

## D. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This section describes the biological resources found within the FRP. The analysis evaluates potential biological impacts resulting from project construction and subsequent uses, and recommends mitigation measures where appropriate. The information presented below is a compilation of botanical, wildlife, and wetland assessment data gathered during biological surveys conducted by Morro Group biologists in February, May, and June of 2005, from review of information from federal, state, and local resource agencies, and from previous biological studies prepared for portions of the site by other consultants.

Existing information reviewed or used in preparation of this section include *Public Access and Resource Management Plan* (RRM, 2003), *Resource Inventory and Constraints Report* (Rincon Consultants, Inc., 2002), *Coastal Resources Institute Faculty East/West FRP, Cambria Property Environmental Audit* (1993), and the *Coastal Resources Institute Faculty East West Ranch, Cambria Property Environmental Audit Update Evaluation* (December 1997), *East West Ranch Bluff Trail Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan* (Morro Group, Inc., 2005), and *East West Ranch Bluff Trail Wetland Assessment* (Morro Group, Inc., 2005).

### 1. REGULATORY SETTING

#### a. FEDERAL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

##### 1) Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1977

Regulatory protection for water resources throughout the United States is under the jurisdiction of the ACOE. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act prohibits the discharge of dredged or fill material into “Waters of the U.S.” without formal consent from the ACOE. “Waters of the U.S.” includes Special Aquatic Sites (e.g., marine waters, tidal areas, stream channels, and wetlands). Impacts to biological resources are assessed as part of the 404 permitting process through consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Policies relating to the loss of aquatic habitats generally stress the need to compensate losses on at least an acre-for-acre (1:1) basis. Under Section 404, actions in “Waters of the U.S.” may be subject to either an individual permit or a general permit, or may be exempt from regulatory requirements. Project activities within or adjacent to Santa Rosa Creek and tributary drainages, and in or adjacent to channels draining into the Pacific Ocean may require authorization through the ACOE permit process.

##### 2) Section 401 of the Clean Water Act of 1977

Section 401 of the Clean Water Act and its provisions ensure that federally permitted activities comply with the federal Clean Water Act and state water quality laws. Section 401 is implemented through a review process that is conducted by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and is triggered by the Section 404 permitting process. The RWQCB certifies via the 401 process that a proposed project complies with applicable effluent limitations, water quality standards, and other conditions of California law. Evaluating the effects of the proposed project on both water quality and quantity (runoff) falls under the jurisdiction of the RWQCB. Proposed project activities that have the potential to result in impacts to water quality and quantity would require certification by the RWQCB. Project activities within or adjacent to

Santa Rosa Creek and tributary drainages, and in or adjacent to channels draining into the Pacific Ocean may require authorization through the Section 401 permit process.

### 3) Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973

The Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) provides legislation to protect federally listed plant and animal species. Impacts to listed species resulting from the implementation of a project would require the responsible agency or individual to formally consult with the USFWS or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service) to determine the extent of impact to a particular species. The USFWS is a federal agency tasked with “working with others, to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people”. The NOAA Fisheries Service is also a federal agency, and is responsible for the “stewardship of living marine resources through science-based conservation and management, and the promotion of healthy ecosystems.”

If USFWS or NOAA Fisheries Service determine that impacts to a species would likely occur, alternatives and measures to avoid or reduce impacts must be identified. USFWS and NOAA Fisheries Service also regulate activities conducted in federal critical habitat, which are geographic units designated as areas that support primary habitat constituent elements for listed species. Any activities that would impact southern steelhead trout, California red-legged frog, tidewater goby, or California seabligh would require authorization through the FESA permit process.

### 4) Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918

The federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act protects all migratory birds, including their eggs, nests, and feathers. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act was originally drafted to end the commercial trade in bird feathers popular in the latter part of the 1800’s. This Act is enforced by the USFWS, and potential impacts to species protected under this law are evaluated by the USFWS in consultation with the ACOE during 404 review. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act protects at least seven bird species potentially present within the FRP.

## b. STATE POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

### 1) California Endangered Species Act

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) ensures legal protection for plants listed as rare or endangered, and species of wildlife formally listed as endangered or threatened. The state law also lists California Special Concern species based on limited distribution, declining populations, diminishing habitat, or unusual scientific, recreational, or educational value. Under state law, the CDFG is empowered to review projects for their potential to impact state-listed species and California Special Concern species, and their habitats.

### 2) Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code

The CDFG is responsible for conserving, protecting, and managing California's fish, wildlife, and native plant resources. To meet this responsibility, the law requires any person, state or local government agency, or public utility proposing a project that may impact a river, stream, or lake

to notify the CDFG before beginning the project. If the CDFG determines that the proposed project may adversely affect existing fish and wildlife resources, a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement is required. A Streambed Alteration Agreement lists the CDFG conditions of approval relative to the proposed project, and serves as an agreement between the CCSD or its designee and the CDFG for a term of not more than five years for the performance of activities subject to this section. A Streambed Alteration Agreement from the CDFG would be required prior to any direct or indirect impact to streambeds, banks, channels or associated riparian resources.

### 3) Other Sections of the Fish and Game Code

“Fully Protected” species may not be taken or possessed without a permit from the Fish and Game Commission and/or the CDFG. Information on these species can be found within §3511 (birds), §4700 (mammals), §5050 (reptiles and amphibians), and §5515 (fish) of the Fish and Game Code. White-tailed kite is a fully protected species potentially present on the FRP.

### 4) California Coastal Commission

The California Coastal Act was enacted in 1976 to provide long-term protection of California’s coastal resources. The Act’s coastal resources management policies are based on recommendations contained in the California Coastal Plan. One such policy includes the following language:

*“Protection, enhancement and restoration of environmentally sensitive habitats, including intertidal and nearshore waters, wetlands, bays and estuaries, riparian habitat, certain wood and grasslands, streams, lakes, and habitat for rare or endangered plants or animals.”*

The California Coastal Commission regulates wetland areas within the coastal zone as defined under Coastal Act §30121. The Coastal Act defines a wetland as:

*“Lands within the coastal zone which may be covered periodically or permanently with shallow water and include saltwater marshes, freshwater marshes, open or closed brackish water marshes, swamps, mudflats, and fens.”*

Recognized Monterey pine forest, riparian and wetland habitats, native grasslands, and habitat for sensitive plant and wildlife species are ESHAs, as defined by the California Coastal Act and San Luis Obispo County Coastal Policies and Local Coastal Plan. Any proposed impacts to these habitats or species must conform to the requirements of the *County Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance* and the *California Coastal Plan*.

## 2. **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

### a. GENERAL SITE CONDITIONS AND HABITAT TYPE DESCRIPTIONS

The FRP contains a diverse mixture of plant communities and habitat types adapted to its coastal location, varied topography and soils, and historical uses. The larger West FRP area encompasses coastal bluffs, extensive areas of annual grasslands, significant stands of native

Monterey pine woodland, and coastal wetland and riparian areas. The smaller East FRP property consists primarily of grassland-dominated floodplain areas for the adjacent Santa Rosa Creek, with small areas of mixed Monterey pine/oak woodland and native grasslands on surrounding hillsides. In addition to Santa Rosa Creek, there are several unnamed drainages within the FRP that are potential “waters of the United States” under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). Areas containing sensitive plant or animal species, or dominated by wetland plants or native grasses are regulated by the California Coastal Commission (CCC) as Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs) as described in the California Coastal Act of 1976.

The mild Mediterranean climate of the area and coastal influence produce summer temperatures averaging 59 to 79 degrees Fahrenheit (°F), winter temperatures averaging 39 to 59 °F, and annual precipitation averaging eighteen inches. The *Soil Survey of San Luis Obispo County, California Coastal Part* maps five soil units as present within the project site. Soil types present include San Simeon sandy loam (most of the upland portions of the West FRP); Briones-Pismo loamy sands and Concepcion loam (found near the coastal portions of the site); and Marimel and Salinas silty clay loams (most of the East FRP and along Santa Rosa Creek). These soils are described in Section C, Agricultural Resources, of this chapter. Areas of Riverwash soils are also present within the banks of Santa Rosa Creek.

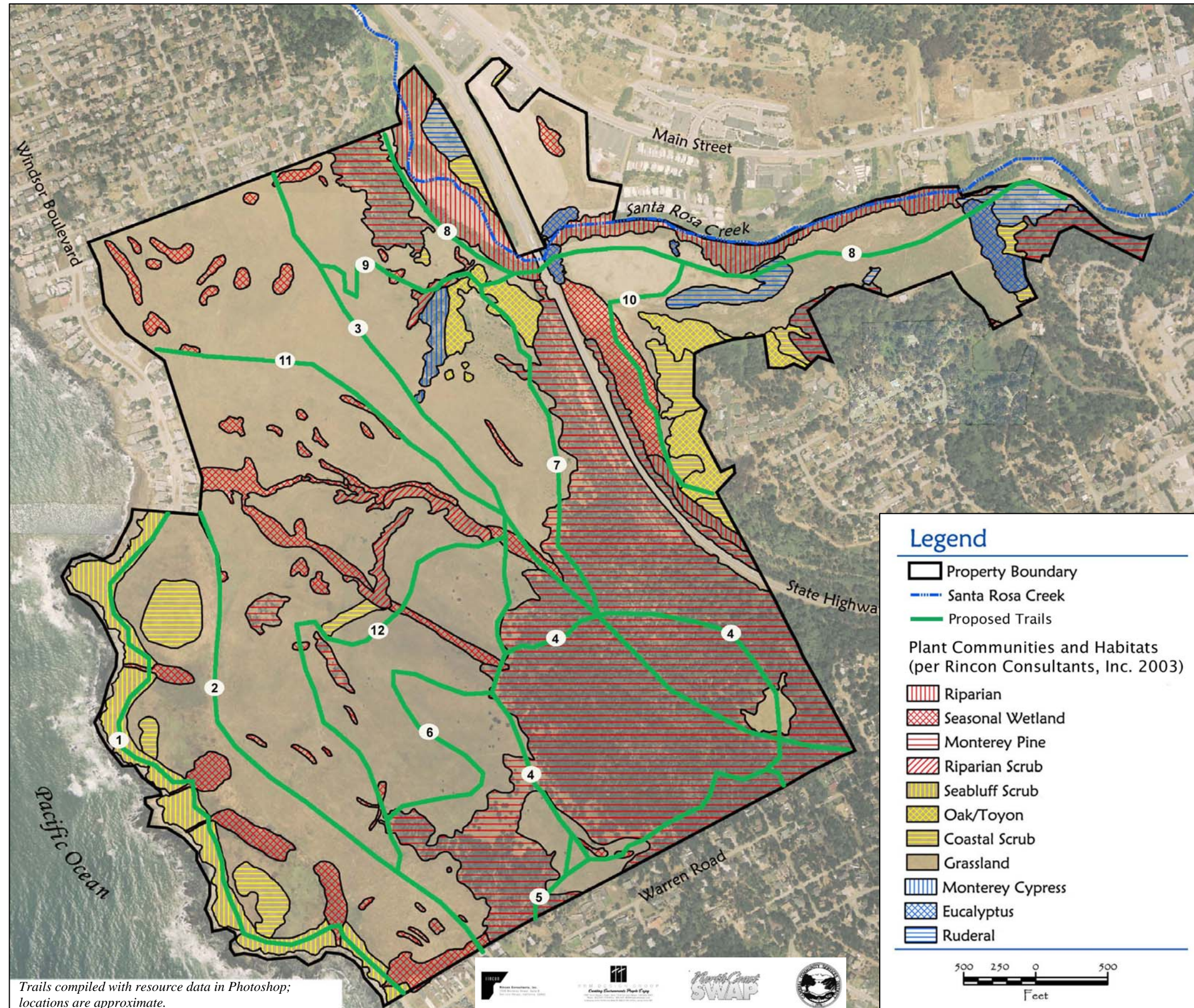
The project site supports the following plant communities and habitat types:

- Annual grassland
- Coastal scrub
- Coastal bluff scrub
- Coast live oak woodland (in association with Monterey pine forest)
- Freshwater marsh wetland
- Monterey pine forest
- Riparian woodland
- Riparian scrub
- Ruderal/anthropogenic

Annual grassland is the dominant plant community on the FRP, and Monterey pine forest covers a significant portion of the non-grassland area (refer to Figure V-6). The remaining habitat types are interspersed in varying degrees within the project site. The following discussions provide a detailed description of the observed plant communities and habitat types. Wildlife species observed or known to frequent these habitats are also discussed.

### 1) Annual Grassland

Annual grasslands, present on both the East and West FRP, may include a composition of both nonnative and native grasses. Valley and southern coastal grasslands composed of mainly Mediterranean species are common in California and consist of a dense to sparse cover of annual grasses approximately eight to twenty inches high (Holland 1986; Holland and Keil, 1995). Native perennial grasses such as needlegrass (*Nassella* spp.) and bluegrass (*Poa secunda*) may occur in some areas but are not usually dominant. Annual grassland communities are often



BACK SIDE FIG V-6

associated with numerous species of wildflowers, especially in years of favorable rainfall. Germination occurs with the onset of late fall rains, and growth, flowering, and seed-set occur from winter through spring. The plants are typically dead through the summer–fall dry season and persist as seeds until the following year’s growing season.

Annual grasslands on the both East and West FRP provide foraging habitat for small mammals such as voles (*Microtus* sp.), white-footed mice (*Peromyscus* spp.), California mouse (*Peromyscus californicus*), Botta’s pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*) and California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*), as well as predators that feed on them, such as coyote (*Canis latrans*), and raptors, including sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), and great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*).

## 2) Coastal Scrub

Coastal scrub communities consist of shrubs approximately three to six feet high, restricted to areas along the coast and extending inland for a few miles. Along the central coast of California, these communities may be sparsely vegetated to dense, and typically lack grassy openings that are more commonly associated with northern coastal scrub (Holland, 1986). While coastal scrub typically grows on exposed, often south-facing slopes with rocky soils (Holland, 1986), localized stands of coastal scrub tend to occupy xeric (dry) sites with shallow soils and may occur on a variety of substrates, including sandstone, diatomite, and serpentinite (Holland and Keil, 1995). Most growth occurs in late winter and spring, and flowering is concentrated in spring and early summer but may continue throughout the year (Holland, 1986). Characteristic species include coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), bush monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*), and sage (*Salvia* spp.).

Mammals expected to occur in or frequent coastal scrub habitat present on the East and West FRP, based on either direct observations or the presence of “sign,” include brush rabbit (*Sylvilagus bachmanii*), California mouse, Botta’s pocket gopher, California ground squirrel, and raccoon (*Procyon lotor*). Bird species that are expected to occur include American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), California thrasher (*Toxostoma redivivum*), and scrub jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*). Common lizards such as western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*) are also expected to occur within coastal scrub habitats of the FRP. Coastal scrub communities on the FRP also provide potential habitat for sensitive species such as the silvery legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra pulchra*), and migratory songbirds.

## 3) Northern Coastal Bluff Scrub

Northern coastal bluff scrub, present on the West FRP, consists of shrubs, herbaceous perennials, succulents, and annual plants on coastal bluffs that are exposed to nearly constant winds with high salt and moisture content. Vegetation density and composition varies with the topography and degree of disturbance.

Coastal bluff scrub communities provide habitat for wildlife species adapted to the windy and exposed conditions common in seaside areas. Species such as Botta’s pocket gopher, and California ground squirrel, burrow along the bluff, and cliff swallows and shore birds build nests

along the cracks and crevices of the vertical cliff. Reptiles such as the western fence lizard may also occur along the edge of the bluff and throughout the bluff scrub habitat.

#### 4) Central Coast Riparian Scrub

Central coast riparian scrub consists of scrubby streamside thickets, varying from open to impenetrable, dominated by any of several willow species (Holland, 1986). The understory commonly supports species such as arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), and stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica* ssp. *holosericea*). Central coast riparian scrub occurs on relatively fine-grained sand and gravel bars that are close to groundwater, along perennial and many intermittent streams of the South Coast Ranges.

Riparian scrub communities on the East and West FRP provide excellent habitat for bird species because the density and complexity of the vegetation layers offer plentiful foraging and nesting opportunities. These areas may also provide shading for aquatic species during conditions when water is present. Riparian communities provide habitat for a variety of songbirds including common yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*), plain titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), and ruby-crowned kinglet (*Regulus calendula*), as well as amphibians and reptiles such as the Pacific chorus frog (*Hyla regilla*) and western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*).

#### 5) Riparian Forest

Riparian forest along the Central Coast includes sparse to dense stands of broad-leafed winter-deciduous shrubs and trees, typically dominated by arroyo willow, red willow (*Salix laevigata*), sycamore, box elder (*Acer negundo*), black cottonwood, and coast live oak. These riparian communities are typically found in moist to saturated sandy or gravelly soils along or adjacent to stream courses.

Riparian forest habitat provides excellent foraging and migration habitat for a variety of bird species, and the associated channel of Santa Rosa Creek on the East and West FRP provides habitat for special-status aquatic species such as California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), southern steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*), tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*), and southwestern pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata pallida*) when water is present.

#### 6) Freshwater Marsh Wetland

Seasonal freshwater marsh communities usually occur in nutrient-rich mineral soils that are saturated or inundated on a seasonal or permanent basis. These communities can occur in areas of slow-moving or stagnant shallow water along streams, or in areas where compacted or slowly permeable soils results in the prolonged presence of surface water or soil saturation. These habitat types also occur along the persistent, moist areas of existing drainages, around the perimeters of ponds, and in low topographic areas that contain standing water or moist soils due to retention of rainfall/runoff (Cowardin et al., 1979).

The freshwater marsh wetlands of the East and West FRP provide foraging habitat and cover for a variety of wildlife species, including common bird species and raccoons, skunks, and other



predators. California red-legged frogs, bullfrogs (*Rana catesbiana*), and Pacific tree frogs (*Hyla regilla*) often inhabit freshwater marsh wetlands.

### 7) Monterey Pine Forest

Monterey pine occurs naturally in three disjunct stands along the California coast at Cambria, the Monterey peninsula, and near Ano Nuevo (Holland, 1995). Monterey pine forest occurs in association with chaparral, coastal scrub, and grassland habitats, and often develops a varied understory layer of shrubs and forbs. Monterey pines (*Pinus radiata*) are threatened by pine pitch canker disease, and by urban development. The species is commonly planted as an ornamental tree, and such plantings are not considered native forest or sensitive species. Natural populations in Cambria are considered to be Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs) by the San Luis Obispo County Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance (CZLUO), Land Use Element, and Local Coastal Plan.

The Monterey pine forest is host to a wide variety of wildlife. Monterey pine forests provide cover and food sources for a number of mammals typical of the area such as black tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), mountain lion (*Puma concolor*) bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginianus*), raccoon, California mouse, and western gray squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*). Woody debris and duff in the pine forest understory also create foraging areas for small mammals, and microclimates suitable for amphibians and reptiles. Monterey pine forest provides canopy habitat for numerous birds and raptors, including chestnut-backed chickadee (*Parus rufescens*), northern flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), Nuttall's woodpecker (*Picoides nuttallii*), steller's jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*), great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), and red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo linatus*). Monterey pine forests on the East and West FRP also provide seasonal congregation sites for the Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*).

### 8) Coast Live Oak Woodland

Coast live oak woodlands feature coast live oak as the dominant evergreen tree, often reaching thirty to 75 feet in height and establishing dense canopies (Holland, 1986; Holland and Keil, 1995). The shrub layer is typically poorly developed, but may include species such as toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) and gooseberry (*Ribes* spp.). The herbaceous layer is continuous and dominated by species such as ripgut brome and other introduced species. Coast live oak woodlands typically grow on north-facing slopes and shaded ravines, intergrading with coastal scrub and chaparral communities on xeric sites and coast live oak forest or mixed evergreen forest on mesic (moist) sites (Holland, 1986).

Coast live oak woodland areas on the East and West FRP offer excellent habitat for a wide variety of wildlife species, including foraging habitat for mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) and nesting and foraging habitat for raptors and a variety of perching birds. Acorns are a valuable food source for many animal species, including the California quail, western gray squirrel, and black-tailed deer. Other representative animal species of oak/toyon woodlands observed or expected to occur onsite include arboreal salamander (*Aneides lugubris*), southern alligator lizard (*Gerrhonotus multicarinatus*), common king snake (*Lampropeltis getulus*), scrub jay (*Aphelocoma corulescens*), plain titmouse (*Parus inornatus*), California towhee (*Pipilo crissalis*), dark-eyed junco (*Junco hyemalis*), North American raccoon, and Virginia opossum.

## 9) Ruderal/Anthropogenic

Ruderal/anthropogenic habitats often occur in abandoned agricultural fields, along roadsides, near developments, and in other areas experiencing severe or repeated ground surface disturbance or dominated by ornamental plant species. Generally, ruderal/anthropogenic areas provide marginal habitat value for wildlife since repeated disturbances and limited cover opportunities do not provide the habitat complexity necessary for diverse wildlife communities. Species expected to occur within this habitat type include various species of mice and pocket gophers, and a number of birds including California quail (*Callipepla californica*) and mourning dove, that often forage in disturbed areas. These species, in turn, are preyed upon by foraging raptors, including American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), and red-shouldered hawk.

Eucalyptus trees are native to Australia and are not generally protected since they are unstable and not native to California. They typically grow to about 98 to 180 feet tall. These trees, individually and in groves, provide perching and nesting habitat for birds and birds-of-prey such as owls, red-tailed hawks, and red-shouldered hawks. Large groves of eucalyptus trees are known to provide habitat for the monarch butterfly (a special animal). Since understory vegetation is typically absent because of the large quantity of highly aromatic leaf and bark litter, eucalyptus groves do not support quality habitat for small mammals and reptiles. Eucalyptus is present on the East FRP.

### b. SENSITIVE SPECIES AND HABITATS

During the literature review portion of this study, a search of the CDFG Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) was conducted to verify reported occurrences of special-status plant and animal species and sensitive habitats within the Cambria U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle area. The CNDDDB is a program that inventories the status and locations of rare plants and animals in California. The results of the CNDDDB search were reviewed to determine reported occurrences of various special-status species in the general vicinity of the FRP. The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) 2006 online *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California* was reviewed to provide additional information on rare plants that are potentially present in the area. Vegetation/habitat types were classified based on CDFG's *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California* (Holland, 1986). Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey data, previous studies prepared for the CCSD, and previous Morro Group survey experience in the Cambria area.

#### 1) Special Status Habitats

Two rare vegetative communities of special concern to resource agencies that occur in the area are Monterey pine forest and Coastal and Valley Needlegrass Grassland. These habitats are present on the FRP. Monterey pine forest is a unique plant community limited to four naturally occurring locations in the world, including the Cambria area. This plant community is considered an ESHA under CCC guidelines.

The coastal and valley needlegrass grassland areas are composed of purple needlegrass (*Nassella pulchra*), a native bunchgrass that was once an abundant component of the California grassland flora. Coastal wetlands and riparian forests are also considered to be sensitive habitats by

federal, state, and local agencies. These habitat types are discussed in detail in the existing conditions section of this report.

## 2) Special Status Plant Species

Botanical surveys were conducted in accordance with the County of San Luis Obispo Department of Planning and Building's *Guidelines for Preparation of Biological Reports* (2003) and CDFG *Guidelines for Assessing the Effects of Proposed Projects on Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Plants and Natural Communities* (2000). The results of the botanical survey conducted by Morro Group in 2005 are shown on Figure V-7.

The CNDDDB contains records of 24 special-status plant species within the Cambria USGS quadrangle and the three surrounding quadrangles (Cayucos, Cypress Mountain, and Pebblestone Shut-in). Two additional species (Hickman's onion (*Allium hickmanii*), and Michael's rein orchid (*Piperia michaelii*),) are considered to have potential to be present due to suitable habitat conditions, and Gairdner's yampah (*Perideridia gairdneri* ssp. *gairdneri*), was documented as present by the Coastal Resources Institute Faculty in 1993 but has not been observed during subsequent survey efforts. Table V-5 lists the 27 plant species considered in this section, and includes survey results and on-site habitat suitability assessments for each species. Many of the listed species have highly specialized habitat requirements that do not occur on the FRP (i.e., coastal dune, salt marsh, chaparral and serpentine outcrops). Thirteen of these 27 species have potential to occur on the FRP due to presence of suitable habitat conditions and plant communities. of these thirteen species, San Luis Obispo County (or Cambria) morning glory, compact cobwebby thistle, San Luis Obispo Indian paint brush, Gairdner's yampah, and Monterey pine have been observed on the FRP during studies conducted prior to and during preparation of this EIR.

## 3) Special Status Wildlife Species

Nine special-status wildlife species were identified by the CNDDDB (2006) as occurring in the Cambria region. The literature review and field surveys conducted for this EIR identified an additional eight animal and bird species that should be considered potentially present due to suitable habitat or foraging conditions. Table V-6 lists the 17 wildlife species considered in this section, and includes survey results and on-site habitat suitability and potential occurrence assessments for each species. of these 17 species, Monarch butterfly, California red-legged frog, southwestern pond turtle, tidewater goby, and south central California steelhead have been observed on the FRP during studies conducted prior to and during preparation of this EIR.

### c. LOCAL CONDITIONS

The East and West portions of the FRP have different biological attributes as a result of location, topography, and a varied history of land uses. In addition, the proposed uses addressed in this EIR are very different for the two areas. The West FRP is proposed to remain as undeveloped open space used for recreational purposes, and development would be limited to multi-use trails, gates and stiles, fences, benches, and signs. Portions of East FRP would be transformed into a community park, complete with recreational field areas, multi-use trails, parking areas, and general community recreation facilities. Sensitive species and habitats are present on both portions of the FRP; however, the potential for impacts are much greater on the East FRP due to

the type of improvements and recreational uses proposed. The following discussions provide specific details on habitats and species present within the East and West FRP project areas.

### 1) West FRP – Habitat Types

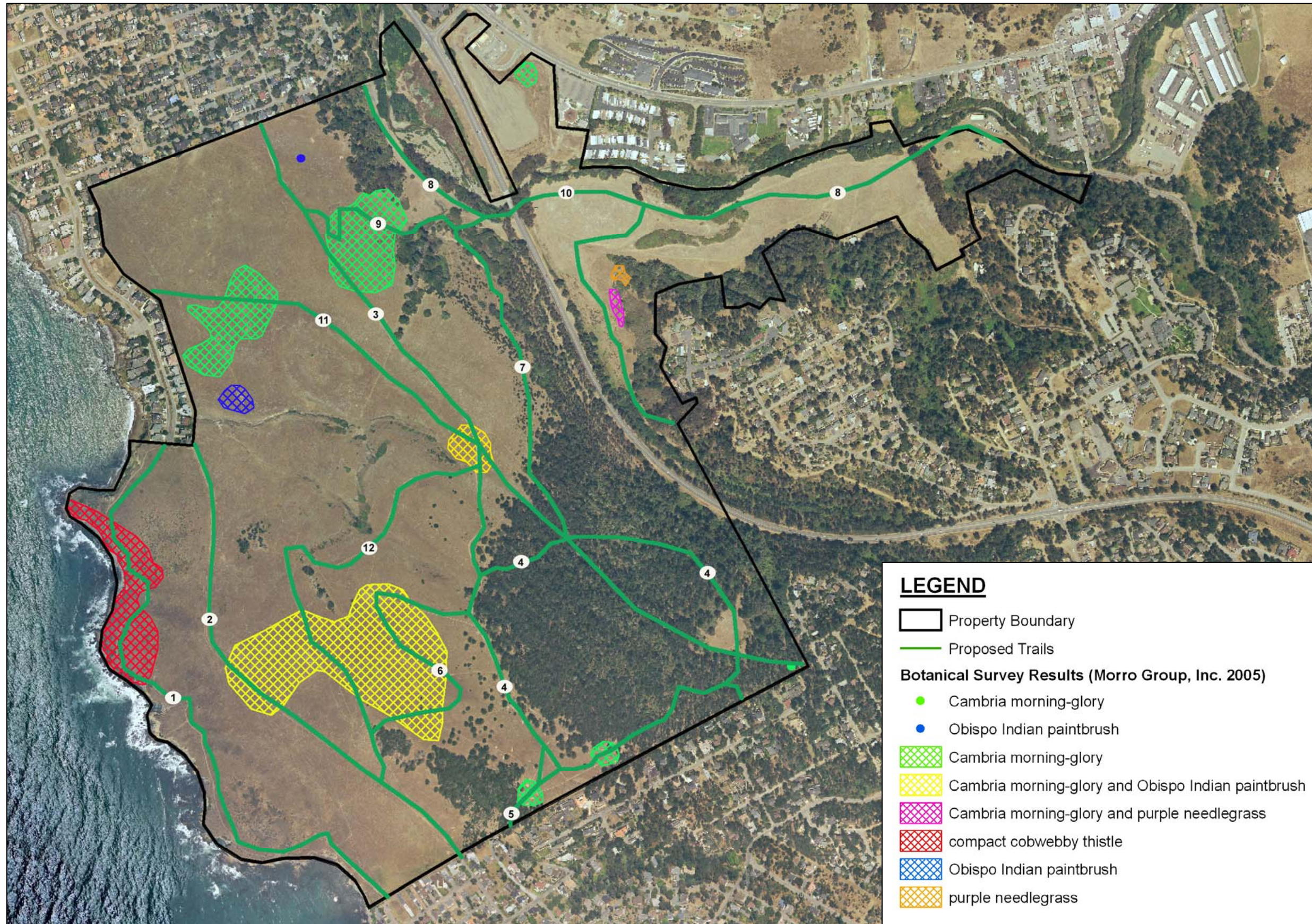
The 364-acre western portion of the FRP consists of steep to gently sloping hillsides immediately west of Highway 1. The site supports coastal grasslands, Monterey pine forest, coastal bluff scrub, riparian forest and wetland habitats associated with Santa Rosa Creek, and fresh water marsh wetlands associated with seeps and small drainages. The steeper portions of the West FRP are composed of dense mixed forest dominated by Monterey pines, with the southeast corner supporting the largest stand of this habitat. Smaller stands of Monterey pines exist in the southwestern portion of the West FRP as well. Most of the rolling terrain and coastal terraces west of the ridgeline consist of annual grasslands that extend toward the sea bluff. The general topography slopes toward the bluffs, and includes a patchy distribution of shallow swales and channels that convey and/or retain water during the rainy season. These areas support wet soil conditions and are dominated by wetland plant species.

#### (a) Annual Grassland

Annual grassland is the dominant community within the project site. Grasslands dominate the rolling hills of the West FRP from the forest edges to the seabluffs. Grassland habitat has been disturbed by historic grazing and other uses, and consists mainly of non-native species. Dominant grass species include soft chess brome (*Bromus hordeaceus*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*), and wild oat (*Avena* spp.). Native grass species observed during biological surveys conducted as part of the EIR analysis include California brome (*Bromus carinatus*), California oat grass (*Danthonia californica*), hairgrass (*Deschampsia elongata*), and purple needle grass (*Nassella pulchra*). Native wildflowers observed include sky lupine (*Lupinus nanus*), ladies tresses (*Spiranthes romanzoffiana*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*), and California buttercup (*Ranunculus californicus*). The special-status San Luis Obispo paintbrush (*Castilleja obispoensis*), and Cambria morning-glory (*Calystegia subacaulis* ssp. *episcopalis*), are present in grassland areas of the West FRP. Common weedy species such as filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), vetch (*Vicia* sp.), black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), storksbill (*Erodium botrys*), summer mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*), wild radish (*Raphanus sativa*), mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), coast morning glory (*Calystegia macrostegia* ssp. *cyclostegia*), and scarlet pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis*), are abundantly dispersed throughout the site. Scattered coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), and California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), shrubs, and dense stands of milk thistle and Italian thistle are present in some areas. Scattered occurrences of native grasses are present in areas of the West FRP.

#### (b) Coastal Scrub

Coastal scrub occurs along the western boundary of the West FRP, near the bluffs. Coastal scrub species are also found in and adjacent to Monterey pine/oak woodland areas. Dominant coastal scrub species within the project site include coyote brush, black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), deerweed, and poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), with other abundant shrub species



Trails and botanical survey results compiled with aerial photography in Photoshop; locations are approximate.

2005 Botanical Survey Results  
FIGURE V-7

  
NORTH  
Not to Scale

BACK SIDE V-7

such as California sagebrush, bush monkeyflower, and herbaceous plants such as thistles (*Carduus pycnocephalus*, *Cirsium occidentale* ssp. *occidentale*, and *Silybum marianum*), purple nightshade (*Solanum xanthii*), and annual grasses. A nearly pure stand of yellow bush lupine (*Lupinus arboreus*) is present near the seabluff on the West FRP.

(c) Northern Coastal Bluff Scrub

Coastal bluff scrub is present on the West FRP as a narrow band of vegetation along the bluff edge. Coastal bluff scrub grades into adjacent grasslands and areas of introduced hottentot fig (*Carpobrotus edulis*), along the bluff, and provides habitat for the special-status compact cobwebby thistle (*Cirsium occidentale* var. *compactum*). Other plant species observed in coastal bluff scrub on the West FRP include: dune and cliff buckwheats (*Eriogonum latifolium*, *E. parvifolium*), seaside daisy (*Erigeron glauca*), saw-toothed golden bush (*Hazardia squarrosa*), coyote thistle (*Eryngium armatum*), sea thrift (*Armeria maritima*), American carrot (*Daucus pusillus*), and California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica* var. *maritima*).

(d) Central Coast Riparian Scrub

Riparian scrub is present along portions of Santa Rosa Creek and along the central drainage on the West FRP. Riparian scrub along Santa Rosa Creek is a well-developed, diverse corridor of riparian vegetation. Arroyo willow is the most abundant species and forms dense thickets in many places along the creek banks. Black cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera* ssp. *trichocarpa*), sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*), California wax myrtle (*Myrica californica*), and blue gum eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*) are all common species observed in the Santa Rosa Creek riparian corridor. Common understory species vary along the creek, but usually include native species such as California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), stinging nettles (*Urtica dioica* ssp. *holosericea*), and poison oak; and non-native species such as cape ivy (*Delairea odorata*), periwinkle (*Vinca major*), cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium*), bristly ox-tongue (*Picris echioides*), rabbitsfoot grass (*Polypogon monspeliensis*), and various other forbs and grasses.

(e) Riparian Forest

Riparian forest habitats are present along the Santa Rosa Creek channel, interspersed with riparian scrub habitats. The creek channel supports arroyo willow, California bay, western sycamore, and Monterey pine.

(f) Freshwater Marsh Wetland

Small pockets of seasonal marsh wetlands occur in the grassland areas scattered throughout the West FRP. Some of these are associated with small drainages that traverse the coastal terraces and drain into the ocean or into Santa Rosa Creek, others occur as springs or seeps where shallow ground water surfaces in the grasslands located on the coastal terraces. Seasonal wetlands associated with the springs and drainages on the West FRP are dominated by a mixture of low-growing herbaceous species such as brown-headed rush (*Juncus phaeocephalus*), creeping spikerush (*Eleocharis macrostachya*), salt-grass (*Distichlis spicata*), Italian rye-grass, Carolina geranium (*Geranium carolinianum*), English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), water cress (*Rorippa nasturtium-aquatica*), and hyssop (*Lythrum hyssopifolia*).

(g) Monterey Pine Forest

There are several stands of Monterey pines and scattered occurrences of isolated trees within the West FRP. The largest stand of Monterey pines is located in the southeastern corner of the West FRP. A smaller stand occurs to the west, and grades into grassland further down-slope. The Monterey pine forest consists of an overstory dominated by the semi-closed cone Monterey pine. Other common tree and shrub species present include coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), and California bay-laurel (*Umbellularia californica*). The multi-layered understory varies from being relatively dense with shrubs and herbaceous plants to some areas that are relatively devoid of plants and contain only pine needle litter or duff. Common understory species observed in the Monterey pine forest include: poison oak, California blackberry, sticky monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), hedge nettle (*Stachys bullata*), and wood fern (*Dryopteris arguta*).

(h) Coast Live Oak Woodland

Many forested areas of the FRP contain coast live oak as a major canopy or understory component, in association with the dominant Monterey pine. Several locations on the West FRP contain coast live oak trees, large toyon shrubs, and poison oak as co-dominant species. Oak/pine woodland habitats on the West FRP support a diverse understory including toyon and coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*) shrubs, and an assortment of species found in Monterey pine forest. Where the canopy is closed there is generally a thick layer of leaf litter and a dense subcanopy of shade tolerant shrubs and herbs such as poison oak, honey suckle (*Lonicera hispidula*), hedge nettle, and yerba buena (*Satureja douglasii*). Some areas exhibit a somewhat more open canopy and understory of grasses and weedy herbs.

(i) Ruderal/Anthropogenic

An area of ruderal habitat is present on the West FRP between Highway 1 and Santa Rosa Creek. This area supports a mixture of ruderal (weedy) species and non-native annual grasses and forbs. Dominant species include ripgut brome, soft chess, slender wild oats, wild radish (*Raphanus sativa*), milk thistle, and telegraph weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*).

2) West FRP – Special Status Species

The West FRP contains Monterey pine forest, coastal wetlands, and riparian forest habitat associated with Santa Rosa Creek. These three habitat types are considered sensitive by federal, state, and local agencies, and are subject to regulatory constraints. Sensitive habitat locations identified on the West FRP are shown on Figure V-7.

(a) Special Status Plant Species

Of the 27 sensitive plant species known to be present within the Cambria area, four were observed within the West FRP (refer to Table V-5). These species are Monterey pine, San Luis Obispo paintbrush, Cambria morning-glory, and compact cobwebby thistle. Additional species are considered as potentially present on the West FRP due to suitable habitat conditions, but were not observed during focused botanical surveys conducted in 2005 by Morro Group, Inc., or during previous surveys conducted for the CCSD. Known special-status plant species locations are shown on Figure V-8.



(b) Special Status Wildlife Species

Of the nine sensitive wildlife species potentially present within the Cambria area, none were observed within the West FRP during biological surveys conducted in 2005 (refer to Table V-6). Previous surveys conducted on the site, and CNDDDB listings document the presence of steelhead, western pond turtle, two-striped garter snake, and tidewater goby in association with Santa Rosa Creek, and the presence of numerous bird and raptor species in forest and grassland areas. Additional wildlife species are considered as potentially present, but were not observed during surveys conducted in 2005 by Morro Group, Inc, or during previous surveys conducted for the CCSD on the site.

3) East FRP – Habitat Types

(a) Annual Grassland

Annual grassland is present throughout the level portions of the East FRP. Grassland habitat has been disturbed by grazing and other uses, and consists mainly of non-native species. Dominant grass species on the site include soft chess brome, ripgut brome, Italian ryegrass, and wild oat. Native grass species observed during biological surveys conducted as part of the EIR analysis include California brome, California oat grass, hairgrass, and purple needle grass. Native wildflowers observed include sky lupine, ladies tresses, California poppy, tidy tips, and California buttercup. The special-status Cambria morning-glory is present in grassland areas of the East FRP. Common weedy species such as filaree, vetch, black mustard, prickly lettuce, storksbill, summer mustard, milk thistle, wild radish, mayweed, Italian thistle, coast morning glory, and scarlet pimpernel, are abundantly dispersed throughout the site. Scattered coyote brush, California sagebrush, shrubs, and dense stands of milk thistle and Italian thistle are present in some areas.

Several distinct areas of native grassland are present on hillsides in the southwestern portion of the East FRP (refer to Figure V-8). Native grasslands are remnants of the original, perennial bunchgrass-dominated coastal prairie community once present over large areas of California. The CCC defines a native grassland as “an area where native grassland species comprise ten percent or more of the total relative cover.” The native grassland areas observed on the East FRP are composed of purple needlegrass (*Nassella pulchra*), a native bunchgrass that was once an abundant component of the California grassland flora. The East FRP native grassland areas mapped on Figure V-8 meet or exceed the ten percent dominance criteria, and may qualify as an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) under CCC guidelines.

**TABLE V-5  
Special-Status Plant Species Potentially Present within the FRP**

Species Name	Habitat and Distribution	Flower Season	Legal Status Federal/State/CNPS/R-E-D	Suitable Habitat or Species Present Within Project Area
<i>Allium hickmanii</i> Hickman's onion	Closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral (maritime), coastal prairie, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grassland; elev. 5 – 200 meters.	MARCH – MAY	--/1B.2	Suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species was not observed during botanical surveys.
<i>Arctostaphylos luciana</i> <i>Santa Lucia manzanita</i>	Chaparral; rocky slopes with shale substrate; restricted to SLO County; elev. 350-850 meters.	FEBRUARY-MARCH	--/1B.2	No suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Arctostaphylos pilosula</i> Santa Margarita manzanita	Chaparral, closed-cone coniferous forest, shale outcrops and slopes; elev. 170 – 1100 meters.	DECEMBER – MARCH	--/1B.2	No suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Arctostaphylos cruzensis</i> Arroyo de la Cruz manzanita	Broadleafed upland woodland, coastal bluff scrub, closed cone coniferous forest, chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland on sandy soils; elev. 60-310 meters.	DECEMBER – MARCH	--/1B.2	Suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Arctostaphylos pechoensis</i> Pecho manzanita	Closed cone coniferous forest, chaparral, coastal scrub on siliceous shale; elev. 150-850 meters.	NOVEMBER – MARCH	--/1B.2	No suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Astragalus didymocarpus</i> var. <i>milesianus</i> Miles's milkvetch	Coastal scrub on clay soils; elev. 20 – 90 meters.	MARCH – JUNE	--/1B.2	No suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Baccharis plummerae</i> ssp. <i>glabrata</i> San Simeon baccharis	Coastal scrub; elev. 50 – 480 meters.	JUNE	--/1B.2	Suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species was not observed during botanical surveys.
<i>Calochortus obispoensis</i> San Luis Obispo mariposa lily	Chaparral, coastal scrub and grassland communities, often on serpentine soils; elev. 75-730 meters.	MAY-JULY	--/1B.2	Suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species was not observed during botanical surveys.
<i>Calystegia subacaulis</i> ssp. <i>episcopalis</i> Cambria morning-glory	Chaparral and cismontane woodland; elev. 60-500 meters.	APRIL-MAY	--/1B.2	Species present on both East and West FRP in annual grassland areas.
<i>Castilleja densiflora</i> ssp. <i>obispoensis</i> Obispo Indian paintbrush	Valley and foothill grassland; elev. 10-400 meters.	APRIL	--/1B.2	Species present on West FRP in annual grassland areas.
<i>Cirsium fontinale</i> var. <i>obispoense</i> Chorro Creek bog thistle	Chaparral, cismontane woodlands; serpentine seeps; elev. 35-380 meters.	FEBRUARY-JULY	FE/SE/1B.2	No suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.

Species Name	Habitat and Distribution	Flower Season	Legal Status Federal/State/ CNPS/R-E-D	Suitable Habitat or Species Present Within Project Area
<i>Cirsium occidentale</i> var. <i>compactum</i> Compact cobwebby thistle	Chaparral, coastal dunes, coastal prairie, coastal scrub; elev 5-150 meters.	APRIL-JUNE	--/1B.2	Species present on West FRP along coastal bluff areas.
<i>Dudleya abramsii</i> ssp. <i>bettinae</i> San Luis Obispo serpentine dudleya	Chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland, /serpentine, rocky; elev. 20 – 180 meters.	MAY-JULY	--/1B.2	No suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Dudleya blochmaniae</i> ssp. <i>blochmaniae</i> Blochman's dudleya	Coastal bluff scrub, chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland on rocky soils, often clay or serpentine; elev. 5-450 meters.	APRIL-JUNE	--/1B.1	No suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Eryngium aristulatum</i> var. <i>hooveri</i> Hoover's button celery	Vernal pools; elev. 3-45 meters.	JULY	--/1B.1	No suitable vernal pool habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Galium hardhamiae</i> Hardham's bedstraw	Closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, serpentine; elev. 395-975 meters.	APRIL-OCTOBER	--/1B.3	Serpentine soil not present within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Horkelia cuneata</i> ssp. <i>sericea</i> Kellog's horkelia	Closed cone coniferous forest and coastal scrub habitats; elev. 10-200 meters.	APRIL-SEPTEMBER	--/1B.2	Suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species was not observed during botanical surveys.
<i>Layia jonesii</i> Jones's layia	Chaparral and valley and foothill grassland on clay or serpentine soils; elev. 5-400 meters.	MARCH – MAY	--/1B.2	No suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Malacothamnus palmeri</i> var. <i>involucratus</i> Carmel Valley bush mallow	Chaparral, cismontane woodlands; talus hills and slopes, sometimes on serpentine. Burn dependent. Elev. 30-1100 meters.	MAY-OCTOBER	--/1B.2	No suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Malacothamnus palmeri</i> var. <i>palmeri</i> Santa Lucia bush mallow	Chaparral on rocky soils; elev. 60-360 meters.	MAY-JULY	--/1B.2	No suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Piperia michaelii</i> Michael's rein orchid	Coastal bluff scrub, closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, lower montane coniferous forest; elev. 3 – 915 meters.	APRIL-AUGUST	--/4.2	Suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species was not observed during botanical surveys.
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i> ssp. <i>gairdneri</i> Gairdner's yampah	Broadleaved upland forest, chaparral, coastal prairie, valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools; 0 – 365 meters.	JUNE – OCTOBER	--/4.2	Species observed in Monterey pine forest of the West FRP in 1997. Not observed during 2005 botanical surveys.

Species Name	Habitat and Distribution	Flower Season	Legal Status Federal/State/ CNPS/R-E-D	Suitable Habitat or Species Present Within Project Area
<i>Pinus radiata</i> Monterey pine	Closed-cone coniferous forest, cismontane woodland; dry bluffs and slopes; elev. 25-185 meters.	-	--/--/1B.1	Species present on both East and West FRP on steep slopes and higher elevation areas.
<i>Sanicula maritima</i> Adobe sanicle	Chaparral, coastal prairie, meadows and seeps, valley and foothill grassland, /clay, serpentinite; elev. 30 – 240 meters.	FEBRUARY – MAY	--/--/1B.1	No suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Streptanthus albidus</i> ssp. <i>peramoenus</i> most beautiful jewel-flower	Chaparral, cismontane woodlands, valley and foothill grasslands on serpentinite soil; elev. 120-1000 meters.	APRIL-JUNE	--/--/1B.2	Serpentine soil not present within the survey area. Species not present on site.
<i>Sueda californica</i> California seablite	Margins of coastal salt marsh up to 15 feet.	JUNE – OCTOBER	FE/--/1B.1	Suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species was not observed during botanical surveys.
<i>Tritelia ixioides</i> ssp. <i>cookii</i> Cook's tritelia	Closed-cone coniferous forest, cismontane woodland /serpentinite seeps; elev 150 – 700 meters.	MAY-JUNE	--/--/1B.3	Suitable habitat occurs within the survey area. Species was not observed during botanical surveys.
General references: Hickman (ed.) 1993, Munz 1974, CNDDDB 2006, CNPS 2006, Tibor, 2001.				
<p><b>Status Codes</b>                      --= <i>No status</i>                      Federal:                      FE = Federal Endangered                      FT=Federal Threatened                      SE=State Endangered</p>	<p>California Native Plant Society (CNPS):  <b>List 1B</b> = rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere  <b>List 2</b>=Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere</p> <p><i>Threat Code:</i>                      1 = Seriously endangered in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat)                      2 = Fairly endangered in California (20-80% occurrences threatened)                      3 = Not very endangered in California (&lt;20% of occurrences threatened or no current threats known)</p> <p><b>Species listed in bold type are known to be present on the site.</b></p>			

**TABLE V-6  
Special-Status Wildlife Species Potentially Present within the FRP**

Common Name	Federal / State / Other Status	General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/ Absent	Potential for Presence
<b>Invertebrates</b>				
Monarch butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	-- / -- / SA	Roosts in coastal eucalyptus and Monterey cypress stands.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable roosting (but not overwintering) habitat is present on the site. Species is expected to occur within the site on a seasonal basis
<b>Fish</b>				
Steelhead – south/central California coast ESU <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus</i>	FT / -- / CSC	Clear, cool stream with abundant instream cover, well-vegetated stream margins, relatively stable water flow, and a 1:1 pool-to-riffle ratio.	P	Species has been identified within Santa Rosa Creek, and is expected to occur within the site during periods of high flow.
Tidewater goby <i>Eucyclogobius newberryi</i>	FE / -- / CSC	Brackish shallow lagoons and lower stream reaches in still, but not stagnant water.	P	Species has been identified within Santa Rosa Creek, and could occur within the site when flow is suitable.
<b>Amphibians</b>				
Coast Range newt <i>Taricha torosa torosa</i>	-- / -- / CSC	Breed in ponds, reservoirs, and slow-moving streams. Frequent terrestrial habitats.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable habitat is present within Santa Rosa Creek. Species is likely to occur within the site.
California red-legged frog <i>Rana aurora draytonii</i>	FT / -- / CSC	Aquatic habitats with little or no flow, the presence of surface water to early June, surface water depths to at least 2.3 feet, and the presence of sturdy underwater supports such as cattails.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable habitat is present within Santa Rosa Creek. Species is likely to occur within the site.
<b>Reptiles</b>				
Western pond turtle <i>Clemmys marmorata pallida</i>	-- / -- / CSC	Quiet waters of ponds, lakes, streams, and marshes. Typically in the deepest parts with an abundance of basking sites.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable habitat is present within Santa Rosa Creek. Species is likely to occur within the site.
Coast (California) horned lizard <i>Phrynosoma coronatum frontale</i>	-- / -- / CSC	Frequents a wide variety of habitats. Most commonly occurring in lowlands along sandy washes with scattered low bushes.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable habitat is present within upland areas. Species is likely to occur within the site.
Silvery legless lizard <i>Anniella pulchra pulchra</i>	-- / -- / CSC	Sandy or loose loamy soils under sparse vegetation. Soils with high moisture content.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable habitat is present within upland areas. Species is likely to occur within the site.
Two-striped garter snake <i>Thamnophis hammondi</i>	-- / -- / CSC	Ponds, reservoirs, and slow-moving streams. Frequents adjacent terrestrial habitats.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable habitat is present within Santa Rosa Creek. Species could occur within the site.

Common Name	Federal / State / Other Status	General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/ Absent	Potential for Presence
<b>Birds</b>				
White-tailed kite <i>Elanus leucurus</i>	MBTA/ FP / - -	Open grasslands, meadows, or marshlands for foraging close to isolated dense-topped trees for nesting and perching.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable roosting and foraging habitat is present. Species could occur within the site.
Loggerhead shrike <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	MBTA / -- / CSC	Open habitats with scattered shrubs, trees, posts, fences, utility lines, or other perches.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable roosting and foraging habitat is present. Species could occur within the site.
Western yellow-billed cuckoo <i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	FC, MBTA / SE / --	Forests to open riparian woodlands with thick understory.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable roosting and foraging habitat is present. Species could occur within the site.
Burrowing owl <i>Athene cunicularia</i>	MBTA / -- / CSC	Open, dry annual or perennial grasslands, deserts and scrublands with low-growing vegetation. Subterranean nester, dependent upon burrowing mammals.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable foraging habitat is present. Species could occur within the site.
California horned lark <i>Eremophila alpestris actia</i>	MBTA / -- / CSC	Short grass prairie, bald hills, mountain meadows, open coastal plains, fallow grain fields, alkali flats.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable nesting and foraging habitat is present. Species could occur within the site.
Prairie falcon <i>Falco mexicanus</i>	-- / -- / CSC	Forages in open areas and grasslands. Nests in cliffs overlooking suitable foraging habitat.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable foraging habitat is present. Species could occur within the site.
Tricolored blackbird <i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	MBTA / -- / CSC	Open water, tall and dense cattails or tules. Large nesting colonies near cropland and insect prey base.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, and suitable habitat is not present. Species unlikely to occur within the site.
Other nesting birds Class Aves	MBTA / -- / CDFG Code §3503	Various habitats (nesting).	P	Nesting bird species were not observed during biological surveys of the site, however, various bird species may nest in trees and other habitats within the site.
<b>Mammals</b>				
Pallid bat <i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	-- / -- / CSC	Roosts in deep crevices, caves, mines, rock faces, bridges and buildings.	P	Species was not observed during surveys, however, suitable roosting and foraging habitat is present. Species could occur within the site.
<p><b>Status Codes:</b>                      --= No status  <b>Federal:</b> FE = Federal Endangered                      FT = Federal Threatened                      FC = Federal Candidate                      MBTA = Protected by Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act</p> <p><b>State:</b> SE = State Endangered      ST = State Threatened                      FP = Fully Protected      SA = CNDDDB Special Animal                      CSC = California Special Concern species                      CDFG §3503 = Protected by Sect 3503 of CDFG code</p>				

(b) Coastal Scrub

Coastal scrub occurs along the hillside just below the neighborhoods of Wilton Drive in the western portion of the East FRP. Coastal scrub species are also found in and adjacent to Monterey pine/oak woodland areas. Dominant coastal scrub species within the project site include coyote brush, black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), deerweed, and poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), with other abundant shrub species such as California sagebrush, bush monkeyflower, and herbaceous plants such as thistles (*Carduus pycnocephalus*, *Cirsium occidentale* ssp. *occidentale*, and *Silybum marianum*), purple nightshade (*Solanum xantii*), and annual grasses.

(c) Central Coast Riparian Scrub

Riparian scrub is present along portions of Santa Rosa Creek within the East FRP. Riparian scrub along Santa Rosa Creek is a well-developed, diverse corridor of riparian vegetation. Arroyo willow is the most abundant species and forms dense thickets in many places along the creek banks. Black cottonwood, sycamore, white alder, California wax myrtle, and blue gum eucalyptus are all common species observed in the Santa Rosa Creek riparian corridor. Common understory species vary along the creek, but usually include native species such as California blackberry, stinging nettles, and poison oak; and non-native species such as cape ivy, periwinkle, cocklebur, bristly ox-tongue, rabbitsfoot grass, and various other forbs and grasses. The riparian corridors supporting central coast riparian scrub within the drainages on the project site are considered sensitive habitats by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), CCC, and County of San Luis Obispo.

(d) Riparian Forest

Riparian forest habitats are present along the Santa Rosa Creek channel, interspersed with riparian scrub habitats. The creek channel supports arroyo willow, California bay, western sycamore, and Monterey pine.

(e) Freshwater Marsh Wetland

Small pockets of seasonal marsh wetlands occur in the grassland areas scattered throughout the FRP. Some of these are associated with small drainages that traverse the coastal terraces and drain into the ocean or into Santa Rosa Creek, others occur as springs or seeps where shallow ground water surfaces in the grasslands located on the coastal terraces. Seasonal wetlands associated with the springs and drainages on the FRP are dominated by a mixture of low-growing herbaceous species such as brown-headed rush, creeping spikerush, salt-grass, Italian rye-grass, Carolina geranium, English plantain, water cress, and hyssop.

(f) Monterey Pine Forest

There are several stands of Monterey pines and scattered occurrences of isolated trees within the FRP.

(g) Coast Live Oak Woodland

Many forested areas of the FRP contain coast live oak as a major canopy or understory component, in association with the dominant Monterey pine. Several locations on the East FRP contain coast live oak trees, large toyon shrubs, and poison oak as co-dominant species.

Oak/pine woodland habitats on the East FRP support a diverse understory including toyon and coffeeberry shrubs, and an assortment of species found in Monterey pine forest. Where the canopy is closed there is generally a thick layer of leaf litter and a dense subcanopy of shade tolerant shrubs and herbs such as poison oak, honey suckle, hedge nettle, and yerba buena. Some areas exhibit a somewhat more open canopy and understory of grasses and weedy herbs.

(h) Ruderal/Anthropogenic

A large area of ruderal habitat is present in the central and eastern portions of the East FRP. This area supports a mixture of ruderal (weedy) species and non-native annual grasses and forbs. Dominant species in these areas include riggut brome, soft chess, slender wild oats, wild radish, milk thistle, and telegraph weed. Some of the ruderal habitat present in the central portion of the East FRP is dominated by a dense shrubby cover of the invasive French broom. Areas of blue gum eucalyptus are present near the County storage yard and the eastern portion of the East FRP. Additional eucalyptus trees are present in the riparian corridor associated with Santa Rosa Creek.

The linear stand of approximately eight eucalyptus trees present on site are older trees and are not in a configuration to provide over-wintering habitat for the monarch butterfly. The Cambria CSD has indicated that several eucalyptus trees blew down in a wind storm in 2005 (pers.com Ben Boer, 2007). These trees are in poor condition and may be considered a hazard.

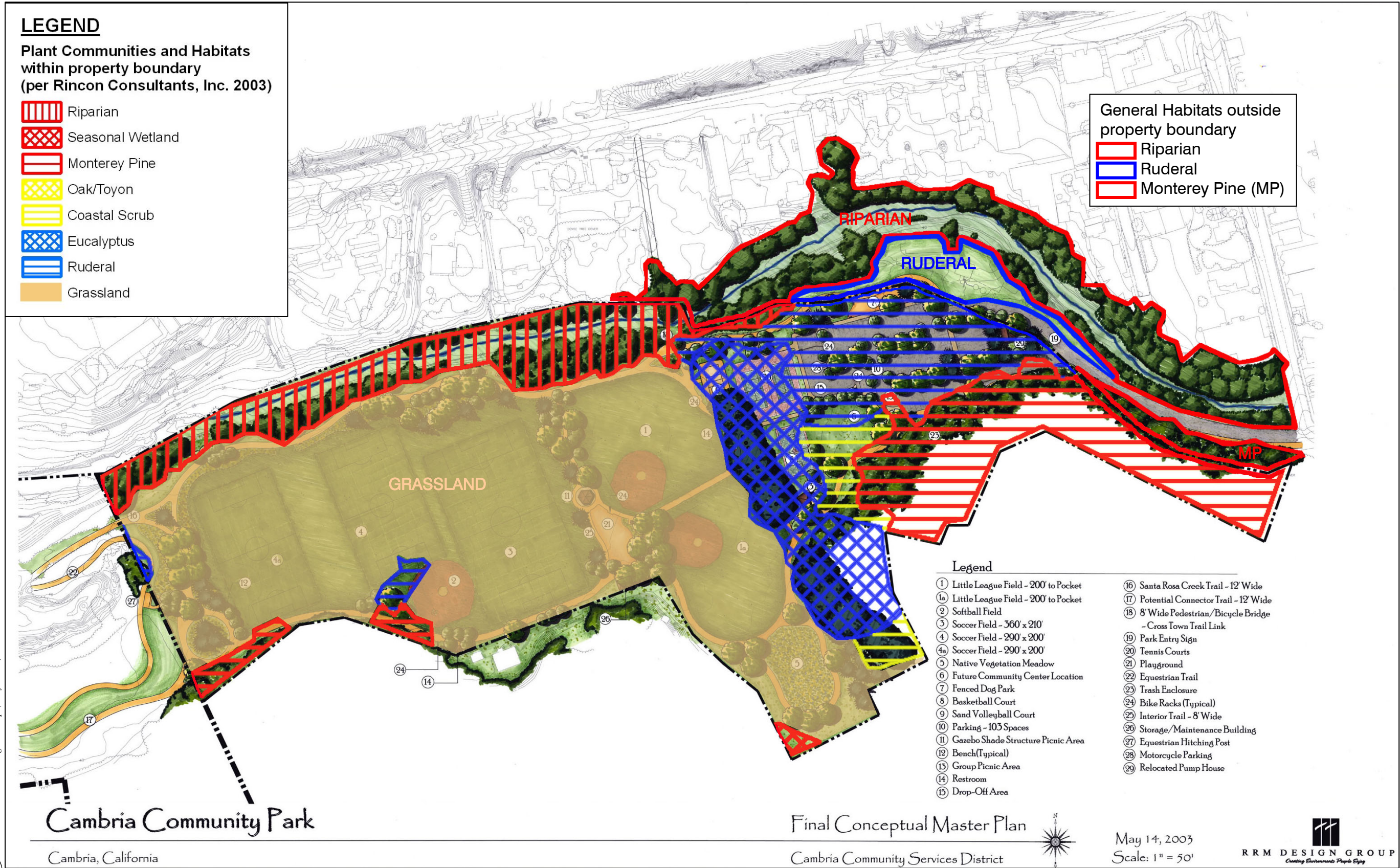
4) East FRP – Special Status Species

The seventy-acre eastern portion of the FRP is bordered by Santa Rosa Creek to the north and east, and by Highway 1 to the west. Habitat types and biological resources are shown in Figure V-9. This area consists largely of the stream channel, banks, and flood plain of the creek. The southern boundary of the East FRP is the lower portion of a steep forest and coastal scrub-covered hillside. This hillside consists mainly of Monterey pine forest and coast live oak/toyon woodland with small patches of coastal scrub also present. The southwestern portion of the East FRP along Highway 1 contains a seasonal wetland, which is dominated by perennial wetland vegetation. Most of the floodplain outside of the Santa Rosa Creek riparian corridor is dominated by annual grassland which has been historically disturbed by agricultural and recreational uses.

(a) Special Status Habitats

The East FRP contains riparian forest, riparian scrub, freshwater marsh, native grassland, and Monterey pine woodland. These habitat types are considered sensitive by federal, state, and local agencies, and are subject to regulatory constraints. Sensitive habitat locations identified on the East FRP are shown on Figures V-7 and V-8.





Source: RRM Design Group (May 2003)

Plant communities and habitats compiled with proposed park plan in Photoshop; locations are approximate.



**NORTH**  
 Scale as Shown

Draft Master EIR

**East FRP Community Park Recreation Improvements and Existing Biological Resources**  
**FIGURE V-8**

BACK SIDE V-8

(b) Special Status Plant Species

Of the 24 sensitive plant species potentially present within the Cambria area, only two were observed within the East FRP (refer to Table V-5). These species are Monterey pine and Cambria morning-glory. Additional plant species are considered as potentially present, but were not observed during focused botanical surveys conducted in 2005 by Morro Group, Inc. Known sensitive plant species locations on the East FRP are shown on Figure V-8.

(c) Special Status Wildlife Species

Of the nine sensitive wildlife species potentially present within the Cambria area, none were observed within the East FRP during biological surveys conducted in 2005 (refer to Table V-5). Previous surveys conducted on the site and CNDDDB listings document the presence of steelhead, western pond turtle, two-striped garter snake, and tidewater goby in association with Santa Rosa Creek, and the presence of numerous bird and raptor species in forest and grassland areas. Additional wildlife species are considered as potentially present, but were not observed during surveys conducted in 2005 by Morro Group.

### 3. THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of potential biological impacts are based on thresholds identified within Appendix G of the CEQA *Guidelines*, which provides the following thresholds for determining impact significance with respect to biological resources. Biological impacts would be considered significant if the proposed project would:

- Substantially affect a rare or endangered species;
- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community;
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act;
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory species of wildlife or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors;
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources;
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan;
- Reduce the long term viability of native plant, fish or wildlife populations;
- Reduce species diversity or numbers of species;
- Introduce invasive plant or animal species.

### 4. IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND METHODOLOGY

Impact assessment focused on identifying potential impacts associated with implementation of the project, and was based on details presented within the project description. Potential impacts were expected to occur where proposed construction or development activities would result in temporary or permanent modification of sensitive communities or habitats occupied or potentially occupied by special-status species. Impacts to biological resources within the study

area were evaluated by determining the sensitivity, significance, or rarity of each resource that would be adversely affected by the proposed project, and thresholds of significance were applied to determine if the impact constituted a significant impact. The significance threshold may be different for each habitat or species and is based on the resource's rarity or sensitivity and the level of impact that would result from the proposed project. Where potential project-related impacts to sensitive resources were identified, measures for avoiding or minimizing adverse effects to these resources are recommended.

## 5. WEST FRP – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

General construction activities associated with all phases of project implementation have the potential to directly impact riparian habitats, wetland habitats, natural plant communities, and special-status plant and animal species. Terrestrial species and aquatic resources within and adjacent to the FRP could also be indirectly impacted by erosion and sedimentation during or following construction. Proposed recreational improvements have the potential to indirectly impact wildlife and riparian areas through increased noise, human presence, and stormwater runoff volumes.

Proposed activities within the West FRP are limited to construction and maintenance of multi-use trails, gates and stiles, fences, benches, and signs suitable for undeveloped open space used for passive recreational purposes. Proposed construction and maintenance activities, and subsequent recreational uses have limited potential to impact riparian and wetland resources, sensitive plant and animal species, native habitats, and nesting birds. The following impacts and mitigation measures apply to all West FRP project activities.

### a. WEST FRP – RIPARIAN AND WETLAND HABITAT IMPACTS

Construction of the proposed trails, associated improvements, and maintenance activities have the potential to cause direct and indirect impacts to riparian and wetland habitats associated with Santa Rosa Creek and various smaller drainages and seasonal wetland areas of the West FRP. Direct impacts would occur as a result of trail, bridge, and boardwalk construction activities. Indirect impacts consisting of sedimentation, increased stormwater runoff, and water pollution, could result during construction from use, maintenance, or staging of construction equipment in areas adjacent to riparian and wetland habitats. Subsequent recreational uses and maintenance of the trail system will impact wildlife in riparian and wetland areas through increased noise and human presence. These potential impacts would be considered significant, but would be minimized or avoided through implementation of appropriate mitigation measures.

**BIO Impact 1 Construction of trails and associated improvements has potential to impact riparian and wetland habitat associated with Santa Rosa Creek and various smaller drainages and seasonal wetland areas both within and downstream from the West FRP, resulting in a potentially significant impact.**

BIO/mm-1 Upon application for construction permits from the County, and site disturbance within jurisdictional areas, the CCSD or its designee shall obtain all necessary permits, approvals, and authorizations from jurisdictional agencies. These may include, but may not be limited to: (1) Army Corps of

Engineers Section 404 Nationwide Permit or Individual Permit for impacts to Army Corps of Engineers jurisdictional wetlands or other waters; (2) Regional Water Quality Control Board Section 401 Water Quality Certification for discharges “Waters of the U.S.” and/or “Waters of the State;” (3) California Department of Fish and Game Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement for activities within the tops of banks or outer edges of riparian canopies (whichever extends furthest from the streambeds) of drainages, and, (4) County of San Luis Obispo Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance Coastal Development Permit.

- BIO/mm-2      Prior to construction, the CCSD or its designee shall prepare a project-specific environmental monitoring plan coordinated with mitigation measures within this EIR, and shall provide funding for a qualified environmental monitor for the construction phases of the project to ensure compliance with EIR mitigation measures, and any applicable agency permit conditions. The monitor shall be responsible for (1) ensuring that procedures for verifying compliance with environmental mitigations are followed; (2) lines of communication and reporting methods; (3) daily and weekly reporting of compliance; (4) construction crew training regarding environmentally sensitive areas; (5) authority to stop work; and (6) action to be taken in the event of non-compliance. Monitoring shall be at a frequency and duration determined by the affected agencies (e.g., Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Fish and Game, California Coastal Commission, and the County of San Luis Obispo).
- BIO/mm-3      Upon application for construction permits from the County, and site disturbance, the CCSD or its designee shall prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) consistent with guidelines, which shall include detailed sediment and erosion control plans consistent with any required Habitat Mitigation Monitoring Plan (HMMP). The SWPPP shall specifically address protection of drainages, and riparian and wetland resources on and adjacent to the project site. Compliance shall be verified by the project environmental monitor through submission of compliance reports.
- BIO/mm-4      Upon application for construction permits from the County, and prior to site disturbance, all riparian and wetland areas shall be shown on all construction plans. The riparian/wetland areas shown on grading plans shall be based on the field data collected and presented in the Environmental Impact Report or from any subsequent survey work. All riparian vegetation planned for removal shall be specified on construction plans. Except for activities requiring removal of riparian trees and associated understory vegetation that are specified on construction plans, all ground disturbances and vegetation removal shall be prohibited within the outer edge of the riparian canopy of any drainage onsite.

- BIO/mm-5 To avoid erosion and downstream sedimentation, and to avoid impacts to aquatic species, no work within or immediately adjacent to on-site drainages (within fifty feet) shall occur during the rainy season (October 15 through April 30), unless authorized by an affected agency (e.g., Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Fish and Game, California Coastal Commission, and the County of San Luis Obispo).
- BIO/mm-6 Equipment access and construction shall be conducted from the banks rather than from within creeks and drainages unless approved otherwise by 404/401/1602 permit conditions. No equipment shall be staged and no temporary placement of fill shall occur in creeks and drainages.
- BIO/mm-7 Soil stockpiles shall not be placed in areas that have the potential for significant runoff during the rainy season. All project-related spills of hazardous materials within or adjacent to project sites shall be cleaned up immediately. Spill prevention and cleanup materials shall be on-site at all times during construction. Cleaning and refueling of equipment and vehicles shall occur only within designated staging areas. The staging areas shall conform to standard Best Management Practices applicable to attaining zero discharge of stormwater runoff. No maintenance, cleaning, or fueling of equipment shall occur within wetland or riparian areas, or within fifty feet of such areas. At a minimum, all project equipment and vehicles shall be checked and maintained on a daily basis to ensure proper operation and to avoid potential leaks or spills.
- BIO/mm-8 Impacts to wetland or riparian habitats resulting from project construction shall be mitigated through restoration/enhancement of adjacent wetland and riparian areas at a minimum of a 2:1 ratio (two square feet of restored habitat for each square foot of disturbed habitat) or greater, or as required by any applicable state or federal permit. Restoration/enhancement shall consist of exotic species removal, revegetation with suitable native species, and maintenance and monitoring of the enhanced areas per the conditions of agency permits obtained for the project. A Habitat Revegetation and Restoration Plan for the project shall be prepared in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Game and the Army Corps of Engineers. A qualified restoration biologist and/or horticulturalist approved by the CCSD shall be retained by the CCSD or its designee to prepare the Habitat Revegetation and Restoration Plan. The Plan shall include success criteria goals and a five-year monitoring schedule. The qualified biologist shall supervise site preparation, timing, species utilized, planting installation, maintenance, monitoring, and reporting of the revegetation/restoration efforts.
- BIO/mm-9 Following completion of ground-disturbing activities within or immediately adjacent to riparian or wetland areas, all disturbed and barren areas shall be immediately revegetated with appropriate native vegetation to reduce the risk

of erosion, per the requirements of the Habitat Revegetation and Restoration Plan and the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan. Areas experiencing temporary disturbance should be replanted with native species that are characteristic of habitats in the project site area.

*Residual Impact* With implementation of mitigation, impacts associated with potential degradation of onsite and downstream riparian and wetland areas due to project construction would be considered *less than significant with mitigation, Class II*.

b. WEST FRP – SENSITIVE PLANTS AND NATIVE TERRESTRIAL HABITATS

Four sensitive annual plant species (Cambria morning glory, San Luis Obispo paint brush, Monterey pine, and compact cobwebby thistle), were identified as present within the West FRP, and suitable habitat for additional sensitive plant species is present in wetland, grassland, and woodland habitats. Two sensitive native terrestrial habitats (Monterey pine forest and native grassland) are also present. Grassland habitats composed of at least ten percent native grass species, and Monterey pine forest habitat are typically considered to be ESHAs under CCC guidelines. Direct impacts to sensitive plant species and native habitats could occur as a result of trail construction activities. Subsequent recreational uses and maintenance of the trail system would impact adjacent sensitive plant and habitat occurrences through trampling and soil disturbance. Due to the undetermined timeframe for future trail construction, the locations of special-status plant species and habitat areas may not be same as the occurrences mapped in 2005. In addition, the *Public Access and Management Plan* is general in nature, and specific grading/site disturbance boundaries are currently undetermined. Site specific botanical studies would be required prior to implementation of trail improvements.

**BIO Impact 2 Implementation of proposed trail improvements to the Ridge Trail, Forest Loop Trail, Victoria Lane Trail, Meander Trail, Creek to Ridge Trail, Wallbridge Trail, and Terrace to Ridge Trail has potential to impact sensitive plant species and native habitats including Cambria morning glory, San Luis Obispo paint brush, compact cobwebby thistle, Monterey pine forest, and native grassland present within and adjacent to proposed trail routes, resulting in a potentially significant impact.**

BIO/mm-10 Prior to application for land use and construction permits from the County and prior to trail construction in areas known to contain sensitive plant species or native habitats, the CCSD or its designee shall retain a qualified botanist/biologist to conduct focused surveys during the appropriate flowering periods within the specific areas proposed for disturbance. Surveys will focus on those plants and habitats noted as present or as having a high potential for occurrence. Based on the survey results, trail locations shall be altered where possible to minimize disturbance or loss of identified plants and habitats.

BIO/mm-11 If disturbance of special-status plants or native habitats located on site cannot be completely avoided through design modification, impacts shall be quantified by number of individuals and by area disturbed, and a Rare Plant

Mitigation Plan shall be prepared by a qualified biologist that specifically addresses impacts to and appropriate mitigation and conservation measures for those impacts. The Plan shall identify areas on the project site suitable for sensitive species habitat restoration and revegetation, and shall include planting methods, maintenance and monitoring requirements, and success criteria. Depending on the species at issue, measures may include preservation of areas containing significant populations, potential transplanting of individual plants, and plant propagation and revegetation within appropriate on-site habitats. Removal or pruning of Monterey pine trees required for hazard reduction or fire safety purposes shall not require mitigation under this measure, but pruning shall follow accepted procedures to avoid harm to the tree.

BIO/mm-12 A qualified biological monitor shall be retained consistent with BIO/mm-2 to ensure that remaining plants and habitats are not inadvertently disturbed during construction activities. Prior to any project-related ground disturbance, all contractors associated with the construction phases of the proposed project shall be trained by the biological monitor on the identification and biology of sensitive plant species and habitats known in the vicinity of the project area. Work areas should also be clearly delineated and flagged to limit vehicular and foot access to only those areas necessary for project completion. These areas should be designated by the biological monitor to avoid/discourage unnecessary damage to sensitive species and habitats within and near the project area.

Residual Impact With implementation of mitigation, impacts to sensitive plant species and native habitats would be considered *less than significant with mitigation, Class II*.

### Secondary Impact

Sensitive archaeological and historical resources are present on the West FRP. Trail realignment to avoid one type of resource may result in significant impacts to other resources. Final trail design would depend on site specific studies, including botanical studies and subsurface investigation of cultural deposit sites.

**BIO Impact 3 Realignment of trails to avoid special status plant species may result in potentially significant impacts to cultural resources.**

BIO/mm-13 Prior to application for land use and construction permits from the County and prior to trail construction within sensitive areas, the CCSD or its designee shall ensure that all resources are considered and avoided where feasible. If conflicts arise, the CCSD shall consult with appropriate agencies to resolve the conflicts (e.g., California Department of Fish and Game, California Coastal Commission, Army Corps of Engineers, Office of Historic Preservation, County of San Luis Obispo).



Implement CULT/mm-1 through CULT/mm-8.

Residual Impact With implementation of mitigation, secondary impacts to sensitive cultural and biological resources would be considered *less than significant with mitigation, Class II*.

c. WEST FRP – SENSITIVE WILDLIFE

1) West FRP – Aquatic Species

The proposed trail construction activities have potential to impact California red-legged frog, steelhead trout, Southwestern pond turtle, tidewater goby, and suitable habitat for these species within or immediately adjacent to the Santa Rosa Creek channel. These aquatic and semi-aquatic species could be directly affected by vegetation removal, accidental fuel spills, erosion, and/or sedimentation. Excessive sedimentation/siltation to the creek may degrade water quality or smother sensitive aquatic species. Special-status species that utilize upland habitat (e.g., western pond turtle, California red-legged frog) may be directly impacted by trampling or crushing. A variety of mitigation measures are recommended to avoid, minimize and compensate for any potential impacts resulting from project construction.

**BIO Impact 4 Trail construction has potential to directly impact aquatic wildlife species and habitats associated with Santa Rosa Creek both within the project area and downstream from the site, resulting in a potentially significant impact.**

Implement BIO/mm-1 thru BIO/mm-7, in addition to the following:

BIO/mm-14 To the extent practicable, construction activities within or adjacent to Santa Rosa Creek (within 100 feet) shall be conducted during the dry season (May 15 through October 15).

BIO/mm-15 At least two weeks prior to start of trail or bridge construction within or adjacent to Santa Rosa Creek (within 100 feet), the CCSD shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct pre-construction surveys within the construction areas to determine the presence of special-status aquatic species. In the event that special-status species are observed within the project site, the appropriate agencies shall be contacted for further consultation. If any life stage of steelhead, California red-legged frog, tidewater goby, or Southwestern pond turtle is found and these individuals are likely to be killed or injured by work activities, the approved biologist(s) shall be allowed sufficient time to move them from the site before work activities begin. The biologist(s) shall relocate any steelhead, California red-legged frog, tidewater goby, or Southwestern pond turtle the shortest distance possible to a location that contains suitable habitat that will not be affected by the activities associated with the proposed project. The biologist(s) shall maintain detailed records of any individuals that are moved (i.e., size, coloration, any distinguishing features, photographs [digital preferred]) to assist him or her in determining whether translocated

animals are returning to the point of capture. Only United States Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and California Department of Fish and Game-approved biologists working under proper permit authority shall participate in any activities associated with the capture, handling, and monitoring of steelhead, California red-legged frog, tidewater goby, or Southwestern pond turtle.

- BIO/mm-16 Prior to construction, an approved biologist(s) shall conduct a training session for all construction personnel. At a minimum, the training shall include a description of steelhead, California red-legged frog, tidewater goby, and Southwestern pond turtle and their habitat; the specific measures that are being implemented to conserve the species for the current project; and the boundaries within which the project may be accomplished. Members of the construction crews shall understand all terms, constraints, and special conditions provided by, but not limited to, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Game, California Coastal Commission, and Regional Water Quality Control Board. Upon completion of this review and understanding, each construction crew member shall sign a worker training form. This form shall be provided with the completion report upon completion of project construction.
- BIO/mm-17 In order to minimize the possibility of injuring special-status species and other wildlife, herbaceous and small woody vegetation within the project impact area shall be removed by hand with portable motorized equipment (i.e., chainsaws, etc.), prior to the use of heavy equipment or machinery. A qualified biologist shall be on-site to provide clearance for special-status species immediately prior to vegetation removal activities. The biological monitor shall have general knowledge of the natural resources of the area and shall also be experienced in the identification of special-status wildlife species (e.g., California red-legged frog, western pond turtle). In the event of a red-legged frog take, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service shall be notified as soon as is reasonably possible. In the event of a steelhead take, National Marine Fisheries Service shall be contacted and the steelhead shall be removed from the project site and kept in a freezer until further direction from National Marine Fisheries Service.
- BIO/mm-18 The number of access routes, size of staging areas, and the total area of activity shall be limited to the minimum necessary to achieve the project goal. Environmentally Sensitive Areas shall be established to confine access routes and construction areas to the minimum area necessary to complete construction and minimize the impact to steelhead, California red-legged frog, and Southwestern pond turtle habitat; this goal includes locating access routes and construction areas outside of wetlands and riparian areas to the maximum extent practicable.

- BIO/mm-19 During project activities adjacent to Santa Rosa Creek, all trash that may attract predators shall be properly contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and construction debris shall be removed from work areas.
- BIO/mm-20 All refueling, maintenance, and staging of equipment and vehicles shall occur at designated locations at least 100 feet from riparian areas. Fueling locations shall have spill containment measures and materials present at all times. The monitor shall ensure contamination of habitat does not occur during such operations. All workers shall be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to take shall a spill occur.
- BIO/mm-21 Project areas disturbed by construction shall be revegetated with an assemblage of native riparian, wetland, and upland vegetation suitable for the area. Locally collected plant materials shall be used to the extent practicable. Invasive non-native plants within disturbed areas shall be controlled to the maximum extent practicable.
- BIO/mm-22 Prior to any work within creek channels containing flowing water, a stream diversion and dewatering plan for each stream location shall be prepared and approved by National Marine Fisheries Service, Army Corps of Engineers, and California Department of Fish and Game, and the streambed within the work area shall be dewatered. The form and function of the diversion and all pumps included in the dewatering strategy shall be designed to ensure a dry work environment and minimize impacts to aquatic species. The stream diversion and dewatering effort shall be conducted under the direct and continuous supervision of a qualified biologist to ensure the proper form and function of the diversion.
- BIO/mm-23 To control sedimentation during and after project implementation, the contractor shall implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) outlined in any authorizations or permits issued under the authorities of the Clean Water Act for the project. If BMPs are ineffective, the contractor shall attempt to remedy the situation immediately, in consultation with the environmental monitor and the CCSD.

Residual Impact With implementation of mitigation, impacts to sensitive aquatic wildlife species would be considered *less than significant with mitigation, Class II*.

## 2) West FRP – Nesting Birds

The riparian corridor along Santa Rosa Creek, Monterey pine forest habitat, and annual grassland habitat provide suitable roosting, nesting, and foraging habitat for a variety of bird species, including several that are considered sensitive by resource agencies. If noise-producing construction activities, or tree pruning or removal occur at any time during the typical nesting season (February 15 to September 1) within 500 feet of riparian corridors, Monterey pine forest, or annual grassland areas, nesting birds could be directly and/or indirectly impacted. Cooper's

hawk, white-tailed kite, loggerhead shrike, and other tree-nesting birds could have nests directly damaged or destroyed during tree-removal activities, or their nesting or foraging behaviors could be indirectly affected by noise and other sources of construction-related disturbance. Ground nesting birds such as California horned lark could have nests directly impacted and behaviors indirectly impacted during any construction activities in annual grasslands onsite. Implementation of mitigation measures would reduce the potential for impacts to nesting birds.

**BIO Impact 5 Trail construction and tree pruning or removal activities within and adjacent to the riparian corridor of Santa Rosa Creek, and in Monterey pine forest and annual grassland habitats, has potential to impact nesting birds during the typical nesting season (February 15 to September 1), resulting in a potentially significant impact.**

BIO/mm-24 Prior to construction, if construction activities or tree pruning or removal are scheduled to occur during the typical bird nesting season (February 15 to September 1) a qualified biologist shall be retained to conduct a preconstruction survey (approximately one week prior to construction) to determine presence/absence for tree-nesting birds within riparian corridors and woodland areas, and ground-nesting birds within annual grasslands onsite. If no nesting activities are detected within the proposed work area, noise-producing construction activities or tree removals may proceed. If nesting activity is confirmed during preconstruction nesting surveys or at any time during the monitoring of construction activities, work activities shall be delayed within 500 feet of active nests until the young birds have fledged and left the nest. In addition, the results of the surveys will be passed immediately to the California Department of Fish and Game, possibly with recommendations for buffer zone changes, as needed, around individual nests. Tree removal shall be monitored for nesting birds and documented by the biological monitor regardless of time of year.

Residual Impact With implementation of mitigation, impacts associated with potential impacts to nesting birds would be considered *less than significant with mitigation, Class II*.

## 6. EAST FRP – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

General construction activities associated with all phases of project implementation have the potential to directly impact riparian habitats, wetland habitats, natural plant communities, and special-status plant and animal species. Terrestrial species and aquatic resources within and adjacent to the FRP could also be indirectly impacted by erosion and sedimentation during or following construction. Proposed recreational improvements have the potential to indirectly impact wildlife and riparian areas through increased noise, lighting, human presence, and stormwater runoff volumes.

Proposed activities would transform the East FRP into an active community park, complete with turf recreational field areas, multi-use trails, parking areas, and general community recreation facilities. These activities have potential to impact riparian and wetland resources, sensitive

plant and animal species, native habitats, and nesting birds. The following impacts and mitigation measures apply to all East FRP project activities.

a. **EAST FRP – RIPARIAN AND WETLAND HABITAT IMPACTS**

Construction of the proposed park, trails, recreational fields, and associated improvements has potential to cause direct and indirect impacts to riparian and wetland habitats associated with Santa Rosa Creek and various smaller drainages and seasonal wetland areas. Direct impacts would occur as a result of trail, bridge, and boardwalk construction activities. Indirect impacts consisting of sedimentation, increased stormwater runoff, and water pollution, could result during construction from use, maintenance, or staging of construction equipment in areas adjacent to riparian and wetland habitats. In addition, construction of an emergency access road extending to Piney Way may result in direct and indirect impacts to the seasonal wetland area associated with the Piney Way gully. Subsequent recreational uses and maintenance of the trail system will impact wildlife and riparian areas through increased noise and human presence. These potential impacts would be considered significant, but would be minimized or avoided through implementation of appropriate mitigation measures.

**BIO Impact 6 Construction of trails, recreational fields, the Piney Way emergency access road, and associated improvements has potential to impact riparian and wetland habitat associated with Santa Rosa Creek and seasonal wetland areas both within, adjacent to, and downstream from the East FRP, resulting in a potentially significant impact.**

Implement Mitigation Measures BIO/mm-1 through 9 prior to and during construction activities on the East FRP.

Residual Impact With implementation of mitigation, impacts associated with potential degradation of onsite and downstream riparian and wetland areas due to project construction would be considered *less than significant with mitigation, Class II*.

b. **EAST FRP – SENSITIVE PLANTS AND NATIVE TERRESTRIAL HABITATS**

Two sensitive annual plant species (Cambria morning glory and Monterey pine), were identified as present within the East FRP, and suitable habitat for additional sensitive plant species is present in wetland, grassland, and woodland habitats. Two sensitive native terrestrial habitats (Monterey pine forest and native grassland) are also present. Grassland habitats composed of at least ten percent native grass species, and Monterey pine forest habitat are typically considered to be ESHAs under CCC guidelines. Direct impacts to sensitive plant species and native habitats could occur as a result of trail construction activities. Subsequent recreational uses and maintenance of the trail system would impact adjacent sensitive plant and habitat occurrences through trampling and soil disturbance.

**BIO Impact 7 Construction of the East FRP portion of the project has potential to impact sensitive plant species and native habitats including Cambria morning glory, Monterey pine forest, and native grassland present within**

**and adjacent to proposed trails, recreational fields, and associated development areas, resulting in a potentially significant impact.**

Implement Mitigation Measures BIO/mm-10 through 12 during construction activities on the East FRP.

*Residual Impact* With implementation of mitigation, impacts to sensitive plant species and native habitats would be considered *less than significant with mitigation, Class II*.

c. **EAST FRP – SENSITIVE WILDLIFE**

1) **East FRP – Aquatic Species**

Construction of the proposed trails and recreational facilities have potential to impact California red-legged frog, steelhead trout, Southwestern pond turtle, tidewater goby, and suitable habitat for these species within or immediately adjacent to the Santa Rosa Creek channel. These aquatic and semi-aquatic species could be directly affected by vegetation removal, accidental fuel spills, erosion, and/or sedimentation. Excessive sedimentation/siltation to the creek may degrade water quality or smother sensitive aquatic species. Special-status species that utilize upland habitat (e.g., western pond turtle, California red-legged frog) may be directly impacted by trampling or crushing. A variety of mitigation measures are recommended to avoid, minimize and compensate for any potential impacts resulting from project construction.

**BIO Impact 8 Trail and recreational facility construction has potential to directly impact aquatic wildlife species and habitats associated with Santa Rosa Creek both within the project area and downstream from the site, resulting in a potentially significant impact.**

Implement Mitigation Measures BIO/mm-1 through BIO/mm-9, and measures BIO/mm-13 through BIO/mm-22 during construction activities on the East FRP.

*Residual Impact* With implementation of mitigation, impacts associated to sensitive aquatic wildlife species would be considered *less than significant with mitigation, Class II*.

2) **East FRP – Nesting Birds**

The riparian corridor along Santa Rosa Creek, Monterey pine forest habitat, and annual grassland habitat provide suitable roosting, nesting, and foraging habitat for a variety of bird species, including several that are considered sensitive by resource agencies. If noise-producing construction activities, or tree pruning or removal (including removal of eucalyptus trees) occur at any time during the typical nesting season (February 15 to September 1) within 500 feet of riparian corridors, Monterey pine forest, or annual grassland areas, nesting birds could be directly and/or indirectly impacted. Cooper's hawk, white-tailed kite, loggerhead shrike, and other tree-nesting birds could have nests directly damaged or destroyed during tree-removal activities, or their nesting or foraging behaviors could be indirectly affected by noise and other sources of construction-related disturbance. Ground nesting birds such as California horned lark

could have nests directly impacted and behaviors indirectly impacted during any construction activities in annual grasslands onsite. Implementation of mitigation measures would reduce the potential for impacts to nesting birds.

**BIO Impact 9** Trail construction and tree pruning or removal activities within and adjacent to the riparian corridor of Santa Rosa Creek, removal of eucalyptus trees, and in Monterey pine forest and annual grassland habitats, has potential to impact nesting birds during the typical nesting season (February 15 to September 1), resulting in a potentially significant impact.

Implement Mitigation Measure BIO/mm-23.

*Residual Impact* With implementation of mitigation, impacts associated with potential impacts to nesting birds would be considered *less than significant with mitigation, Class II*.

## 7. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Implementation of the *Public Access and Management Plan* and the *Community Park Master Plan* would result in permanent and temporary impacts to biologically sensitive freshwater marsh, riparian, native grassland, and Monterey pine forest habitats. These habitats contain or have the potential to contain sensitive plant and animal species, and fall under the jurisdiction of various state and federal resource agencies.

The potential impacts to the sensitive species and habitat types discussed in this section, when considered in context with the potential for losses of similar habitats due to the construction of future projects within the County, constitute a cumulative impact to these biological resources.

**BIO Impact 10** The impacts to sensitive species and habitats resulting from development of the proposed project would result in the direct loss of biological resources, and would contribute to the cumulative degradation of biological resources of the area, resulting in a potentially significant cumulative impact.

Implement BIO/mm-1 through BIO/mm-23.

*Residual Impact* Projects identified within the cumulative development scenario would be subject to the same regulatory requirements and similar types of mitigation measures as the proposed project. Cumulative impacts to sensitive species and habitats would be *less than significant with mitigation, Class II*.

### LIST OF ABBREVIATED TERMS

Abbreviation	Term
ACOE	Army Corps of Engineers
CCC	California Coastal Commission
CCSD	CCSD
CDFG	California Department of Fish and Game
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CNDDDB	CDFG Natural Diversity Data Base
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CZLUO	Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
ESHA	Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
HMMP	Habitat Mitigation Monitoring Plan
NOAA Fisheries Service	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey