation is Rural Living. The County's recently approved Countywide Plan lists the following Goals and Policies under the Land Use Element.
- Goal LU-1: Growth and development that builds thriving communities, contributes to our Complete County, and is fiscally sustainable.
 - Policy LU-1.2 Infill Development
 - Policy LU-1.5 Development Impact Fees
 - Goal LU-2 Land Use Mix and Compatibility: An arrangement of land uses that balances the lifestyle of existing residents, the needs of future generations, opportunities for commercial and industrial development, and the value of the natural environment.
 - Policy LU-2.1: Compatibility with existing uses
 - Policy LU-2.2: Compatibility with planned uses
 - Policy LU-2.3: Compatibility with natural environment
 - Policy LU-2.4: Land Use Map consistency
 - Policy LU-2.6: Coordination with adjacent entities
 - Goal LU-4 Community Design: Preservation and enhancement of unique community identities and their relationship with the natural environment.

- Policy LU-4.1: Context-sensitive design in the Mountain/Desert regions Policy LU-4.3: Native or drought-tolerant landscaping
- Policy LU-4.5: Community identity
- Policy LU-4.7: Dark skies

The proposed project would be consistent with the above goals and policies. A review of all other General Plan Goals (Housing Element, Infrastructure & Utilities Element, Transportation & Mobility Element, Natural Resources Element, Renewable Energy & Conservation Element, Cultural Resources Element, Hazards Element, Personal & Property Protection Element, Economic Development Element, and Health & Wellness Element) indicates that the proposed project is consistent with all applicable Goals, often with mitigation, as demonstrated by the findings in the pertinent sections of this Initial Study. The proposed project can be implemented without significant effects on the circulation system; infrastructure related to water and electricity is not needed for the dry Campground; it can meet the requirements set forth in the Economic Development Element pertaining to new revenue generating development; it will not generate significant air emissions or GHG emissions; it will meet noise design requirements; it can meet all Safety Element requirements; and it implements the land use compatibility requirements of the Health and Wellness Element. Therefore, the implementation of this project at this site will be consistent with surrounding land uses, and current use of the site. The project would therefore have a less than significant potential to conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect and mitigation measures would be required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XII.	MINERAL RESOURCES - Would the project:				

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) | Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that will be of value to the region and the residents of the state? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) | Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

SUBSTANTIATION:	(Check ☐ if project is located within the Mineral Resource Zone Overlay):
San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials	

- a, b) **No Impact.** According to the County of San Bernardino Countywide Policy Map NR-4 Mineral Resource Zones, the project site is not mapped within a Mineral Resources Zone (Open File Report Area) as designated by the State of California Department of Conservation, Mineral Land Classification map. The proposed project is furthermore not located within an area designated by the State Mining and Geology Board in 1987 or 2013 as containing mineral resources. Given that the proposed project is not located on a delineated state or regionally significant site, and that no mineral extraction currently occurs or is known to have ever occurred on the property or project vicinity, it is anticipated that the development of the site would have a less than significant potential to result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state. Therefore, the project will not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that will be of value to the region and the residents of the state nor result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan and no mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XIII. NOISE - Would the project result in:				

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or Ground borne noise levels? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if the project is located in the Noise Hazard Overlay District ☐ or is subject to severe noise levels according to the General Plan Noise Element ☐):

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials; Noise Report (Appendix D)

a) Less than Significant Impact.

Construction Noise Impacts

The construction activities for the proposed project are anticipated to include site preparation and grading of approximately a quarter of the 7.5 gross acre project site (approximately three quarters of the project site will be undisturbed), building construction of the Campground areas (shade structures and picnic tables), limited paving, and application of architectural coatings. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are residents at the single-family home located as near as 230 feet west of the project site. There are also single-family homes located as near as 510 feet north of the project site and 410 feet southwest of the project site.

Section 83.01.080(g)(3) of the County's Municipal Code allows construction noise to exceed the County noise standards provided that construction activities occur between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., except Sundays and Federal holidays. However, the County construction noise standards do not provide any limits to the noise levels that may be created from construction activities and even with adherence to the County standards, the resultant construction noise levels may result in a significant substantial temporary noise increase to the nearby residents.

In order to determine if the proposed construction activities would create a significant substantial

temporary noise increase, the construction noise standards provided in the FTA Manual (FTA, 2018), has been utilized, since this is the only guidance document from a government agency that defines what constitutes a significant construction noise impact from implementing a project. The FTA Manual details that a significant construction noise impact would occur if construction noise exceeds 80 dBA Leq over an 8-hour workday at any of the nearby homes.

Construction noise impacts to the nearby sensitive receptors have been calculated through use of the RCNM and the parameters and assumptions are detailed above. The results are shown below in Table F.

Table F – Construction Noise Levels at the Nearby Homes

Construction Phase	Construction Noise Level (dBA Leq) at:		
	Nearest Home to West ¹	Nearest Home to North ²	Nearest Homes to Southwest ³
Site Preparation	59	56	58
Grading	60	57	59
Building Construction	63	60	62
Paving	60	57	60
Painting	53	49	52
FTA Construction Noise Threshold⁴	80	80	80
Exceed Threshold?	No	No	No

¹ The nearest home to the west is located as near as 570 feet from the middle of project site.

² The nearest home to the north is located as near as 820 feet from the middle of project site.

³ The nearest home to the southwest is located as near as 600 feet from the middle of project site.

⁴ The FTA Construction noise threshold for residential uses obtained from the FTA Manual (FTA, 2018).

Source: Appendix D

Table F shows that the greatest noise impacts would be as high as 63 dBA Leq during the building construction phase at the nearest home to the west. All calculated construction noise levels shown in Table F are within the FTA daytime construction noise standard of 80 dBA averaged over eight hours. Therefore, through adherence to the limitation of allowable construction times provided in Section 83.01.080(g)(3) of the Municipal Code, construction-related noise levels would not exceed any standards established in the General Plan or Noise Ordinance nor would construction activities create a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels from construction of the proposed project. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures would be required.

Roadway Vehicular Noise

Vehicle noise is a combination of the noise produced by the engine, exhaust and tires. The level of traffic noise depends on three primary factors (1) the volume of traffic, (2) the speed of traffic, and (3) the number of trucks in the flow of traffic. The proposed project does not propose any uses that would require a substantial number of truck trips and the proposed project would not alter the speed limit on any existing roadway so the proposed project's potential offsite noise impacts have been focused on the noise impacts associated with the change of volume of traffic that would occur with development of the proposed project.

The General Plan Noise Element Goal N1, requires the avoidance of excessive noise exposure to noise sensitive land uses. However, the General Plan does not quantify what is a significant roadway noise increase. As such, the roadway noise threshold utilized in the *San Bernardino Countywide Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report* (Countywide Plan DEIR), has been utilized, which details that a significant noise increase would occur when the traffic noise increases by 3 dBA CNEL.

According to the Air Quality Memo (Vista Environmental, 2024), the proposed project is anticipated to generate 22 daily vehicle trips, at full occupancy. According to the *Joshua Tree Community Plan*, adopted March 13, 2007, the nearest roadway that was analyzed is Border Avenue that is anticipated to have 1,798 average daily trips by the year 2030. The proposed project would contribute up to 1.2 percent of the daily trips on Border Avenue. In order for project-generated vehicular traffic to increase the noise level on any of the nearby roadways by 3 dB, the ADT would have to double, or by 1.5 dB, the ADT would have to increase by 50 percent. As such, the proposed project's roadway noise impacts would be well below the County's 3 dBA roadway noise increase threshold. Therefore, operational roadway noise impacts to the nearby sensitive receptors would be less than significant and no mitigation measures would be required.

Onsite Noise Impacts

The operation of the proposed project may create an increase in onsite noise levels from the proposed Campground. Section 83.01.080(c) of the County's Development Code limits the noise created from stationary sources, such as campsites to 55 dBA between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. and to 45 dBA between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. at the nearby homes.

In order to determine the noise impacts from the operation of the Campground, a reference noise measurement of was taken at 50 feet from campsites at San Simeon Creek Campground, which has 115 campsites and as such represents a worst-case or conservative reference for the proposed project that is proposing 15 campsites. The reference noise measurement and associated photo index of the noise measurement is attached to this Memo.

The noise levels at the nearby sensitive receptors were calculated based on standard geometric spreading of noise, which provides an attenuation rate of 6 dB per doubling the distance between source and receptor. The operational noise levels were calculated at representative sensitive receptors and the results are shown in Table G.

Table G – Onsite Operational Noise Levels at the Nearby Sensitive Receptors

Noise Source	Operational Noise Levels ¹ (dBA Leq) at:		
	Nearest Home to West ²	Nearest Home to North ³	Nearest Homes to Southwest ⁴
Campsites ⁵	30	27	28
County Noise Standards ⁶ (Day/Night)	55/45	55/45	55/45
Exceed Standards?	No/No	No/No	No/No

Notes:

¹ The noise levels were calculated through use of standard geometric spreading of noise from a point source with a drop-off rate of 6 dB for each doubling of the distance between the source and receiver.

² The nearest home to west is as near as 340 feet from the nearest campsite.

³ The nearest home to north is as near as 535 feet from the nearest campsite.

⁴ The nearest home to southwest is as near as 460 feet from the nearest campsite.

⁵ The campsites are based on a reference noise measurement of 47.1 dBA at 50 feet.

⁶ From Section 83.01.080 of the County's Development Code

Table G shows that the proposed project's onsite operational noise from the proposed Campground would not exceed either the daytime or nighttime County residential noise standards for stationary noise sources. Therefore, operational onsite noise impacts would be less than significant.

b) **Less than Significant Impact.**

Construction-Related Vibration Impacts

The construction activities for the proposed project are anticipated to include site preparation and grading of approximately a quarter of the 7.5 gross acre project site (approximately three quarters of the project site will be undisturbed), building construction of the Campground areas (shade structures and picnic tables), limited paving, and application of architectural coatings. Vibration impacts from construction activities associated with the proposed project would typically be created from the operation of heavy off-road equipment. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are residents at the single-family home located as near as 230 feet west of the project site.

Section 83.01.090 of the County's Municipal Code restricts the creation of vibration which produces a particle velocity greater than 0.2 inch-per-second PPV. The project applicant has stated that no large earthmoving equipment would be utilized during construction of the project. From the equipment list provided in the FTA Manual (FTA, 2018) with available vibration data, a small bulldozer would be the closest fit to the anticipated equipment that would be used, which creates a vibration level of 0.003 inch per second PPV at 25 feet. Based on typical propagation rates, the vibration level at the nearest offsite structure (230 feet away) would be 0.0003 inch per second PPV. The vibration level at the nearest home would be below the County's 0.2 inch per second PPV threshold. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures would be required.

Operations-Related Vibration Impacts

The proposed project would consist of the development of a Campground. The on-going operation of the proposed project would not include the operation of any known vibration sources, other than automobiles, which generate only nominal levels of vibration. Therefore, a less than significant vibration impact is anticipated from operation of the proposed project and no mitigation measures would be required.

- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels from aircraft. The nearest airport is the Yucca Valley Airport that is located as near as 9.6 miles southwest of the project site. The project site is located outside of the 60 dBA CNEL noise contours of this Airport. Therefore, the proposed project would not be exposed to excessive aircraft noise. No impacts would occur from aircraft noise.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING - Would the project:					
a)	Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b)	Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials.

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** This project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, directly or indirectly. No residential use is proposed as part of the project and there would be no direct population growth. The proposed project would not induce population growth or the development of new homes or roads. Local contractors will be used to construct the proposed project, which will not require additional temporary housing onsite. Therefore, no impacts would occur and no mitigation is required.
- b) **No Impact.** There are no residences within the project site, as the project site is vacant containing non-native and native vegetation and weeds. No persons currently reside on the site and therefore, implementation of the proposed project will not displace substantial numbers of existing housing, or persons necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Thus, no impacts will occur, and no mitigation is required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XV. PUBLIC SERVICES				

- a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire Protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Police Protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Other Public Facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **Fire Protection. Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project site is served by the San Bernardino County Fire Department, and the nearest Fire Station to the proposed project site is the Yucca Valley Station (42) located about approximately 6 miles to the southwest of the project site. The San Bernardino County Fire Department provides fire protection, fire prevention, and emergency medical services to the project area. The proposed project would result in minimal potential for random emergency events during operations, because the majority of the activities at the site would be related to recreation and there will be minimal structures at the site. Based on the above information, the proposed project does not pose a significant fire or emergency response hazard, nor is the proposed project forecast to cause a significant demand for fire protection services. The proposed project includes a dry Campground. There is no water service provided to the site. Additionally, no new structures are proposed for the project site. Furthermore, the proposed project would not induce substantial population within the County such that a significantly greater demand on fire protection services would be required. A less-than-significant impact is anticipated, and no mitigation measures would be required.

Police Protection. Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project receives police services through the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. The Department enforces local, state, and federal laws; performs investigations and makes arrests; administers emergency medical treatment; and responds to County emergencies. The project site is served by the Morongo Basin Station, located at 6527 White Feather Road, approximately 8 miles from the project site. The proposed project will not include the kind of uses or activities that would likely attract criminal activity, except for random trespass and/or theft; however, any random trespass is unlikely given that the type of activities proposed would not typically attract criminal activities. Furthermore, the proposed project would not induce substantial population within the County such that a significantly greater demand on police services would be required. Therefore, a less-than-

significant impact is anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

Schools. No Impact. This project would not have a significant impact on schools because this project would not generate additional demand for school services. No new residences are proposed with this project; therefore, there would not be any new students. No impact is anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

Parks. No Impact. The proposed project will not directly add to the existing demand on public recreational facilities. The project is not anticipated to generate any new direct demand for parks within the County, as this project would have a minimal potential to induce local population growth within the County. The proposed project, through the hosting of guests as part of the proposed Campground, will continue to contribute to and increase demand for recreational facilities, in the sense that the Joshua Tree National Park. Thus, the fifteen campground site guests (approximately 30 guest) would contribute to support of the forecast increased demand for recreation and park visitation of the Joshua Tree National Park. Joshua Tree National Park includes 792,623 acres. The park allows rock climbing, backpacking, camping, hiking, horseback riding, geologic sight-seeing, birding, wildlife viewing, and stargazing. According to the National Park Service, Joshua Tree attracts over three million visitors a year. The National Park Service is primarily funded by Congress. Joshua Tree National Park charges visitors to enter the park ranging from fifteen dollars to fifty-five dollars. No other nearby parks would be impacted by the proposed project, as there are no other parks in close proximity to the project site. As such, existing federal and state, and local regulations pertaining to parkland dedication and maintenance assessed by the above governmental entities would mitigate potential adverse impacts to the environment that may result from the increased demand for park and recreation services within the County as a result of implementation of the proposed project. Therefore, this project would not have a significant impact on countywide parks. No impact is anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

Other Public Facilities. No Impact. This project is not anticipated to impact other public facilities because the project would not result in the need for new or expanded public facilities. No new buildings or residences that would generate a demand for other public services are proposed by this project. No impact is anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XVI.	RECREATION				

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) | Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility will occur or be accelerated? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| b) | Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

<i>SUBSTANTIATION:</i>
<i>San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials</i>

- a) **No Impact.** As previously discussed in Section XIV, Population and Housing and Section XV, Public Services, this project will not contribute to an increase in the population beyond that already allowed or planned for by local and regional planning documents. The proposed project, through the hosting of guests as part of the proposed Campground, will continue to contribute to and increase demand for recreational facilities, in the sense that the Joshua Tree National Park. Thus, the fifteen campground site guests (approximately 30 guest) would contribute to support of the forecast increased demand for recreation and park visitation of the Joshua Tree National Park. Joshua Tree National Park includes 792,623 acres. The park allows rock climbing, backpacking, camping, hiking, horseback riding, geologic sight- seeing, birding, wildlife viewing, and stargazing. According to the National Park Service, Joshua Tree attracts over three million visitors a year. The National Park Service is primarily funded by Congress. Joshua Tree National Park charges visitors to enter the park ranging from fifteen dollars to fifty-five dollars. No other nearby parks would be impacted by the proposed project, as there are no other parks in close proximity to the project site. As such, existing federal and state, and local regulations pertaining to parkland dedication and maintenance assessed by the above governmental entities would mitigate potential adverse impacts to the environment that may result from the increased demand for park and recreation services within the County as a result of implementation of the proposed project. The proposed project will not increase the use of recreational facilities that would result in the physical deterioration of other surrounding facilities. No impact is forecast, and no mitigation is required.
- b) **No Impact.** The project does not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. The proposed project will occur within a vacant site, that has not been designated for recreational use nor does it contain recreational uses at present. Furthermore, the proposed project is not expected to induce population growth as maintenance workers will only visit on an as needed basis, and visitors will only stay at the Campground sporadically and temporarily. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated to occur under this issue, and no mitigation is required.

The proposed project is not forecast to directly add to the existing demand on local public

park or recreational facilities. The proposed project is not anticipated to generate any new direct demand for other parks within the County, as this project would have no potential to induce local population growth. No other nearby parks would be impacted by the proposed project, as there are no other parks in close proximity to the project site. The proposed project will have a less than significant impact on parks and recreation facilities.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XVII. TRANSPORTATION – Would the project:					
a)	Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c)	Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d)	Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** As a small-scale project with a limited number of guest space, the proposed project would not cause a notable increase in traffic during operations. Local roads would only be minimally affected during temporary construction activities. The San Bernardino County traffic study guidelines require the preparation of a traffic study if a proposal generates 100 or more peak hour trips without consideration of pass-by trips during any peak hour. According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Trip Generation Manual, Tenth Edition, ITE Land Use Code 416 for Campgrounds found that an occupied campsite would generate 0.48 daily trips in the AM Peak Hour and 0.98 daily trips in the PM Peak Hour, or 1.46 daily trips per campsite, which equates 21.9 daily trips generated by the proposed project at full occupancy. According to the County of San Bernardino Transportation Impact Study Guidelines, dated July 9, 2019, if a project generates less than 100 peak hour trips, a traffic analysis shall not be required. The 21.9 daily trips generated by the Project would be below the County's threshold. The proposed project does not propose any modifications to any pedestrian or bicycle facilities, and would not interfere with any future plans as none are located in the project vicinity. Additionally, no public transit stations are located in close proximity to the project site. Therefore, project operation would not affect public transit operation. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. Therefore, a less than significant impact occurs, and no mitigation measures are required.
- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The County of San Bernardino Transportation Impact Study Guidelines, dated July 9, 2019, provides recommendations in the form of thresholds of

significance and methodology for identifying VMT-related impacts. The proposed project is subject to a VMT analysis and will adhere to the recommendations and practices described in the City's guidelines. The County Guidelines provide details on appropriate criteria that can be used to identify when a proposed land use project is anticipated to result in a less than significant impact without conducting a more detailed analysis. Screening thresholds are broken into the following types:

- Project Type Screening
- Transit Priority Area (TPA) Screening
- Low VMT Area

To determine if the project is located within a Transit Priority Area (TPA) or a low VMT generating area, the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA)'s web-based VMT screening tool was utilized. The proposed project appears to meet the Project Type Screening for the following reasons: the County Guidelines notes smaller projects that generate fewer than 110 trips per day are assumed to cause a less than significant VMT impact. The proposed project is anticipated to result in less than 30 round-trips per day, which would be less than the 110 trip per day significance threshold. As such, the project would have a less than significant impact on VMT and is exempt from a full project-level VMT assessment. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur, and no mitigation measures are required.

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would occur entirely within the project site boundaries. Construction activities would not occur within the adjacent roadways to the project site. There are no uses that would be impacted by construction equipment or construction trips on the adjacent roadways. Trucks delivering equipment can enter the site without major conflicts with the flow of traffic on the roadways used to access the site. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to comply with all applicable fire code and ordinance requirements for construction and access to the site. Emergency response and evacuation procedures would be coordinated with the County, as well as the local police and fire departments. Therefore, impacts associated with hazardous design features would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are required.
- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** The site incorporates an open design which allows access during a possible emergency event. Access to ingress and egress points, including turnaround areas, are of adequate width and design and have received preliminary approval from the County Fire Department during their review of the Project. Therefore, impacts associated with an emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES				
a) Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Cultural Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), South Central Coast Information Center, California State University, Fullerton; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **No Impact.** A pedestrian field survey of the project site was performed to determine if there were any features on the project site eligible for listing on a historic register. In addition, an archival records search was performed at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) at California State University, Fullerton in order to identify any previously recorded archaeological sites within the Project site boundaries or in the immediate vicinity. Additionally, the Sacred Lands Files (SLFs) by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) were reviewed. No tribal cultural resources were observed on the project site, no tribal cultural resources were previously recorded on the project site or in the immediate area. Accordingly, implementation of the proposed project would not impact a tribal cultural resource eligible for listing on a historic register and no mitigation measures would be required.
- b) **Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation.** Assembly Bill (AB) 52 took effect on July 1, 2015. AB 52 requires a lead agency to make its best efforts to avoid, preserve, and protect tribal cultural resources. Prior to the release of the CEQA document for a project, AB 52 requires the lead agency to initiate consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project if: (1) the California Native American tribe requested the lead agency, in writing, to be informed by the lead agency through formal notification of proposed projects located in the geographic area that is

traditionally and culturally affiliated with the tribe, and (2) the California Native American tribe responds, in writing, within 30 days of receipt of the formal notification, and requests the consultation.

The project site consists mostly of vacant land with three existing structures located on the eastern portion of the site. The site has a disturbed habitat with sparse ornamental and native vegetation and creosote bush scrub on the northern portion of the site. There is evidence of previous grading activities within the disturbed habitat on project site. The development and construction activities shall have minor excavation of subsurface soils found on the project site for grading of campsite and road.

The County sent project notification letters to California Native American tribes, which had previously submitted general consultation request letters pursuant to 21080.3.1(d) of the Public Resources Code. Each recipient was provided a brief description of the proposed project and its location, the lead agency contacts information, and a notification that the tribe has 30 days to request consultation. At the time of this writing no comment letters have been received. However, the following **Mitigation Measure TCR-1 through TCR-4** have been provided as part of the proposed project to ensure that impacts to any unknown TCRs would remain less than significant.

MM TCR-1: Appropriate consulting Tribe(s) shall be contacted, of any pre-contact cultural resources discovered during project implementation, and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input within 48 hours with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2018), a cultural resource Monitoring and Treatment Plan shall be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with consulting Tribe(s), and all subsequent finds shall be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for a monitor to be present that represents consulting Tribe(s) for the remainder of the project, should Tribe(s) elect to place a monitor on-site at the Tribe's cost. As necessary, and in accordance with Project-Specific consultations conducted with the NAHC and various Tribal entities in association with AB52, SB18, and/or any other legal guidelines relating to Native American consultations may change to reflect Project-Specific needs and requirements.

MM TCR-2: If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100- foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to MM GEO-1 and State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code shall be enforced for the duration of the project.

MM TCR-3: Only the NAHC Designated MLD Tribal representative shall make all future decisions regarding the treatment of human remains of Native American origin within the response times outlined below. The MLD shall determine the disposition and treatment of Native American human remains and any associated grave goods following Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) protocols, and what constitutes "appropriate dignity" as that term is used in the applicable statutes and in the Tribe's customs and traditions. The MLD or his/her designee shall complete an inspection and provide written recommendations to the DPW and the landowner (if different than the DPW) within forty-eight (48) hours of being granted access to the site. If the descendant does not make recommendations within 48 hours, the landowner shall re-inter the remains in a secure area of the property where there will be no further disturbance. Should the landowner not accept the descendant's recommendations, either the owner or the MLD may request mediation by NAHC. According to the California Health and Safety Code, six (6) or more human burials at

one (1) location constitute a cemetery (Section 8100), and willful disturbance of human remains in a cemetery is a felony (Section 7052).

MM TCR-4: Any and all archaeological/cultural documents as related to documented tribal cultural resources created as a part of the project (isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be disseminated to appropriate consulting Tribe(s) in the form of an un-redacted report (containing DPR forms). The Lead Agency and/or applicant shall, in good faith, consult with the appropriate Tribe(s) until construction completion of the project and completion of any measures imposed to protect resources.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with the implementation of MM TCR-1 through MM TCR-4.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XIX.	UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS - Would the project:				
a)	Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c)	Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the Project that it has adequate capacity to serve the Project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d)	Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e)	Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials

a&b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not require new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage. The project site does already include an existing septic tank that supports the existing uses and not the proposed project. The proposed Campground will utilize portable toilets. The proposed project would not generate excess waste nor impact the capacity of local infrastructure.

Wastewater

The proposed Campground will utilize portable toilets for the campers. The project site has an existing septic tank that supports the existing uses on the site.

Water

The proposed project includes a dry campground site. Water will not be provided to the site. The project would utilize water during construction of the campsite pads and road for dust suppression. Water would be trucked to the project site from an off-site location. Project construction and operation would not utilize water facilities, and no construction or relocation of water facilities would cause a significant environmental effect. Therefore, the proposed project would have less than significant impacts to water. Given that the project would not require the construction of new or expansion of existing wastewater treatment facilities, the project would have no impact on water facilities and would not impact water supplies of water purveyors in the area. No mitigation measures would be required.

Stormwater

There is no stormwater management system required because it is not anticipated that stormwater will run-off from the site, as all the stormwater will percolate through pervious surfaces of the natural desert sand. Therefore, stormwater will be adequately managed on site and as such, development of the project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded stormwater facilities. Impacts are less than significant.

Other Wet and Dry Utilities

The proposed project does not provide electricity to the project site. The minimal dark sky approved lighting provided with the proposed project shall be solar. Therefore, development of the project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded electric power facilities. Impacts are less than significant. Development of the proposed project would not create a demand for natural gas and would not be connected to any natural gas distribution system. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded natural gas facilities.

- c) **No Impact.** The project would not result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments, because no municipal wastewater providers exist in the area, so none serve the project site. The project will be served by portable toilets. As such, no determination of adequate capacity by a wastewater treatment provider is necessary to accommodate the project and no mitigation measures would be required.
- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** Private trash hauling companies collect solid waste from unincorporated areas of the County under franchise agreements with the County. Burrtec Waste Company currently provides residential and commercial waste collection and recycling programs under a franchise agreement with the Eastern Desert Region of Joshua Tree, Twentynine Palms, and Yucca Valley. The project site currently has dumpster service provided from Burrtec. According to the San Bernardino Countywide General Plan EIR, after waste is collected, it is delivered to the Landers Sanitary Landfill. The Landers Sanitary Landfill has adequate capacity to handle the waste generated at the Campground.

According to the CalRecycle, the maximum permitted capacity of Landers Sanitary Landfill is 13,983,500 Cubic Yards (CY), while its remaining capacity is 11,148,100 CY; the Landers Sanitary Landfill can accept 1,200 tons per day. The amount of solid waste produced by the project would represent a nominal percentage of the land facility's permitted daily throughput and an equally small increase in the amount of solid waste processed at the facility per year. All collection, transportation, and disposal of any solid waste generated by the project would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations. In particular, AB 939 requires that at least 50% of solid waste

generated by a jurisdiction be diverted from landfill disposal through source reduction, recycling, or composting. Cities, counties, and regional agencies are required to develop a waste management plan that would achieve a 50% diversion from landfills.

As required by existing regulations, any hazardous materials collected on the project site during construction, or operational activities would be transported and disposed of by a permitted and licensed hazardous materials service provider at a facility permitted to accept such hazardous materials. Therefore, impacts associated with permitted landfill capacity and solid waste statutes and regulations would be less than significant and no mitigation measures would be required.

- e) **Less than Significant Impact.** The California Integrated Waste Management Act (AB 939), signed into law in 1989, established an integrated waste management system that focused on source reduction, recycling, composting, and land disposal of waste. In addition, the bill established a 50 percent waste reduction requirement for cities and counties by the year 2000, along with a process to ensure environmentally safe disposal of waste that could not be diverted. Per the requirements of the Integrated Waste Management Act, the County adopted the 1995 Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP) (Amended 2018). The CIWMP outlines the goals, policies, and programs the County implements to create an integrated and cost-effective waste management system that complies with the provisions of AB 939 and its diversion mandates. To assist the County in achieving the mandated goals of the Integrated Waste Management Act, the Project's building tenant(s) would be required to work with future refuse haulers to develop and implement feasible waste reduction programs, including source reduction, recycling, and composting. Additionally, in accordance with the California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Act of 1991, the Project is required to provide adequate areas for collecting and loading recyclable materials where solid waste is collected. The collection areas are required to be shown on construction drawings and be in place before occupancy permits are issued. The proposed project would be required to comply with all applicable solid waste statutes and regulations. Implementation of the Project would result in less than-significant impacts and no mitigation measures would be required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XX.	WILDFIRE: If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				

- | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) | Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| b) | Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| c) | Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water resources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| d) | Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino Countywide Plan, 2020; Submitted Project Materials

- a-d) **Less than Significant Impact.** A wildfire is a nonstructural fire that occurs in vegetative fuels, excluding prescribed fire. Wildfires can occur in undeveloped areas and spread to urban areas where the landscape and structures are not designed and maintained to be ignition resistant. As stated in the State of California's General Plan Guidelines: "*California's increasing population and expansion of development into previously undeveloped areas is creating more 'wildland-urban interface' issues with a corresponding increased risk of loss to human life, natural resources, and economic assets associated with wildland fires.*" To address this issue, the state passed Senate Bill 1241 to require that General Plan Safety Elements address the fire severity risks in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) and Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs).

According to the California Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer maintained by Cal Fire⁷, the project site is located in a LAR zone. Additionally, according to the Countywide Plan Policy Map HZ-5 Fire Hazard Severity Zone, the project site is not located within a fire hazard zone. Therefore, the would be a less than significant impact related to wildfires.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

⁷ Accessed 11-13-2024: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/03beab8511814e79a0e4eabf0d3e7247/>

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:				

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| c) Does the project have environmental effects, which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |

- a) **Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** As described in Section IV, Biological Resources, Section V, Cultural Resources, Section VII, Geology and Soils, and Section XVIII, Tribal Cultural Resources, the project would not result in significant impacts to biological resources, archaeological resources, paleontological resources, and tribal cultural resources with mitigation incorporated.

Therefore, with the incorporation of mitigation, the project would not degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

- b) **Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** As addressed herein, the project would potentially result in project-related air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, paleontological, and tribal cultural resources, that could be potentially significant without the incorporation of mitigation. Thus, when coupled with similar impacts related to the implementation of other cumulative projects located throughout the broader project area, the project would potentially result in cumulative-level impacts if these significant impacts are left unmitigated.

However, with the incorporation of mitigation identified within this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, the project's individual-level impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels and would not considerably contribute to cumulative impacts in the greater project region. Additionally, these other related projects would presumably be bound by their applicable lead agency to (1) comply with the all applicable federal, state, and local regulatory requirements; and (2) incorporate all feasible mitigation measures, consistent with CEQA, to further ensure that their potentially cumulative impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

Although cumulative impacts are always possible, the project, by incorporating all mitigation measures outlined herein, would reduce its contribution to any such cumulative impacts to less than cumulatively considerable. Therefore, the project would result in individually limited, but not cumulatively considerable, impacts. Thus, impacts would be less-than-significant with mitigation incorporated.

- c) **Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** As evaluated throughout this document, the project would have no impact, less-than-significant impact, or less-than-significant impact with mitigation incorporated with respect to all environmental impact areas. Therefore, with incorporation of mitigation, the project would not directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects on human beings.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.