INITIAL STUDY and
PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
for

PLEASANTON RIDGE REGIONAL PARK LAND USE PLAN
ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

East Bay
Regional Park District

Adopted: July 17, 2012
Resolution No.: 2012-07-183
SCH No.: 2012062006

Lead Agency:
East Bay Regional Park District
P.O. Box 5381, Oakland, CA 94605
www.ebparks.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS, continued

Section **Page #**

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND REGULATORY GUIDANCE

The East Bay Regional Park District (District or EBRPD), as Lead Agency, has prepared this Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the proposed *Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park Land Use Plan project* (LUP), as described in Section 2.5, in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as amended, and in accordance with the State of California *CEQA Guidelines* (California Administrative Code, Title 14, Chapter 3).

As the CEQA Lead Agency, the District has prepared this document to provide agencies and the public with information about the proposed project's potential impacts on the local and regional environment. This document addresses the recommendations and actions contained in the LUP that would result in physical changes to the baseline environmental conditions at this regional park. The purpose of this Initial Study (IS) is to determine whether implementing the project could result in potentially significant effects to the environment, and, if so, to incorporate avoidance and mitigation measures to eliminate or reduce the project's potentially significant adverse effects to less-than-significant levels.

If, after consideration of this IS and any comments received during the public review period, the District finds no substantial evidence that the proposed project would have a significant adverse effect on the environment, then a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) will be submitted for adoption by the District's Board of Directors, as provided in §21064.5 of the CEQA Statute.

1.2 PURPOSE

The District has developed the recommendations and proposals contained in the *Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park Land Use Plan* to describe land use goals, capital projects and resource management actions at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, the project area. The purpose of this document is to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed *Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park Land Use Plan*. The District has incorporated mitigation measures into the project to avoid any potentially significant impacts or reduce them to a less-than-significant level.

1.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Chapter 4.0 of this document contains the IS Checklist which identifies the potential environmental impacts by resource area and provides a brief discussion of each impact resulting from implementation of the proposed project. Based on the IS and supporting environmental analysis provided in this document, together with the incorporation of mitigation measures, the proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts for the following issues: air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hydrology and water quality, noise and transportation and traffic.

In accordance with Section 15064(f) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, a MND will be prepared if the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment after the inclusion of mitigation measures. Based on the available project information and the environmental analysis

presented in this document, there is no substantial evidence that, after the incorporation of mitigation measures, the proposed project would have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, it is proposed that a MND be adopted in accordance with the *CEQA Guidelines*.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Project Name: *Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park Land Use Plan, City of Hayward, City of Pleasanton and Unincorporated Alameda County, California*

Project Summary: The District proposes to incorporate 2,360 acres of land bank parcels into the existing 4,172 acres of parkland currently open to the public at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. The project area comprises 6,532 acres. The project proposes to open three new access points for a total of three District staging areas and two trailheads. Implementation of the project would expand the existing 29-mile sanctioned trail system by 34 miles for a total of approximately 63 miles (58 acres) of trails at full build-out, and develop back country picnic, interpretive and camping opportunities. Implementation of the project would relocate the existing park service yard and staff office. Actions that would result in physical changes to the environment, referred to collectively as the "project," are included in Section 2.5, *Project Details*.

The Initial Study for the proposed project has been prepared in conformance with specifications of the CEQA Statute, and the State *CEQA Guidelines*. Compliance with CEQA is required because of state and local jurisdiction over the proposed project.

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION

As shown in Figures 1 and 2, the 6,532-acre project area is generally bounded by Interstate 580 to the north, Foothill Road to the east, Niles Canyon Road to the south and Palomares Road to the west. The project area is predominantly undeveloped land mostly within the jurisdictional boundaries of unincorporated Alameda County with a portion of the northern area within the City of Hayward and small areas along the eastern edge within the City of Pleasanton. One hundred eight assessor parcels compose the project area, which is situated within USGS Dublin and Niles 7.5 Quads, within the following latitude/longitude limits: southern boundary, 37° 35' 39.398" N; northern boundary, 37° 41' 41.23" N; and eastern boundary, 121° 52' 43.181" W - 121° 59' 17.365" W.

2.3 PROJECT PURPOSE AND GOALS

The *Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park Land Use Plan* is a long-term guide for natural and cultural resources management and access, recreational and educational facilities and programs; the plan's purpose is to:

- Open 2,360 acres of new parkland to the public.
- Increase outdoor recreational opportunities, specifically trails, backpack camping and picnicking.
- Improve public access.
- Manage the park's natural resources to benefit biodiversity and habitat values for native wildlife.
- Protect, and where appropriate, interpret, cultural resources.

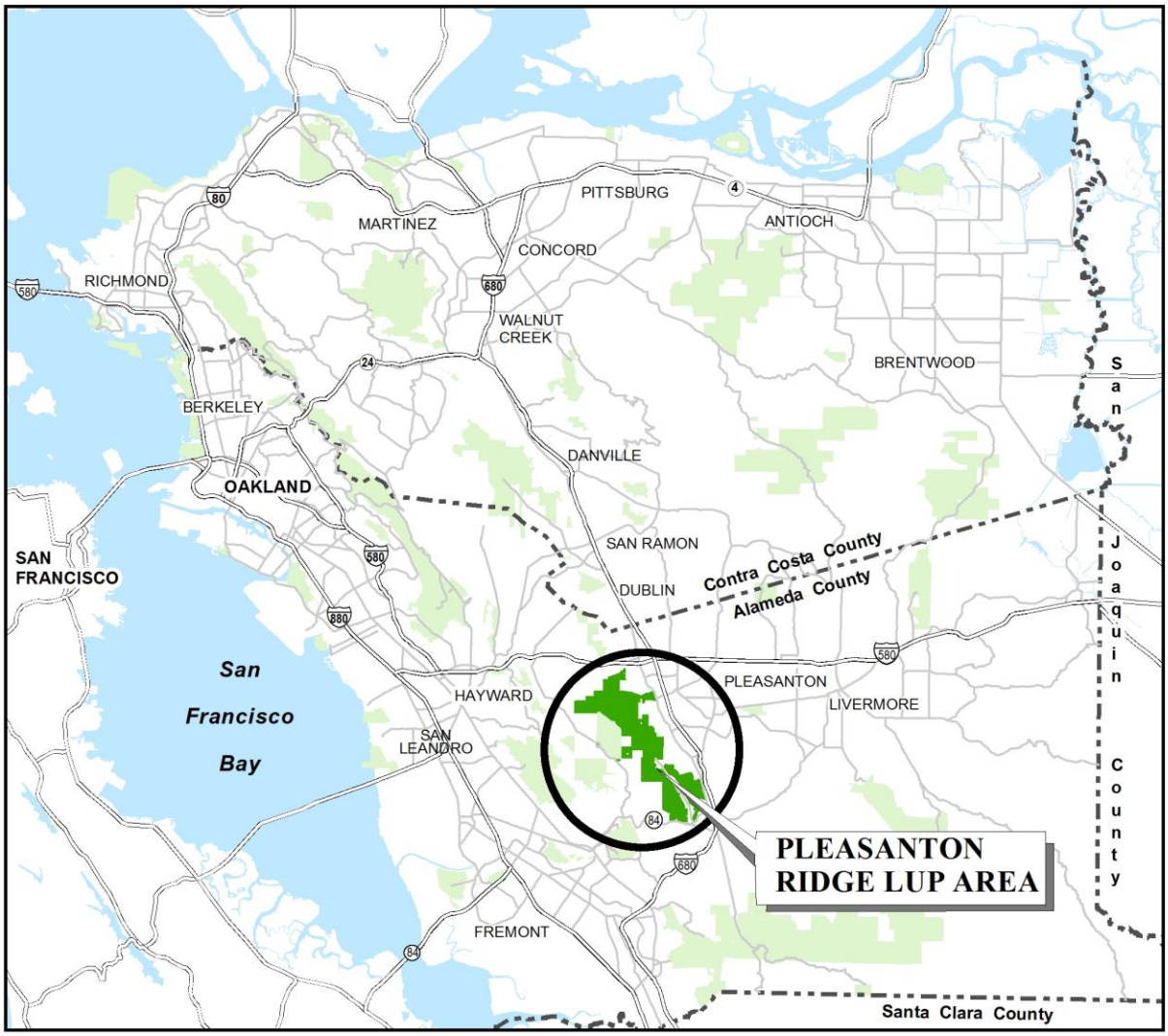

PITTSBURG
ANTIOCH
MARTINEZ
CONCORD
RICHMOND
WALNUT CREEK
BRENTWOOD
BERKELEY
DANVILLE
OAKLAND
SAN RAMON
SAN FRANCISCO
DUBLIN
Contra Costa County
Alameda County
San Francisco Bay
HAYWARD
PLEASANTON
LIVERMORE
SAN LEANDRO
PLEASANTON RIDGE LUP AREA
FREMONT
Santa Clara County
San Joaquin County
0 5 10 Miles
N
W
E
S
LUP Study Area
Other Regional Parks
East Bay Regional Park District
Initial Study
Planning/Stewardship/GIS Services
SEP. 12, 2011
Figure 1
LOCATION MAP
Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
Alameda County, California

Figure 2
VICINITY MAP
Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
Alameda County, California
East Bay
Regional Park District
Initial Study
Planning/Stewardship/GIS Services
SEPT. 21, 2011
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
N
LEGEND
Existing District Staging Area/Trailhead
Proposed District Staging Area/Trailhead
City of Pleasanton Parks/Trailhead
City Boundary
LUP Area
EBRPD Parkland
Existing Trail or Road
Highway
Other Selected Road
DUBLIN HILLS REGIONAL PARK
PLEASANTON RIDGE REGIONAL PARK
FIVE CANYONS OPEN SPACE
GARIN REGIONAL PARK
DRY CREEK PIONEER REGIONAL PARK
DON CASTRO
VARGAS
Devany Canyon (EBRPD)
Laurel Creek Dr (Pleasanton)
Moller Ranch Dr (Pleasanton)
Cairns (EBRPD)
Alviso Adobe Park (Pleasanton)
Augustin Bernal Park (Pleasanton)
Foothill Staging Area (EBRPD)
Town of Sunol
DUBLIN CANYON RD
FOOTHILL RD
LAS POSITAS BLVD
KILKARE RD
CANYON RD
NILES
PALOMARES RD
MISSION BLVD
CITY OF DUBLIN
CITY OF PLEASANTON
HAYWARD
ALAMEDA COUNTY
UNION CITY
CITY OF FREMONT
580
680
880

2.4 PROJECT BACKGROUND AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Project Setting: The LUP, specifically Chapter 3.0 and several appendices, provide a full description of the project area's physical environment and natural and cultural resources. What follows is a brief description of the project's background and its existing environmental setting. Existing site conditions represent the "baseline" setting for the environmental impact analysis, as summarized here.

The District's 1973 Master Plan initially identified a regional park on Pleasanton, Main and Sunol ridges to protect important ridgelands and provide open space connections. The District first acquired parkland in this area in 1984, and in 1990 the District adopted an interim land use plan that opened 1,771 acres of parkland to the public. Subsequently, the District adopted several planning documents to formally incorporate and open newly acquired land, pushing the parkland boundaries generally north and westward. Today, 4,172 acres at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park are open to the public and the LUP covers 2,360 additional acres, bringing the total acreage of the project area to 6,377.

As shown in Figures 1 and 2, the park is generally bounded by Interstate 580 to the north, Foothill Road to the east, Niles Canyon Road to the south and Palomares Road to the west. The park covers Pleasanton, Main and Sunol ridges. Pleasanton and Main ridges sit to the east. Sunol Ridge, the highest ridge, which peaks at 2,100 feet above mean sea level, parallels these other ridges to the west. On Pleasanton and Main ridges, the District owns two discontinuous properties linked by an access road through the City of Pleasanton's 237-acre Augustin Bernal Community Park. To the northwest, the parklands extend into upper Kilkare Canyon, where the park continues into Sunol and Main ridges, and terminates in the north in Devany Canyon. The project area serves as a natural visual backdrop to the flat Livermore and San Ramon Valley plain and is a valuable scenic resource. The pastoral character and topographic diversity of the park provides for a peaceful setting and affords sweeping ridge-top views of the visually prominent peaks and ridgelines of the Diablo, Hamilton and Las Trampas/Pleasanton/Sunol ranges.

Primary park access is from the Foothill Staging Area, located along Foothill Road, which provides parking for 50 vehicles, including horse trailers, with overflow space for 75 additional vehicles. The Foothill Staging Area also includes vault toilets, two drinking fountains and a family picnic area. The Oak Tree Trailhead, formerly known as Thermalito Trailhead, is located in the southern boundary of the park at Foothill Road near the Town of Sunol; this access does not provide public parking and contains no park facilities. Another existing park access is located on the eastern border of the project area through the City of Pleasanton's Augustin Bernal Community Park. Public access is limited to residents of the adjoining Golden Eagle subdivision and City of Pleasanton residents; non residents can apply for a week-long pass to enter the park.

Though the parkland can be characterized as unimproved open space, the existing conditions reflect centuries of human occupancy, and the land contains a rich variety of cultural resources. Since at least 1985, portions of the land that now comprise Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park have been evaluated for cultural resources. In addition, in preparation for the LUP, the District

conducted oral histories of members of parkland homestead families and hired a professional archaeological firm to prepare a cultural resources sensitivity map of the park; this work has enabled the District to propose a project to avoid potential impacts to cultural resources.

Cultural resource evaluations in the park have uncovered evidence of pre-historic Native American resources, such as bedrock mortars and subsurface midden deposits. European settlement of the land began in the 1860s and historic resources from early homesteaders and ranchers include houses and out buildings; ornamental plants and fruit and olive orchards; paved and unpaved roads and trails; fences; sewage and water systems, which include holding tanks and septic systems and wells, springs, storage tanks, hydrants and distribution systems that provide potable and non-potable water; and grazing infrastructure, including spring boxes, corrals, water troughs and 27 ponds, many of which were constructed either to provide drinking water to cattle or more recently to create wildlife habitat. There is just under 30 miles of existing, official trails located in portions of the park that are now open to the public; nine miles of unsanctioned or bootleg narrow trails also exist. Park facilities include three houses, built and used by former landowners, which now serve as park security residences; one house also functions as a staff office and meeting room. The proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area includes a mobile home, barn, workshop and shed. There is a backpack campsite with two informal sites located near the terminus of Kilkare Road along Sinbad Creek.

The park's landscape is characteristic of California's northern coast range and inland valley and contains expansive grasslands, steep rolling hills and valleys and meandering tree-lined drainages with oak/bay woodlands. The park forms part of the Alameda watershed and provides valuable wildlife habitat including critical breeding and foraging habitat for several federal- and state-listed species. Constructed stock ponds provide water for cattle, but also provide habitat for resident wildlife including the federally-threatened California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*). The park is located within the federally-designated critical habitat area for Alameda whipsnake (*Masticophis lateraliss euryxanthus*). Headwaters of seven streams originate on land with the park; Sinbad Creek, which serves as a tributary to Alameda Creek, is the park's major drainage.

As shown in Table 1, located in Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*, 17 special-status wildlife species, including three federally-threatened species, have either been observed by District staff or others, or have the potential to occur in the project area. Additionally, Congdon's tarplant (*Hemizonia parryi ssp. congdonii = Centromadia parry subsp. Congdonii*) is known to occur in the project area and, with a State CNPS List 1B.2 (fairly endangered in California) and an East Bay CNPS Rank of *A2, will be considered under CEQA.

Over the last 30 years, District biologists, as well as various environmental consulting firms, have conducted both general and species-specific surveys of the project area. From 2007 to 2011, in preparation of the LUP, District staff conducted annual field surveys, including ponds and wetlands, for plants and wildlife. Additionally, District staff has reviewed the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), a state-maintained inventory of rare plants and animals. Taken together, these studies form a baseline inventory of the park's existing environmental condition, and have allowed the District to design the project so as to avoid and minimize potential environmental impacts.

2.5 PROJECT DETAILS

The project details contained in this section address the recommendations and actions contained in the *Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park Land Use Plan* project, referred to collectively as the "project," that would result in physical changes to the baseline environmental conditions at this regional park and are incorporated by reference in this document.

Recreational Facility Development and Infrastructure Improvements

The *Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park Land Use Plan* divides the project area into natural and recreation/staging units. The LUP recommends that 6,068 acres or 93 percent of the total project area be designated a Natural Unit, meaning that this land would either remain undeveloped and/or it is suitable for passive recreational activities such as trail use. Public facilities and infrastructure would be concentrated in the remaining land, comprising five recreation/staging units, totaling 464 acres, as depicted in Figure 6: the existing Foothill Staging Area; the future Garms and Tyler Ranch staging areas; and the Sinbad Creek and Aquila backpack camps. Project implementation will result in a total of 52 acres of new developed area including 17 miles of new, narrow trail construction. To make the land more enjoyable and accessible to the public, the LUP recommends the following proposals that would result in physical changes to the project area:

<u>Foothill Staging Area – Development is located within existing 400-acre footprint</u>

- Increase parking capacity by 25 spaces to 100 vehicles; provide a vehicle turn-around; expand the existing picnic site to accommodate up to 25 people and add trees and/or a shade shelter; develop the Bachelder Nature Trail, the Bluegrass Trail and Foothill Trail with access to the ridge; and install a fire hydrant.
- Develop the Sycamore Grove picnic site/day camp area, a group day campsite with picnic tables, storage cabinets, trash receptacles and vault toilet(s) along the Sycamore Grove Trail.
- Develop a children's play area and adult fitness apparatus.

<u>Garms Staging Area – The staging area totals 46 acres, roughly 10 acres will be developed</u>

- Designate the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection as the main entrance to this staging area. Develop a formal entrance and modify the traffic signal, crosswalks and turn lanes on Foothill Road and install headwalls.
- Develop a paved parking lot with up to 75 parking spaces.
- Develop the Garms picnic site/day camp area near the parking area with water fountain, two double vault restroom buildings and shade trees and/or shelter. Develop a children's play area.
- Develop the Wildflower Trailhead, a non-vehicular access from the northern boundary of the staging area, in the vicinity of Highland Oaks Drive. Modify the existing crosswalk across Foothill Road with signs and/or warning lights.
- Develop the Wildflower Trail and the Congdon Loop Trail, a gently-sloped, loop trail within the staging area and provide a connection to the proposed Tehan Falls Trail.

- Improve the road that provides access to the private inholding and staff office and park residence: improve drainage crossings under the road; install a retaining wall and drainage swales and culverts along the western edge of the road; and widen and re-pave the road.
- Install a gated entry with keyed 24-hour access for private residents.
- Relocate the staff Operations office and maintenance function to the Tyler Ranch Staging Area; remove the existing park maintenance functions, but retain the building for continued use as a park security residence and for future use by staff.

Tyler Ranch Staging Area – The staging area totals 5 acres, roughly 4 acres could be developed

- Develop a parking lot to accommodate, at full build-out, up to 90 vehicles including several horse-trailers; provide a turn-around. Parking may be developed in phases and paved.
- Improve the terminus of Foothill Road with a turn-around to accommodate emergency vehicles.
- Develop a family picnic site, with a shade shelter and a double vault toilet, near the parking lot.
- Develop the Canyon Oak Trail and a section of the Tyler Ranch Loop Trail from the picnic area that will also provide a connection to the Sunol Ridge Trail.
- Provide for a park security residence, either at the existing mobile structure or develop a new residence.
- Relocate the park office and service yard from the Garms Staging Area: construct a building to provide space for a staff office and corporation maintenance facility with equipment storage, work areas and staff parking. Retain the existing barn and stable.
- Connect buildings to the municipal water system.
- Develop a new access road into the staging area west of the existing road; remove the existing road. This new road will provide access to the parking area, service yard and security residence. Install landscaping on the eastern border of the staging area and along the parking lot to screen park use from adjacent private residences and uses.

Devany Canyon Trailhead

- Open and install signs at this new trailhead, to provide non-vehicular access from the northern boundary of the park.

Camps, Picnic Tables, Shelters and Water

- Improve the existing Sinbad Creek Camp located along the Raptor View Trail. This existing back country campsite consists of a day use picnic site and a potable water line and an overnight campsite area with two level pads located about 500 feet uphill. Proposed improvements of the Sinbad Creek Camp would include extending the existing potable water line uphill; and installing picnic tables, vault toilet(s), storage cabinets, bike racks, horse ties, water troughs and trash receptacles.

- Develop the Aquila Camp along Sunol Ridge. This backpack camp would be located approximately two miles from the Tyler Ranch Staging Area along the Aquila Loop Trail, serve between 5 and 25 campers and provide picnic tables, storage cabinet, potable water piped in from a nearby spring, restroom, trash receptacles and level pads for tents.
- Install picnic tables and/or benches at various points along trails and destination points.
- Develop shade structures in group use, day camp and picnic areas.
- Develop drinking water fountains within staging and picnic areas.

Road and Trail Management and Improvements

To improve public enjoyment and circulation throughout the park, the *Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park Land Use Plan* proposes to modify and expand the existing trail system. To minimize habitat disturbance and soil displacement, the LUP proposes to retain, where appropriate, existing trails in the trail system. There are about 29 miles of existing, sanctioned trails within the project area and implementation of the LUP would open another 34 miles of trails, for a total trail system of approximately 63 miles at full build-out. Specifically, the LUP recommends that an additional 12 miles of existing trails be opened to the public in their current condition. The LUP proposes to close or decommission 10 miles of unsafe, unsustainable or redundant trails and to modify five miles of existing trails; new alignments are recommended for portions of existing unsustainable routes. The LUP also includes recommendations to narrow seven miles of existing trails. Proposed new alignments will provide safer, environmentally superior alignments, resulting in long-term beneficial impacts. Overall, the LUP proposes to develop 17 miles of new, narrow trails that are less than four-feet wide; the LUP does not recommend building additional service roads. The District would also install trail name, informational and wayfinding signs to aid public use.

At the park, the District would continue to undertake a program of regular road and trail improvement and maintenance activities, which is essential for providing safe access for trail users and park maintenance, police and emergency and firefighting vehicles. To minimize soil erosion, where possible, the District will mow trails rather than grade them. Substandard road and trail conditions are identified annually by District staff, and are remedied through a program of regular maintenance. Maintaining existing and future roads and trails at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park typically would involve the following activities: grading, adding gravel, patching, repairing landslides, replacing or installing drainage structures or clear-span bridges, and minor realignment as a result of erosion and/or slope instability.

Vegetation and Pest Management and Non-Native Animal Control

Managing wildland vegetation at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park requires conservation practices that accomplish resource and fire control objectives consistent with park and recreational uses and values. Managing the land to minimize the potential for uncontrolled wildfires is particularly important here, as residential development and isolated homes are located just outside of the park's boundaries. The District will continue to implement wildland vegetation and pest management activities at the park to reduce wildfire hazards, to control the spread of invasive, non-native vegetation, and to promote plant and animal diversity. The District also utilizes pest

management activities to prevent pests, such as insects, animals and plant pathogens, from causing harm to desired natural resources, as well as unacceptable safety, health, aesthetic, economic or structural damage.

Invasive weeds are not common at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, in large part because the District has had a control program for invasive weeds in place at the park since 1993. Nevertheless, the District will continue to implement its pest management program and expand the program into recently acquired open space lands, as needed, to control invasive weed species. The District will also continue to manage non-native wildlife that have the potential to adversely impact native species and their habitat or damage park infrastructure or compromise public safety, such as red fox, bullfrogs, and feral pigs and feral and domestic cats.

The District will continue to conduct fuel reduction, vegetation and pest management activities at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park in compliance with applicable state and federal law and in accordance with directives contained in the District *Master Plan 1997*, *East Bay Regional Park District Wildfire Hazard Reduction and Resource Management Plan* (LSA 2010), *Wildland Management Policies and Guidelines* (EBRPD 1992 and 2001) and *Pest Management Policies and Practices* (EBRPD 1987). *The Pest Management Policies and Practices* manual describes how the District implements its Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program. The IPM program includes a comprehensive methodology for: evaluating animal and plant pest problem areas; choosing the appropriate treatment from among non-chemical and chemical (pesticides and herbicides) alternatives; and conducting treatments safely for applicators, the general public and the environment.

The District could periodically schedule prescribed burning projects (the intentional ignition of grass, brush and forest fuels) to achieve particular weed control and wildfire management objectives in the project area. The District Fire Department would conduct each burn in cooperation with biologists in the Planning, Stewardship and GIS Services Department, and in compliance with local and state air quality regulations under Regulation 5 of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations.

At Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, the District has used, and will continue to employ grazing, including the use of cattle, sheep and goats, as the primary vegetation management tool over grassland areas because of its practicality, cost-effectiveness and compatibility with maintaining overall biological diversity. The District uses prescribed burning, mechanical, manual, biological and chemical treatment methods as secondary vegetation management tools for small-scale, project-specific purposes such as weed control. These land management activities have been ongoing since the District acquired this parkland.

Ranching has been practiced on Pleasanton, Main and Sunol ridges for 150 years, and probably began earlier during the Rancho Period (1822-1850). Livestock production, as well as dry land farming, likely began here in the 1850s. These activities grew to become the primary land uses until the land that now encompasses Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park became parkland. Since it has managed the open space land, the District has employed a closely managed and adaptive livestock grazing program to conserve natural resources and to minimize the threat of wildfire; livestock grazing is a baseline environmental condition of the land and the LUP recommends

that the District continue to responsibly graze the land.

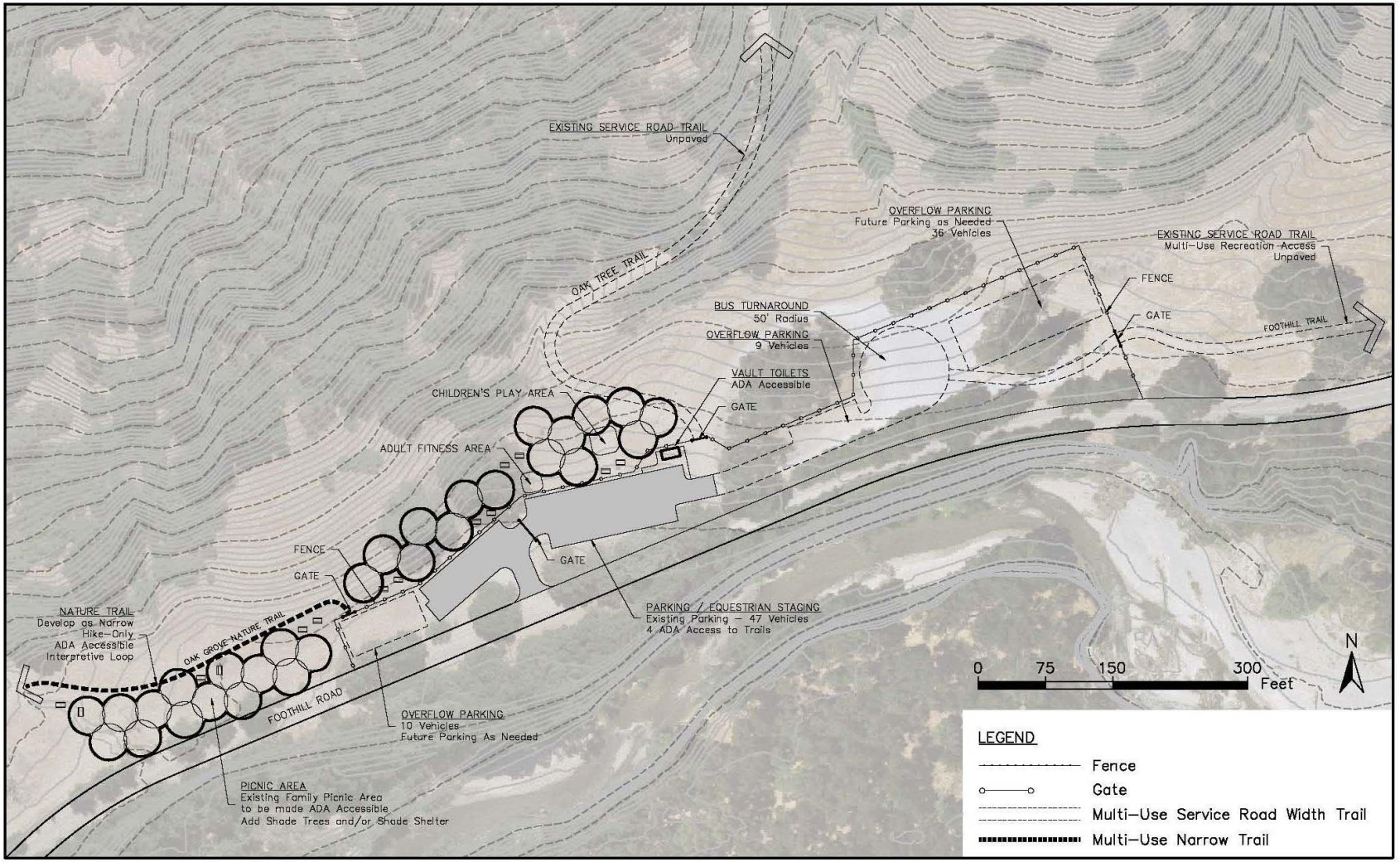
The District leases suitable agricultural lands to tenants with expertise in livestock grazing. As described in Appendix E, *Grazing Management Plan*, of the LUP, the park contains seven active grazing units. The District now employs a seasonal grazing regime in which livestock graze during the early spring to reduce the buildup of thatch and are removed from much of the park in the summer months. Continuing a closely monitored grazing program at the park, as proposed in the LUP, would neither result in a substantial physical change in the environment nor cause a significant environmental impact, as it is a baseline condition. District staff has analyzed the vegetation characteristics of the project area to determine a grazing strategy that is consistent with resource conservation objectives. This range analysis is contained in the *Grazing Management Plan*. While conducting a range analysis, District staff considered the potential impacts of livestock grazing operations on environmental resources including water quality, erosion, soils, wetland and riparian resources, and resident plants and animals. Staff has designed the grazing program to avoid or minimize significant environmental impacts, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act. To accomplish natural resource and fire control objectives, the LUP proposes the following proposals at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park:

- Continue to employ a managed grazing program selectively using cattle, sheep and goats, as appropriate; manage grazing of pond margins to maintain vegetation.
- Construct, install and develop grazing infrastructure, such as corrals, fencing, wetland exclosures, gates, cattleguards and water improvements to improve the distribution of livestock and obtain uniform grazing. Water development projects may include: installing water troughs in new locations utilizing both gravity and solar powered pump and tank systems; developing new springs and spring boxes or drilling new wells; and periodic maintenance projects such as replacing existing, worn spring boxes, pumps, pipelines and troughs.
- Augment the grazing program with prescribed burns where appropriate, and mechanical treatments (timed mowing), where applicable and feasible to conserve and enhance important resource values, such as soil, vegetation, wildlife and water, to ensure that natural parkland ecosystems are maintained in a healthy and productive condition.
- Apply revegetation treatments (e.g., mulch, seeding), herbicide applications or combinations thereof as determined through the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program to reduce the invasion of exotic plant species.
- Use mechanical means to remove overhanging limbs or diseased or fallen trees where they represent a hazard to park visitors or structures.
- Monitor and manage non-native wildlife (e.g., red fox, wild pigs, bullfrogs and non-native fish) to reduce impacts to native species. Management tools may include restoring existing ponds to eliminate bullfrog populations; trapping and removing pigs and red foxes; and installing temporary exclusion hog fencing around restoration sites to prevent intrusive rooting and damage.

Pond, Wetland and Aquatic Wildlife Management

The project area is located within the Alameda Creek watershed and contains several seasonal creeks and tributaries and 27 seasonal ponds including several springs (see Figure 7). The federally-listed California red-legged frog is known to breed in ponds. The LUP proposes the following activities that would result in physical changes to the environment that are related to managing ponds, creeks and riparian areas:

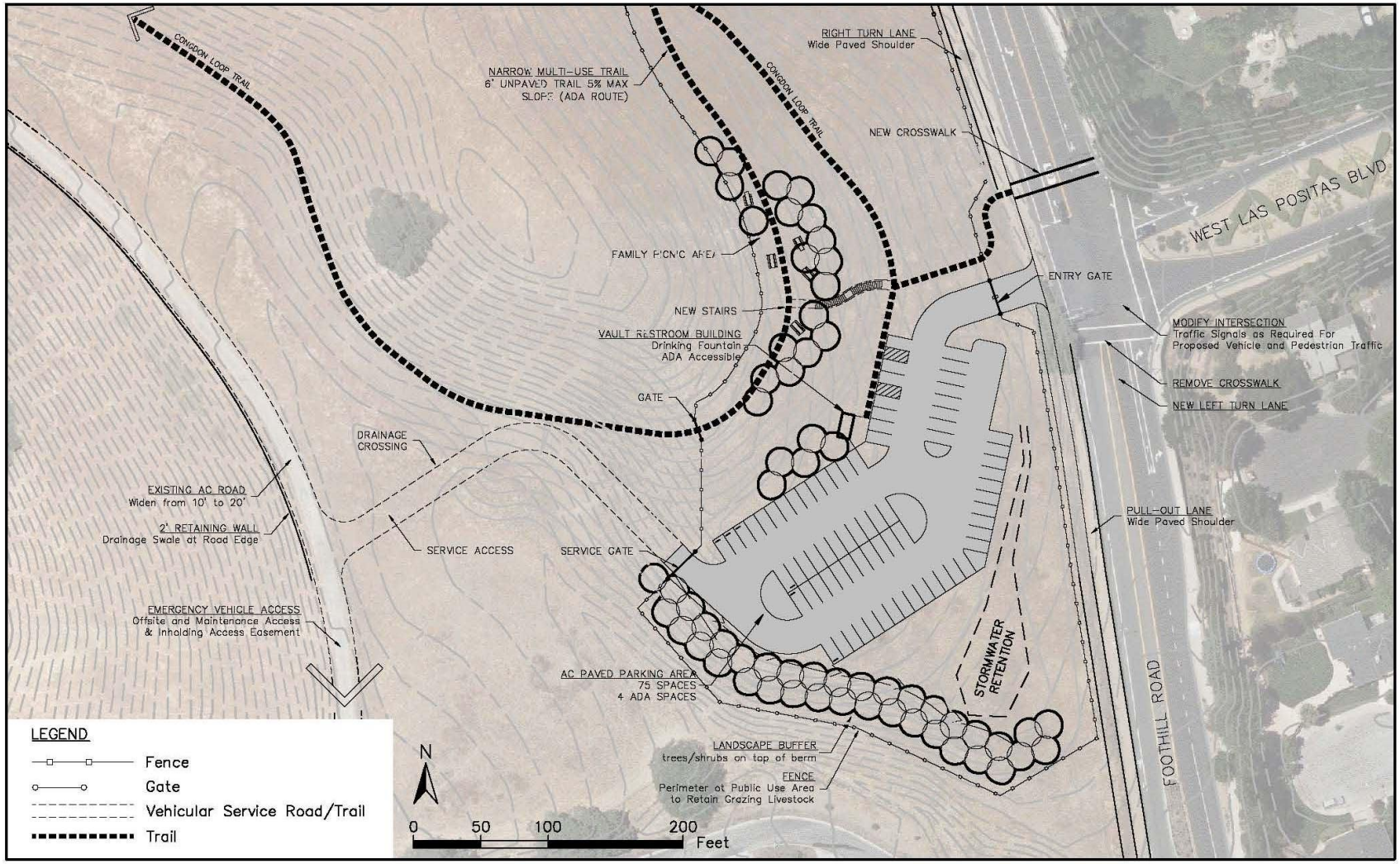
- Continue to regularly maintain and enhance the habitat value of the site's stock water ponds through periodic restoration activities. Routine maintenance activities may include: dredging; filling; re-contouring; draining; installing fences; stabilizing berms and spillways; and repairing dams and water supply systems.
- Capture and remove bullfrogs and non-native predatory fish from ponds.
- Initiate stream habitat restoration projects for Sinbad Creek/Sinbad Creek Trail and Cook Canyon/Cook Canyon Trail to improve habitat conditions for native aquatic species. Restoration projects may incorporate: bioengineering for bank stabilization (e.g., installing willow bundles), channel realignment to increase sinuosity, restoring historic gradients, and grading and planting to restore floodplain habitat.



East Bay Regional Park District
Initial Study
Planning/Design and Construction
October 06, 2011

Figure 3
FOOTHILL STAGING AREA

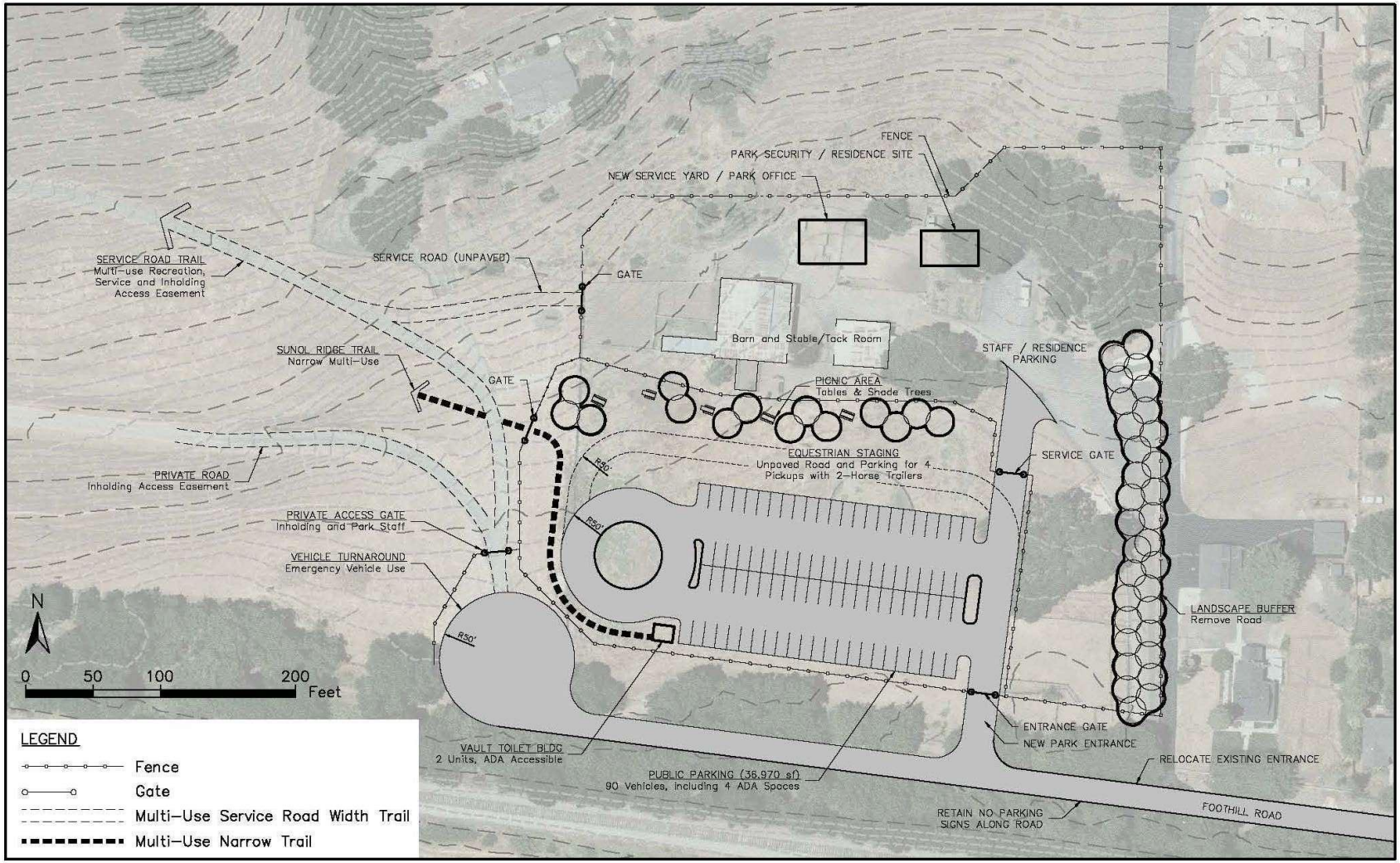
Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
Alameda County, California



East Bay Regional Park District
Initial Study
Planning/Design and Construction
October 06, 2011

Figure 4
GARMS STAGING AREA

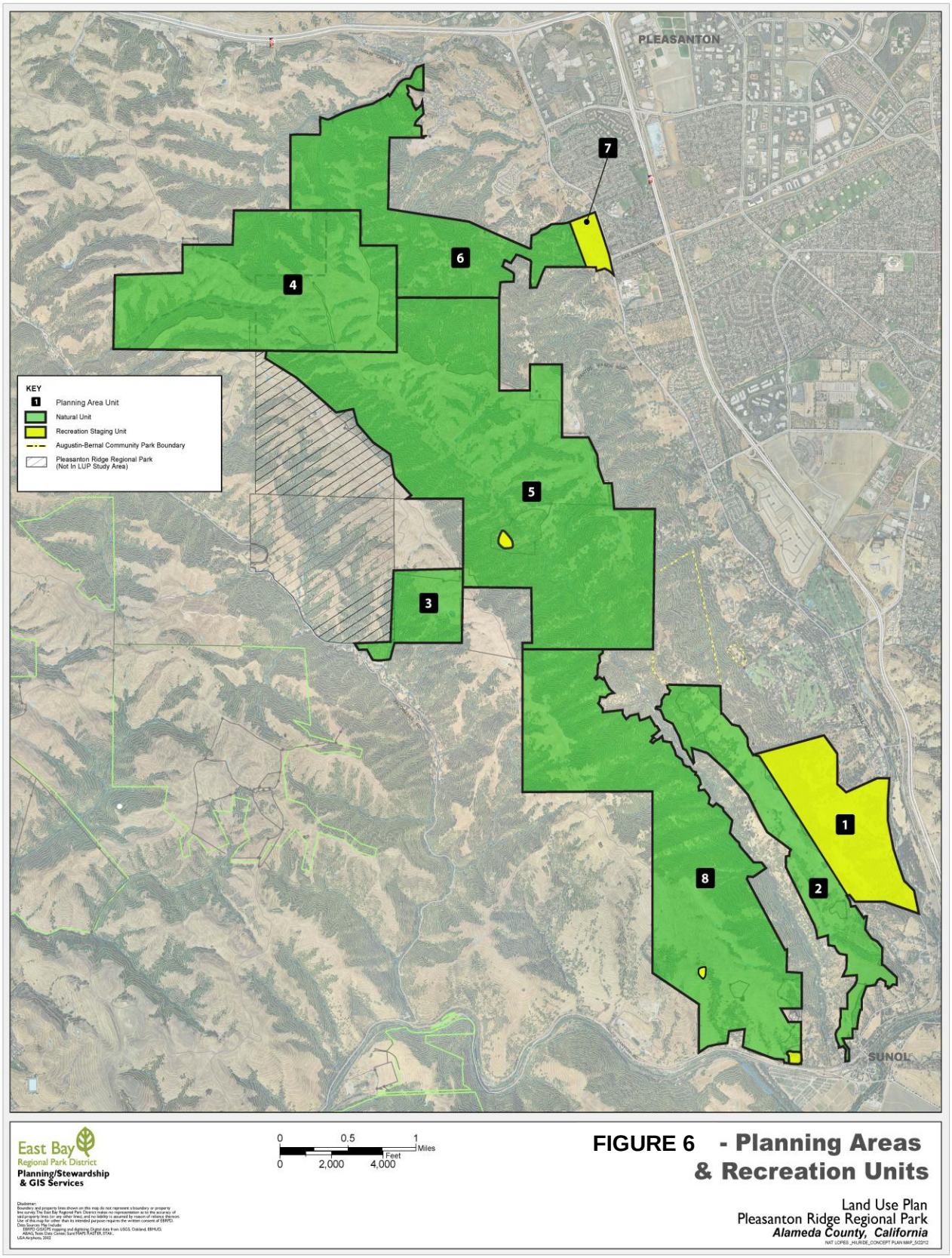
Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
Alameda County, California



East Bay Regional Park District
Initial Study
Planning/Design and Construction
October 06, 2011

Figure 5
TYLER RANCH STAGING AREA

Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
Alameda County, California


PLEASANTON
SUNOL
KEY
1 Planning Area Unit
Natural Unit
Recreation Staging Unit
Augustin-Bernal Community Park Boundary
Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
(Not In LUP Study Area)
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
East Bay
Regional Park District
Planning/Stewardship
& GIS Services
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0 2,000 4,000 Feet
FIGURE 6 - Planning Areas & Recreation Units
Land Use Plan
Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
Alameda County, California

2.6 REGULATORY SETTING

Required Actions. The District proposes to:

1. Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring Plan; and
2. Approve the *Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park Land Use Plan.*

Approvals and Permits. The *Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park Land Use Plan* includes several activities that would be subject to permitting by various regulatory agencies. Permits and/or approvals required from the following local, state and federal agencies to implement elements of the LUP include:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) – Section 402 and 404 of the federal Clean Water Act
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Section 404 Permit
- California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) – Streambed Alteration Permit Section 1600
- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) – Section 401 Certification of the federal Clean Water Act and Waste Discharge Requirements under the State of California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act
- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board – Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and Provision C.3 of the Municipal Regional Permit
- City and County encroachment and construction permits
- Alameda County Public Health Department permits for vault toilets

2.7 PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL

In accordance with Section 15073 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the District is distributing this Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for review by local, state and federal agencies with jurisdiction over the project area. A notice of availability of the IS/MND has been sent to nearby property owners and other interested parties. A Public Hearing on the project will be held at a regular District Board of Directors meeting at District headquarters, 2950 Peralta Oaks Court in Oakland. The IS/MND is available for review at the following locations:

East Bay Regional Park District
Planning, Stewardship and GIS Services
P.O. Box 5381
2950 Peralta Oaks Court
Oakland, CA 94605
Web site: www.ebparks.org
Phone: (510) 544-2325
Fax: (510) 635-3478
Email: rbreines@ebparks.org

Pleasanton Public Library
400 Old Bernal Avenue
Pleasanton, CA 94566
(925) 931-3400

Hayward Main Library
835 C Street
Hayward, CA 94541
(510) 293-8685

Written comments on the IS/MND should be submitted in writing to the District prior to the conclusion of the 30-day public comment period. Comments should be mailed, emailed or faxed to the Planning, Stewardship and GIS Services Department, attention: Raphael Breines, at the above address, email or fax number.

In reviewing the IS/MND, affected public agencies, organizations and interested citizens should focus on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing any potential impacts to the environment, and the proposed ways in which any significant effects of the project are to be avoided or reduced.

The District will review and evaluate written comments received during the public review period, and determine whether any substantial new environmental issues have been raised. If there are substantial new environmental issues, not covered in the IS/MND, further documentation, such as an Environmental Impact Report or an expanded IS/MND, may be required. If not, the District's Board of Directors will adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and approve the project. The District will then file a Notice of Determination with the Alameda County Clerk-Recorder's Office within five days following project approval.

3.0 SUMMARY OF MITIGATION MEASURES

AIR QUALITY

MITIGATION AIR-1: To control dust emissions the District will be required to employ the following Best Management Practices for managing dust:

- Water all exposed surfaces and unpaved access roads;
- Excavate during calm air periods;
- Cover haul trucks transporting soil, sand or other loose material off-site;
- Reestablish bare soils with vegetation;
- Limit vehicle speeds on unpaved road to 15 miles per hour;
- Minimize idling times to five minutes or less; and
- Properly maintain and tune construction equipment.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

MITIGATION BIO-1: Concurrent with determining the final alignment of new trails, a qualified wildlife biologist will conduct site-specific, pre-construction surveys to determine the presence of any special-status species that could be affected. Based on survey findings, avoidance and/or mitigation measures for biotic impacts will be determined on a case-by-case basis including contacting appropriate resource agencies for consultation.

MITIGATION BIO-2: Construction of new trails located in potential Alameda whipsnake habitat will be confined to the period of July 1st through October 31st. This represents an active period for Alameda whipsnake and should minimize potential impacts because snakes are expected to move readily during construction.

MITIGATION BIO-3: Ground-clearing for construction will be confined to the minimum area necessary, and appropriate erosion control measures will be incorporated.

MITIGATION BIO-4: To minimize impacts to special-status wildlife, prescribed burns will be conducted according to permit guidelines restricting burns to the season that presents the least risk to the animals.

MITIGATION BIO-5: During a prescribed burn, if the District's biological monitor finds species of concern within the burn area, individual animals will be hazed or otherwise removed from the project area by a qualified wildlife biologist. Burns may be suspended for the amount of time necessary to perform this action.

MITIGATION BIO-6: To reduce the chance of injury of an animal during burning of piles, slash piles will be disassembled and reformed immediately prior to burning. This method will decrease the potential risk of harming any species taking refuge in a pile.

MITIGATION BIO-7: Prior to the removal of mature trees during bird nesting season, February 1st through July 31st, the District will conduct site-specific, pre-construction tree surveys to determine the presence of nests of legally protected bird species. If any trees to be removed contain active nests, the District will consult with the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine under what conditions these trees can be legally removed. In addition, construction activities near these trees will be conducted only after the young have fledged, as determined by a qualified wildlife biologist. Such surveys will not be required outside of bird nesting season.

MITIGATION BIO-8: Within upland habitats, if special-status bird species are encountered within or adjacent to trail alignments or recreation areas during the survey or construction period, construction activities will be scheduled outside of the bird nesting season between August 1st and January 31st.

MITIGATION BIO-9: If active special-status bird nests or other protected species are identified in public use areas, to avoid disturbance, the District may seasonally restrict public access to areas during the breeding season; close trails, in accordance with Ordinance 38 (EBRPD Visitor Use Regulations); or develop appropriate buffers around successful nest locations, to avoid disturbance to breeding or migrating wildlife.

MITIGATION BIO-10: All construction activities that have the potential to affect wetland areas will take place during the dry season, between August 1st and October 31st, or as otherwise determined by permitting agencies, and in compliance with the federal Clean Water Act.

MITIGATION BIO-11: A qualified wildlife biologist(s) will survey ponds for special-status aquatic wildlife prior to and during pond maintenance projects. If found, individuals will be relocated to an appropriate site by a qualified wildlife biologist permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

MITIGATION BIO-12: Spoil materials generated during pond maintenance projects will be utilized for pond reinforcement or removed and deposited at predetermined upland location(s).

MITIGATION BIO-13: The District will enact seasonal closure zones when deemed appropriate to restrict park activity around breeding or migrating amphibians and other sensitive wildlife.

MITIGATION BIO-14: To avoid impacts to special-status aquatic wildlife during prescribed burns, the District will identify water sources that are known to support these species on the project map and will avoid drawing water from them to suppress a fire.

MITIGATION BIO-15: To prevent ash from entering waterbodies during prescribed burns, the District will establish appropriate upland buffers around each waterbody within the prescribed burn project area.

MITIGATION BIO-16: No equipment will be operated in standing or flowing water. Heavy equipment working in or adjacent to wetlands will be placed on mats or other measures must be taken to minimize soil disturbance.

MITIGATION BIO-17: Where possible, stream channel crossings associated with roads and trails will consist of a clear-span bridge with footings located outside of the channel; bridges will be located to minimize impacts to riparian vegetation. For new or repaired stream channel crossings, the District will obtain necessary permits from the California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board.

MITIGATION BIO-18: For construction projects adjacent to wetlands and waterbodies, the District will develop and implement Best Management Practices for control of erosion, sediment and pollutants. Best Management Practices may include: re-planting exposed areas; using dikes, basins, ditches, clean straw, erosion control fabric and other temporary measures; installing catchments for source pollutants; and including a sufficient vegetated buffer between parking areas and wetlands.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

MITIGATION CULT-1: A monitor will be present during initial grading and other earth-disturbing activities associated with development of the Garms Staging Area, the Tyler Ranch Staging Area and Aquila Camp. Concurrent with determining the final alignment of new trails, an archaeologist will conduct an evaluation of Sinbad Creek and other nearby drainages in the vicinity of proposed trail creek crossings and, if necessary, relocate trails and related creek crossing structures to avoid disturbance of previously undiscovered cultural resources. If no historic or subsurface deposits, or other indications of a cultural resource, are observed, then monitoring will no longer be warranted throughout construction.

MITIGATION CULT-2: Prior to taking any action affecting the physical condition of structures greater than 50 years of age in the Tyler Ranch Staging Area and throughout the project area, the District will hire an architectural historian to evaluate structures/sites and determine their eligibility for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources and will obtain recommendations for adaptive reuse or demolition. If structures are determined to be historically significant then treatment in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the *Treatment of Historic Properties* for recording, preserving, rehabilitating, restoring and reconstructing historic buildings will be warranted.

MITIGATION CULT-3: In the event that prehistoric, archaeological or paleontological artifacts or remains are encountered during project construction, all

earth-disturbing activities will be halted within at least 50 feet and artifacts will be protected in place (in accordance with EBRPD Board Resolution No. 1989-4-124 and state and federal law) until the find is evaluated by an archaeologist or trained cultural resource professional, and appropriate mitigation, such as curation, preservation in place, etc., if necessary, is implemented.

MITIGATION CULT-4: In the event of accidental discovery of human remains, the County Coroner will be notified, and, if the remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be notified to identify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD), in accordance with state and federal law. The disposition of the remains will be coordinated between the District, the County Coroner, NAHC, MLD and the archaeological consultant.

MITIGATION CULT-5: The District will continue to map all known cultural resource sites and record them in the *Cultural Resources Site Atlas*.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

MITIGATION GEO-1: When installing drainage crossings and developing trails near waterbodies, per California Department of Fish and Game permit conditions, work will be restricted to the dry season between April 1st and October 31st or between August 1st and October 31st in areas that have the potential to support California red-legged frog or California tiger salamander.

MITIGATION GEO-2: The District will implement appropriate Best Management Practices for minimizing potential erosion and sedimentation when developing trails, conducting road improvements and installing stream crossings based on site conditions, scale of work and distance to creeks and seasonal wetland areas. These measures could include: conducting activities during the dry season; using dikes, basins, ditches, straw, erosion control fabric and other temporary measures (e.g., water bars, fiber rolls); and installing catchments for source pollutants while in-water work within jurisdictional waters will be limited to the period between August 1st and October 31st.

NOISE

MITIGATION NOISE-1: Hours of work will be Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Requests to work off-hours, on weekends and holidays will be at the discretion of the District's representative.

MITIGATION NOISE-2: Internal combustion engines will be equipped with a muffler type recommended by the manufacturer. Equipment and trucks will utilize the best available noise-control techniques (e.g., engine enclosures, shrouds, intake silencers, ducts, etc.) whenever feasible and necessary.

MITIGATION NOISE-3: Noisy, stationary construction equipment will be located as far as possible from nearby residences.

TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

MITIGATION TRAN-1: In cooperation with the City of Pleasanton, implement roadway improvements at the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection concurrent with developing the Garms Staging Area. Intersection improvements could include modifying crosswalks, widening approaches, providing a left-turn lane from the southbound approach, and installing a traffic signal and headwalls.

4.0 INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

PROJECT INFORMATION		
1.	Project Title:	Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park Land Use Plan, Alameda County California
2.	Lead Agency Name & Address:	East Bay Regional Park District, 2950 Peralta Oaks Ct., P.O. Box 5381, Oakland, CA 94605-0381
3.	Contact Person & Phone Number:	Raphael Breines, (510) 544-2325
4.	Project Location:	Unincorporated Alameda County with portions of the project area within the City of Hayward and the City of Pleasanton
5.	Project Sponsor Name & Address:	East Bay Regional Park District, 2950 Peralta Oaks Ct., P.O. Box 5381, Oakland, CA 94605-0381
6.	Plan Designation:	Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
7.	Zoning:	Various
8.	Description of Project:	Long-term guide for managing natural and cultural resources and access, recreational and educational facilities and programs at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
9.	Setting:	Refer to *Section 2.4 - Background and Setting and Section 4.10 of the Checklist - Land Use and Planning*)
10.	Approval Required from Other Public Agencies:	Refer to *Section 2.6 Regulatory Setting*

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED					
The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.					
☐	Aesthetics	☐	Agriculture & Forest Resources	■	Air Quality
■	Biological Resources	■	Cultural Resources	■	Geology/Soils
■	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐	Hazards & Hazardous Materials	■	Hydrology/Water Quality
☐	Land Use/Planning	☐	Mineral Resources	■	Noise
☐	Population/Housing	☐	Public Services	☐	Recreation
■	Transportation/ Traffic	☐	Utilities/Service Systems	■	Mandatory Findings of Significance

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

Prepared by: Raphael Breines, Senior Park Planner

Raphael Breines — Signature

5/29/12 — Date

Approved by: Brian Wiese, Chief, Planning, Stewardship and GIS Services Department

Brian Wiese — Signature

5/29/12 — Date

4.1 AESTHETICS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
AESTHETICS -- Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	■	☐
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	■	☐
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☐	☐	■	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	■	☐

a, c) Would the project: a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?; or c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? A significant adverse impact would occur if the project would introduce new visual elements that would significantly interfere with existing scenic vistas or be out-of-character with the existing visual setting. The project area comprises more than 6,500 mostly ridge-top acres and has a rural and agricultural character. The project area is a scenic open space amenity of regional significance; views from the park are an important component in its enjoyment. With its open, pastoral character and varied topography, Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park serves as the primary visual backdrop for Pleasanton to the east and portions of Hayward and Castro Valley to the west. The project area is an important resource for the surrounding communities, particularly from the relatively flat Livermore and Amador valleys to the east. The project area affords commanding picturesque vistas from its peaks, which reach approximately 2,000 feet at Sunol Ridge, of the surrounding San Francisco Bay Area and beyond.

Primary goals of the LUP are to maintain and improve habitat conditions for wildlife, manage the fuel load of flammable vegetation to lessen wildfire hazard and preserve important viewsheds. Management tools to achieve these goals include livestock grazing, prescribed burns, integrated pest management programs and site-specific restoration work. The District will design proposed development to be compatible with the rustic character of the area and cluster proposed development within five recreation/staging units, as shown in Figure 6 on page 17. Several views of and from the project area are shown on page 35. The location of new development would be consistent with policy direction contained in the District's *Master Plan 1997*, which provides several general policies guiding development at the project area that would help to mitigate potential visual impacts. These include prescriptions recommending that facilities be located to preserve open space, designed to blend with the environment, and screened from public viewpoints and trails to the greatest extent possible. The LUP is also consistent with the goals contained in Alameda County's *East County Area Plan* (ECAP) to retain

Pleasanton Ridgelands as permanent open space. Policy 105 of the ECAP states that Alameda County will preserve major visually-sensitive ridgelines, including Pleasanton, Main and Sunol ridges, in open space (Alameda County Planning Department 2002). Programs in the City of Pleasanton General Plan support retaining and expanding the park as permanent open space lands (City of Pleasanton 2009).

The District would continue to manage Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park to retain its distinctive visual and physical character. The overall effect of the proposed project on the visual character of Pleasanton, Main and Sunol ridges would be beneficial as it would permanently preserve open space to maintain the rural character of this landscape that contributes to the quality of life for residents of Hayward, Pleasanton, unincorporated Alameda County and the greater San Francisco Bay Region. Continuing the existing managed livestock grazing program is the primary tool the District would use to retain the existing open landscape and viewshed that is desired by the public.

The project would introduce new visual elements, such as parking lots, park-related buildings, picnic tables, campsites, shelters, trails, restroom facilities, cattle grazing infrastructure, fencing, signs and landscaping. The majority of the project area, 6,068 acres or 93 percent of the total land area, is designated as a Natural Unit; developed facilities would be concentrated in an area less than 7 percent of the project area's total land area, and in general would not be seen from off-site.

The project would also include off-site road modifications on Foothill Road at the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection and just to the north at Highland Oaks Drive. Road modifications may include installing traffic and directional signs, overhead signalized lights, turn lanes, a turn-around, and headwalls and crosswalk improvements. Project implementation would also involve improvements to the southern terminus of Foothill Road, just outside of the proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area. Here, a vehicle turn-around would be developed that would be visible from outside of the project area, but would result in only minor changes to the existing visual setting. In addition, certain new trails would be visible from off site, but would not result in significant visual impacts.

The most significant proposed improvements, including all of the parking/staging areas, are located in areas that have been previously disturbed. Proposed improvements to the Foothill Staging Area include increasing parking, constructing a shade shelter, expanding an existing picnic area and developing a group day camp and trails. The project also includes planting trees along the eastern edge of the staging area along Foothill Road to screen improvements from the roadway. Overall, these improvements will constitute minor changes to the visual quality of the area and would result in a less-than-significant visual impact.

At the proposed Garms Staging Area and the Tyler Ranch Staging Area, implementation of the project would introduce new visual elements that would change the existing view from neighbors' properties. Improvements to the Garms Staging Area would disturb a total of approximately 10 acres and would include a 75-space gravel or paved vehicle parking lot, picnic area, restroom building, shade shelter, children's play area, new trails and road improvements on Foothill Road. Improvements would be visible from Foothill Road, from private residences

across this road and from the Lemoine Ranch Estates subdivision on the west side of Oak Creek Drive, primarily from several houses on River Rock Hill Road.

Typical District staging areas utilize landscaping and natural materials, such as wood and stone, where possible, to achieve a more natural look to the facilities. The District will create a landscaped berm near the southern edge of the Garms Staging Area to minimize visual impacts to nearby houses. The height of the berm and vegetation would provide a visual barrier between the parking area and residences facing the park on River Rock Hill Road. The use of these practical design considerations would ensure that implementation of the project would maintain the visual character of the area. Consequently, visual impacts would be less-than-significant.

Proposed development at the Tyler Ranch Staging Area would total roughly four acres and include developing a vehicle parking lot in phases, with an ultimate capacity of up to 90 spaces, improving the terminus of Foothill Road and developing trails and a family picnic area, with a shade shelter and a restroom building. In addition, the LUP recommends developing a new park security residence, a building to provide space for a staff office and a maintenance yard with equipment storage, work areas and staff parking. A new access road in the staging area would be developed and landscaping would be installed on the eastern border of the staging area to screen park use from adjacent homes and uses.

Though project implementation would intensify development in the Tyler Ranch Staging Area, existing development has already affected the visual character of the area. The area is a historical settlement site that was used for ranching activities and includes an enclosed pasture, barn, woodshop, house and outbuildings. Moreover, as a result of its proximity to Niles Canyon Road, railroad corridors and other constructed features, the immediate area has a lower visual quality than other areas in the interior of the park, and is well suited for additional development. None of the proposed improvements would constitute significant changes to the visual quality of the area, as new development would have a similar aesthetic quality as existing development – improvements would be designed with appropriate materials and colors to blend with the area's rustic character – and would be clustered within a recreation/staging unit. Therefore, project implementation would not detract from the overall, natural character of Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, nor substantially alter any views of or from park. Implementation of the project would have a less-than-significant visual impact.

> **Potential Impact:** Less-than-Significant with proposed project design
> **Mitigation:** None required

b) Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? The project area is visible to motorists along several highways, which have been designated scenic routes. Scenic routes are intended to protect the aesthetic values of an area by preserving or enhancing road corridors that provide pleasurable views. Interstate 680, which runs in a north-south direction and parallels the project area to the east, is an officially designated State Scenic Highway. Immediately south of the project area lies State Route 84 (Niles Canyon Road), of which portions nearest the park are designated State Scenic Highway.

Interstate 580, to the north, is an Eligible State Scenic Highway, but has not been officially designated. Park staging projects close to Interstate 680, including the Garms and Foothill staging areas, are located at the base of the foothills and would not be visible from this scenic corridor, as houses, roads, railroad tracks and vegetation lie between them.

Portions of the proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area would be visible from the State Route 84/Niles Canyon Road scenic corridor. However, proposed staging area improvements would be in character with the existing setting and would not have a significant visual impact on this scenic highway. Proposed project improvements, such as new trail construction and campsites, are generally located in the interior of the park and would not be visible from scenic roadways. In certain instances along scenic routes, new or modified trails and grazing infrastructure may be visible to passing motorists, but trail and other minor development projects would not be expected to have negative visual impacts viewed from the scenic highways or from other vantage points, and implementation of the project would not damage trees, outcroppings or historic structures. Therefore, the project would have a less-than-significant impact on scenic resources located within a state scenic highway.

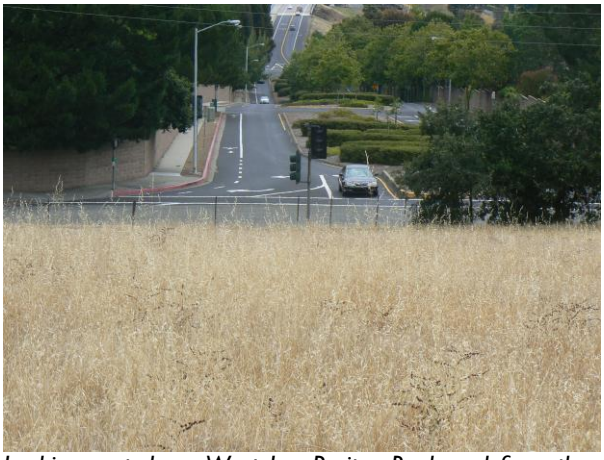
Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

d) Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? The LUP does not propose significant new sources of light or to construct facilities or buildings that would create a substantial new source of glare. The park is typically closed after dark. Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park contains few lighted facilities and park gates close at 8:00 p.m. or earlier. The project would not introduce temporary or permanent night lighting and construction would occur only during daylight hours. Moreover, the District would include landscape buffers adjacent to neighbors on the southern edge of the parking area in the Garms Staging Area and on the eastern edge of the Tyler Ranch Staging Area. Therefore, short- and long-term glare impacts occurring as a result of the project would be less-than-significant.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

VIEWS OF and FROM THE PROJECT AREA

Views of houses in the Lemoine Ranch Estates subdivision from the proposed Garms Staging Area. The hillside in the foreground will be lowered to reduce visual impacts of a proposed parking area.



Looking east down West Las Positas Boulevard from the proposed Garms Staging Area. This area is proposed to be the entrance to the staging area.

View of the Foothill Staging Area.

View of the Tyler Ranch Staging Area, as seen from the southern terminus of Foothill Road.

4.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
AGRICULTURE RESOURCES In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in the Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	■	☐
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	■	☐
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)) or timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526)?	☐	☐	☐	■
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	■
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	■	☐

a, e) Would the project: a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?; or e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? Two programs are used to measure the agricultural productivity of the project area's soils: the Soil Capability Classification System of the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service and the California Department of Conservation,

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program identifies farmland within California and groups farmland into five general categories: Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance and Grazing Land. Grazing is the predominant agricultural use of Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. Several acres in the southeastern portion of the park are identified as Unique Farmland. This is farmland that has unique characteristics needed to produce high yields of a specific crop, which in this case was olives (California Department of Conservation 2009). The majority of the park contains soils that are agriculturally unsuitable except for pasture and range. However, throughout the American Farm Period, the southern area of the park was dry farmed for fruit and olives and subsequently farmed for wheat, barley and oats; in this area an historic olive grove remains and some trees may date from the 1870s. The LUP recommends that because this area is a unique cultural feature, it be retained and included as a component of educational and interpretive programming. The LUP does not propose changes in land use or to the agricultural use of this area, and proposed project improvements are designed to maintain the overall pastoral aesthetic of Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. The existing agricultural use of livestock grazing, a baseline environmental condition, will continue with project implementation. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact with respect to converting farmland to non-agricultural use.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

b) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? The Williamson Act is a state law that allows local governments to contract with private landowners to restrict specific lands to agricultural or related open space use in return for a lower property-tax assessment. Neither the project area nor immediately adjacent lands are zoned for agricultural use, but specific lands within the project area are under Williamson Act contract. These lands were placed under Williamson Act contracts prior to being transferred to the District. The Williamson Act contracts run with the land, so they remain in effect if land ownership changes. The District has recently filed for non-renewal of all of its lands under Williamson Act contracts; non-renewal is a minimum ten-year process. However, implementation of the project would not cause the conversion of any agricultural land nor result in changes in zoning or other activities that would conflict with agricultural activities at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing agricultural zoning nor facilitate conversion of agricultural land to a non-agricultural use.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

c, d) Would the project: c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)) or timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526)?; or d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? The project area is not zoned or designated forest land and the project will not result in loss or conversion of forest land. There are no ongoing, commercial timber harvesting activities on Pleasanton Ridge

Regional Park. In site-specific circumstances, the District may implement programs at the park that would involve selective, controlled removal of trees for the purpose of public safety and resource and wildfire management. However, the mission of the District is to preserve and protect open space in its natural condition. A primary goal of the LUP is to maintain the park's overall biodiversity and promote a healthy ecosystem, not to permanently convert forest land. Therefore, implementation of the LUP would not conflict with existing lands zoned as forest land or timberland.

Potential Impact: No Impact
Mitigation: None required

4.3 AIR QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
AIR QUALITY. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	■	☐
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	■	☐	☐
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☐	■	☐	☐
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	■	☐	☐
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	■	☐

Environmental Setting

This section addresses potential effects of implementation of the proposed project on ambient air quality and the potential for exposure of people, specifically sensitive receptors, to harmful pollutant concentrations. The section also evaluates the potential for the proposed project to conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan; to violate an air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation; to result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project

region is in nonattainment; or to create objectionable odors that would affect a substantial number of people.

Both the federal and state governments have established ambient air quality standards for outdoor concentrations of various pollutants in order to protect public health. These are called criteria pollutants. The national and state ambient air quality standards have been set at concentration levels that could be generally harmful to human health and welfare and are intended to protect the most sensitive persons from experiencing health impacts. The air pollutants for which national and state standards have been set include ozone (O_3), carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter (PM_{10}), fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2) and lead. In addition to criteria pollutants, for which there are ambient air quality standards, there is a second type of regulated pollutants called toxic air contaminants (TACs). TACs are known to be injurious, even in small quantities, and are associated with industrial processes such as petroleum refining; commercial operations including gas stations and dry cleaners; and motor vehicle exhaust, particularly from diesel engines. The federal and state governments provide emission regulations, rather than ambient air standards, for these pollutants; no safe levels of exposure to TACs have been established.

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) sets and enforces emission standards for motor vehicles, fuels and consumer products and sets air quality standards in the state. Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is within the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin (SFBAAB), which is under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). BAAQMD has regulatory authority governing air pollutant emissions in the nine counties that surround the San Francisco Bay. BAAQMD has adopted the *Bay Area 2005 Ozone Strategy* as a guide for the region to achieve compliance with air quality standards for ozone. BAAQMD has also adopted the *Bay Area 2010 Clean Air Plan*, which establishes emission control measures to improve Bay Area air quality and protect public health.

BAAQMD monitors air quality at several pollutant monitoring sites in the SFBAAB including at least two in the vicinity of the project area. BAAQMD maintains a monitoring site in Hayward on the west side of the project area that monitors ozone levels. Federal ambient air quality standards are generally met in the Hayward area, but ozone and particulate matter emissions exceed the more stringent state standards (City of Hayward 2002). BAAQMD also monitors air quality at a site in Livermore; at this site, violations of state standards for ozone and particulate matter have generally decreased since the mid 1990s, but do occur several days each year (City of Pleasanton 2009).

The entire Bay Area, which includes the project area, is currently not in attainment for state and national ozone standards and national particulate matter ambient air quality standards (BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines May 2011). The BAAQMD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines (May 2011) presents the *Thresholds of Significance* for construction- and operational-related criteria air pollutant and precursor emissions. Based on these significance thresholds, an increase of nitrogen oxides (NOx) above 54 lbs/day for short-term effects (construction) or long-tern effects (operations) would result in a significant impact. An increase of ROG or reactive organic gases above 54 lbs/day for short- or long-term effects would result in a significant impact. For PM_{10}, project construction- and operational-related impacts would be significant at

a level equal to or greater than the 82 lbs/day, while the threshold for $PM_{2.5}$ would be 54 lbs/day. Measured in another way, a construction site with earthmoving exceeding 8.1 acres a day or grading or excavation of more than 2.2 acres per day would exceed the construction threshold of significance. For the purposes of this document, emissions that would exceed the BAAQMD *Thresholds of Significance* would be considered significant adverse impacts.

Potential air quality impacts as a result of project implementation would likely be associated with vehicle exhaust, prescribed burns and construction and maintenance activities. Sources of vehicle exhaust emissions could be associated with District staff and public safety, grazing tenants, construction workers and park users. Prescribed burns generate particulate matter and nitrogen oxides. Construction-related activities generate air pollutants including carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, reactive organic gases and nitrogen oxides. Sources of fugitive dust emissions include construction-related activities, road and trail grading and material hauling. However, the daily average emissions as a result of project implementation are not anticipated to exceed the BAAQMD's *Thresholds of Significance* for criteria air pollutant and precursor emissions.

Discussion

a) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? The project will not conflict or obstruct implementation of any applicable air quality management plans. The BAAQMD *Bay Area 2010 Clean Air Plan* outlines thresholds for significant air quality impacts specifically for local plans, such as a general plan. The proposed project is consistent with the general plans of the cities of Hayward and Pleasanton and unincorporated Alameda County, where the project area is located. These plans, as well as the LUP, contain a number of policies and recommendations that aim to improve air quality. Therefore, the project is consistent with established air quality plans for the region, and potential impacts would be less-than-significant.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None Required

b, c) Would the project: b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?; or c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)? As describe above, the Bay Area is currently non-attainment for state and national ozone standards and national particulate matter ambient air quality standards. In the nearby Hayward monitoring station, federal ambient air quality standards are generally met, but state standards for ozone and particulate matter are exceeded. Violations of state standards for ozone and particulate occur several days each year in the Livermore monitoring station.

Potential air quality impacts as a result of project implementation would likely be associated with vehicle exhaust, prescribed burns and construction and maintenance activities. However,

the daily average emissions are not anticipated to exceed the BAAQMD's *Thresholds of Significance* for criteria air pollutant and precursor emissions.

Vehicle Exhaust

Implementation of the LUP would result in an increase in the generation of vehicle trips to the project area, from park users, park staff and maintenance and public safety vehicles. This increase in traffic would result in an increase in vehicle-related emissions. At full build-out, the proposed project would generate traffic from park users, estimated at a maximum of approximately 455 vehicles or 910 vehicle trips on peak days (see Section 4.16, Transportation/Traffic). On most days throughout the year, particularly weekdays or during poor weather conditions, the volume of traffic would likely be much less. At full build-out, operations of the park would not exceed the BAAQMD daily air quality thresholds of significance for criteria air pollutants and would be significantly less than the 10,000 vehicle trips per day established as the threshold under which a significant level of air pollution could be expected to be generated from vehicle exhaust (BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines May 2011). Therefore, project implementation would not violate air quality standards and would result in a less-than-significant air quality impact from vehicle traffic.

Prescribed Burning

Implementation of the LUP could involve small-scale fuel management projects and prescribed burns to reduce vegetative fuel loads and managing natural resources in a recommended treatment area. Prescribed burns would produce smoke and generate ozone precursors, including suspended particulate matter and nitrogen oxides, which have the potential to increase harmful pollutants and threaten public health. However, the BAAQMD's *Bay Area 2005 Ozone Strategy* and *Bay Area 2010 Clean Air Plan* account for planned combustion such as prescribed burns. Additionally, BAAQMD Regulation 5 allows open burning for most forest management on permissive burns days when air quality generated is not expected to adversely affect ambient air quality or downwind human populations. Moreover, the District Fire Department conducts all prescribed burns in compliance with guidelines set forth by BAAQMD, which are intended to increase the safety of burns and minimize the generation of potential air pollutants. The District minimizes impacts to local and regional air quality by preparing a *Prescribed Fire and Smoke Management Plan* for each burn operation describing the burn's objectives, how smoke would be managed and other logistical details, for approval by BAAQMD. Moreover, on the burn day, District fire officers would monitor the conditions to confirm that the burn could proceed, and BAAQMD may send an inspector to monitor smoke production along with District personnel. Appropriate staff and firefighting equipment would be deployed to the site for the duration of the prescribed fire and subsequent clean up. The District Fire Department would also prepare and submit a post-burn report to BAAQMD within 30 days. Compliance with these procedures, as outlined in BAAQMD's Regulation 5, would ensure that the District's prescribed burns would have a less-than-significant air quality impact.

Additionally, the LUP contains numerous measures to reduce the risk of unplanned fires including maintaining its vegetation management program to manage the vegetative fuel load; temporarily prohibiting barbecues and open fires or closing the park entirely to public use based on weather conditions; prohibiting fires at backpack camps; aggressively suppressing

wildfires; and continuing interagency fire management partnerships. Implementation of these measures would continue to minimize the risk of unplanned fires, and consequently, the risk that ozone precursors from unplanned fires could contribute to a regional air quality violation. Therefore, impacts associated with air quality violations from implementation of the LUP would be less-than-significant.

Construction and Maintenance Activities

Construction activities would include short-term operation and periodic idling of heavy equipment that has the potential to generate dust and equipment exhaust emissions. However, daily average emissions would not reach or exceed the air pollutants or precursors levels identified in the BAAQMD *Thresholds of Significance* described above. Implementation of Mitigation Measure **AIR-1** would further reduce minor impacts associated with air quality to a less-than-significant level.

> **Potential Impact:** Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
> **Mitigation: AIR-1**
>
> **MITIGATION AIR-1**: To control dust emissions the District will be required to employ the following Best Management Practices for managing dust:
> - Water all exposed surfaces and unpaved access roads;
> - Excavate during calm air periods;
> - Cover haul trucks transporting soil, sand or other loose material off-site;
> - Reestablish bare soils with vegetation;
> - Limit vehicle speeds on unpaved road to 15 miles per hour;
> - Minimize idling times to five minutes or less; and
> - Properly maintain and tune construction equipment.

d) Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? Sensitive receptors include children, elderly, infirm and people sensitive to air pollutants. Examples of land uses where sensitive receptors congregate are playgrounds, schools, childcare centers, hospitals, residences and senior housing. At least two schools, Foothill High School, on Foothill Road and George C. Lydicksen Elementary School, on Highland Oaks Drive, both within Pleasanton Unified School District, are located within a quarter-mile of the proposed Garms Staging Area. Therefore, implementation of the project has the potential to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

On site, sensitive receptors include park users and wildlife. Park visitors would be protected from emissions pollutant concentrations through temporary closures of areas within the park that would potentially be adversely impacted by construction activities and prescribed burns. Implementation of the project would also not significantly impact wildlife because the project would not generate substantial pollutant concentrations.

The District may periodically perform prescribed burns at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. Prescribed burns are conducted in coordination with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and under controlled conditions during weather that is conducive to smoke dispersal. Therefore, with implementation of the Best Management Practices described above, prescribed

burns would generate relatively small amounts of ozone precursors, and exposure of sensitive receptors to pollutant concentrations would be less-than-significant.

Project implementation would generate relatively small amounts of air pollutants as a result of vehicle emissions, construction activities and on-going park maintenance activities. However, the project's effect on air quality from dust as a result of earthmoving activities, such as developing staging areas, and constructing and maintaining roads and trails, would be temporary and localized, and account for only a negligible amount of air pollutants. Daily average emissions of construction- or maintenance-related criteria air pollutants or precursors are not anticipated to reach any of the thresholds identified in the BAAQMD's *Thresholds of Significance*, above: daily earthmoving and grading will be well under 8.1 acres and 2.2 acres, respectively. Nevertheless, to further reduce impacts to air quality from construction-related activities to levels that are less-than-significant, the District will implement Mitigation Measure **AIR-1** to control fugitive dust and exhaust emissions.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
Mitigation: AIR-1

e) Would the project create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people? The *Thresholds of Significance* for odor impacts are qualitative in nature and related to some degree to the distance of the activities from sensitive receptors. Project-related emissions, including particulate matter, carbon monoxide, diesel exhaust and fuel vapors, may result in short-term generation of odors emitting from park-users' vehicles and from construction equipment. However, these odors would be short-term and would dissipate rapidly in the air, decreasing with increasing distance from the source, thus minimizing any potential exposure to residents. Visitor exposure to these odors would be limited through periodic closures of areas of the park that would potentially be adversely impacted by construction activities. Consequently, the project would not result in a significant odor impact.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None Required

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	■	☐	☐
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	■	☐	☐
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	■	☐	☐
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	■	☐	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	■	☐
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	■

Environmental Setting

Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park contains a diversity of plant communities that provide suitable habitat for invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals. The 6,532-acre project area contains three major plant communities. These communities consist of oak woodland, comprising about 3,846 acres; California annual grassland (with some native perennial grasses present), which covers about 2,458 acres; and scattered shrubland on about 219 acres. In addition, riparian and wetland plant communities occur along portions of creeks and canyons in and around various ponds, and among springs and seeps and comprise almost four acres. The project area also contains areas where the original vegetation has been modified as a result of agricultural and residential uses. Most notable are remnant olive orchards located at the southern end of the project area; these orchards cover approximately five acres. Each of these

habitat types supports a wide variety of native wildlife species that reside in the park on a seasonal, migratory or year-round basis. The parkland is large enough to support wide-ranging predators including mountain lion, bobcat, fox and numerous raptors including golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and various hawks. The project area also provides habitat for amphibians and reptiles and contains a variety of water resources, including wetlands, 27 ponds, creeks, springs and seeps. Historically, the park's primary drainage, Sinbad Creek, provided habitat for federally-threatened steelhead trout (*Onchorhynchus mykiss*).

In an effort to design a project that will avoid or substantially lessen effects on biological resources, District and other biologists have conducted extensive habitat assessments to inventory plant and animal species that occur or that have the potential to exist, and to document their location(s) in the park. Although focusing particularly on special-status species and sensitive natural communities, District biologists have documented other significant wildlife species and habitat resources. As part of the planning process for this and earlier planning projects associated with Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, District staff conducted plant surveys in 1993 and 1994; in 1995 along Sinbad Creek; and 2007-2011 throughout the project area. District wildlife biologists conducted wildlife surveys in 1993, 1994, 2002, 2004 and 2007-2011. District biologists have also mapped plant communities, wetlands and water sources, as well as surveyed many of the 27 on-site ponds for aquatic species including macro-invertebrates, amphibians and fish. In addition, District staff reviewed the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California. The results of these surveys are detailed in Section 3.1.2.5 and Appendices C and D of the LUP; Figure 7, *Parkland Resources*, illustrates the major plant communities.

Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park contains many native species of grasses, wildflowers and trees, but only one that requires full consideration under CEQA: Congdon's tarplant (*Hemizonia parryi ssp. congdonii = Centromadia parry subsp. congdonii*) is a California State CNPS List 1B.2 plant (fairly endangered in California), with an East Bay CNPS Rank of *A2. Congdon's tarplant has been identified in a cattle-grazed pasture on the west side of the proposed Garms Staging Area.

As shown on Table 1, Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park contains habitat that has the potential to support 17 special-status wildlife species. Federally-threatened species that are known to occur on the project area include California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*) and Alameda whipsnake (*Masticophis lateralis euryxanthus*). Additionally, the entire park is located within designated critical habitat for Alameda whipsnake. While no habitat conservation plans apply to the project area, in 1999, a conservation easement was recorded on 657 acres of open space located in the northern portion of the project area. The conservation easement was established to protect and enhance habitat for California red-legged frog and Alameda whipsnake. A management plan is associated with the conservation easement.

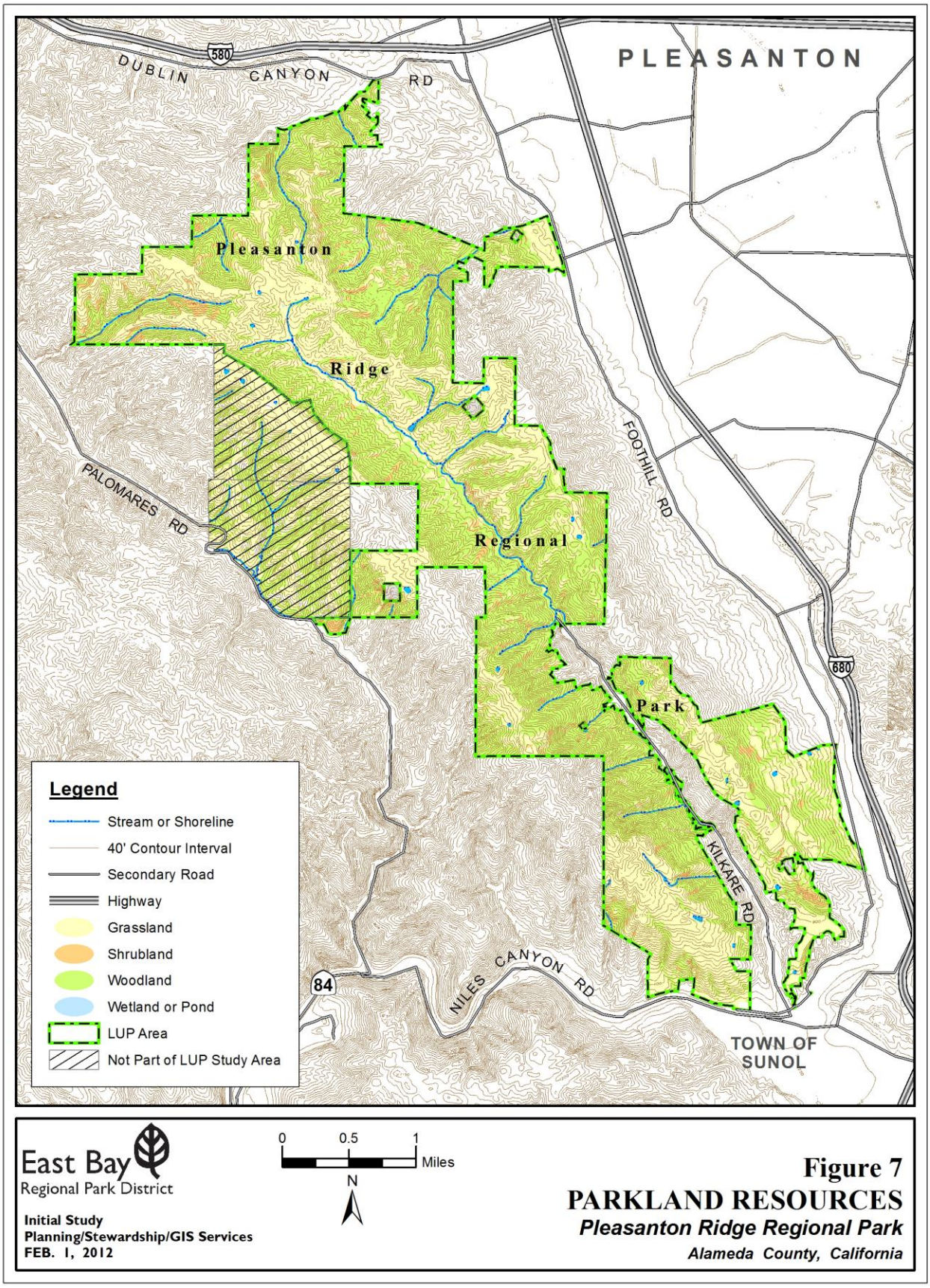


Figure 7
PARKLAND RESOURCES
Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
Alameda County, California

Table 1: Special-Status Wildlife Species Potentially Affected by the Project

Class	Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status[1]	State Status[1]	Occur-rence[2]
Amphibians	Frog, California Red-legged	*Rana draytonii*	FT	SSC	O/B
Amphibians	Salamander, California Tiger	*Anbystoma californiense*	FT	ST	P[5]
Birds	Eagle, Golden	*Aquila chrysaetos*	BGPA	CFP	O/B
Birds	Falcon, American Peregrine	*Falco peregrinus anatum*	Delisted	CFP	P
Birds	Grasshopper Sparrow	*Ammodramus savannarum*		SSC	O/B
Birds	Harrier, Northern	*Circus cyaneus*		SSC[3]	O
Birds	Hawk, Swainson's	*Buteo swainsoni*		ST	O/R[4]
Birds	Kite, White-tailed	*Elanus leucurus*		CFP[3]	O
Birds	Owl, Burrowing	*Athene cunicularia*		SSC	P
Birds	Shrike, Loggerhead	*Lanius ludovicianus*		SSC[3]	O/B
Birds	Warbler, Yellow	*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*		SSC	P
Mammals	American Badger	*Taxidea taxus*		SSC	P
Mammals	Dusky-footed Wood Rat, San Francisco	*Neotoma fuscipes annectens*		SSC	O/B
Mammals	Bat, Townsend's big-eared	*Corynorhinus townsendii*		SSC	P
Mammals	Bat, Pallid	*Antrozous pallidus*		SSC	O
Reptiles	Turtle, Western Pond	*Emys marmorata*		SSC	O/B
Reptiles	Whipsnake, Alameda	*Masticophis lateralis euryxanthus*	FT	ST	K/B*

[1] Status definitions and governing agencies as follows:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
FE Listed as endangered by the Federal Government
FT Listed as threatened by the Federal Government
FSC Federal Species of Concern
FC Federal Candidate

California Fish and Game Commission
SE Listed as endangered by the state of California
ST Listed as threatened by the state of California
SSC Species of Special Concern
CFP Fully Protected Species
CP Protected Species

[2] Occurrence: O=observed during our surveys, K=known to occur, P=potential to occur, U=unlikely to occur, B=breeding confirmed, and R=rare species/migrant, * animal captured on ALC land 1996, Swain (CNDDB Record)

[3] Rookeries or nesting only

[4] Wintering

[5] Historical record

Source: East Bay Regional Park District 10-4-11

Full implementation of the LUP will result in 52 acres of new developed area including staging areas, campsites and trails. This will bring the total developed area of the park to 408 acres including a trail system of approximately 63 miles or 58 acres. Proposed development is concentrated in five recreation/staging units that total 464 acres or 7 percent of the total 6,532-acre project area. The recreation/staging units include the existing Foothill Staging Area, the proposed Garms and Tyler Ranch Staging areas and the Sinbad Creek and Aquila backpack camps. In these areas, the LUP proposes to develop a service yard, park security residence, minor shelters, parking areas, picnic sites, campsites, trails, restroom facilities, water development systems, landscaping, fencing, signs and cattle grazing-related infrastructure. The District will use sensitive site planning to avoid or minimize biological resource impacts in the development and implementation of the LUP. In addition, the District has incorporated mitigation measures, discussed below, into the project to reduce potential affects to biological resources to a level of less-than-significant.

Discussion

a, b) Would the project: a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?; or b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Plants

In the project area, Congdon's tarplant is the only plant species that meets the criteria for rare, threatened or endangered under CEQA. Special-status plants are species that are legally protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) or other regulations or are species considered sufficiently rare by the scientific community to qualify for such listing. District staff typically monitors special-status species during the bloom season on an annual basis. Congdon's tarplant blooms June through November and is regarded as a member of a group of plants termed spikeweeds and tarplants. Congdon's tarplant thrives in disturbed and grazed conditions. This plant has been identified in a cattle-grazed pasture on the west side of the proposed Garms Staging Area by District biologists; in certain years, the population of this plant has been relatively large, while other years reveal few, if any, plants.

Proposed improvements in the Garms Staging Area, including developing the Congdon Loop Trail and the staging and picnic areas, have the potential to adversely impact Congdon's tarplant. To minimize potential impacts to Congdon's tarplant, the District will continue to preserve and enhance existing Congdon's tarplant habitat. This will be accomplished by continuing to seasonally graze portions of the staging area where Congdon's tarplant historically is concentrated to reduce vegetation growth in grasslands and promote the regeneration of this species. In addition, District staff will conduct pre-construction surveys for Congdon's tarplant prior to development of the Garms Staging Area and development will be located to minimize

direct impacts to this species. Moreover, the following LUP recommendations are meant to preserve and enhance conditions for Congdon's tarplant: removing the park maintenance area from this site, developing an interpretive outdoor education program for the Congdon Loop Trail featuring Congdon's tarplant, and continuing to monitor and survey this species. Implementing these management actions will ensure that potential impacts to Congdon's tarplant will be less-than-significant.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required.

Wildlife

Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park contains a variety of vegetation types including woodland, grassland, shrubland, riparian and wetlands. Based on a review of the CNDDB and surveys conducted by District biologists, 17 special-status wildlife species occur or have the potential to occur at the park (see Table 1). Twelve special-status species are known or are likely to breed in the park including federally-threatened California red-legged frog and Alameda whipsnake. The LUP for Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park attempts to avoid or minimize impacts to special-status wildlife species through resource-sensitive site planning and employing an adaptive management approach. The District's adaptive management approach is based on using a variety of conservation measures to address evolving environmental conditions within specific areas of the park. As the District gains additional knowledge and management tools, it may modify management programs to achieve desired outcomes in conformance with regulatory agencies. An adaptive management approach gives the District flexibility in managing the parkland and will help guide the development of proposed park facilities, trails and resource enhancement projects.

Another valuable tool that the District will use to minimize biological impacts at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is the existing Pleasanton Ridge Conservation Bank (PRCB). The PRCB, established in 1999 on 657 acres in the northern portion of the project area, sets forth management provisions for protecting and restoring natural resources, focusing on special-status species' habitat, within its boundaries. The concept for establishing a conservation bank is to set aside land with significant natural resource values to be managed in perpetuity. In turn "credits" are awarded for the special habitat values that the property possesses. These credits can then be sold on the open market to developers who are required to mitigate by preserving off-site lands with similar habitat values, in this case for core populations of California red-legged frog and Alameda whipsnake. The District could potentially use these credits when required to mitigate for proposed parkland improvements that require permits from regulatory resource agencies. Additionally, the District could implement restoration projects within the PRCB and potentially receive additional conservation credits. By utilizing available conservation bank credits to mitigate for project impacts, the District may restore degraded resources and existing infrastructure, thereby enhancing habitat for special-status species and adding recreation trail opportunities.

The park is located within an area designated critical habitat for Alameda whipsnake, a federally- and state-listed threatened species. Alameda whipsnake, which is found only in Alameda and

Contra Costa counties and prefers shrubland areas which have rocky and grassy openings, occupies the project area. In general, implementation of the project would have a beneficial impact of Alameda whipsnake, as the project would protect the land from urban development and provide for permanent conservation of this strategically located area, allowing for connections to additional habitat areas, an essential component of the recovery strategy of this species. Nevertheless, it is possible that specific aspects of the project, particularly trail development, increased human activity and incompatible grazing practices, could adversely impact Alameda whipsnake.

The District will continue to manage grassland and shrubland habitat to benefit Alameda whipsnake through using prescribed fire, integrated pest management programs and other methods, to maintain optimal vegetation density; continuing to employ a moderate and managed grazing regime using cattle, sheep and goats, as appropriate, to maintain a mosaic of habitat characteristics conducive to Alameda whipsnake and other native reptiles; and minimizing new trail construction where such trail development would traverse critical Alameda whipsnake habitat. To further reduce potential impacts to Alameda whipsnake to levels that are less-than-significant, the District will conduct pre-construction surveys to determine the presence of Alameda whipsnake (Mitigation Measure **BIO-1**), confine trail construction in potential whipsnake habitat to the period of July 1st through October 31st when the snake is active (Mitigation Measure **BIO-2**) and confine ground-clearing activities to the minimum necessary area (Mitigation Measure **BIO-3**).

The District will continue to perform vegetation management projects at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park with the central goals of achieving weed control and fire management objectives while continuing to enhance wildlife habitat and increase populations of special-status and other desirable wildlife species for the long-term. If left unmanaged, grassland habitat will naturally evolve into shrub habitat that does not offer the primary constituent elements for Alameda whipsnake and a number of other special-status species. The District actively manages the parkland using mowing, herbicides, prescribed burning and livestock grazing, independently or in conjunction, to modify the habitat to benefit special-status and other desirable wildlife species.

Livestock grazing is a long-term existing use at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. The District conducts a closely monitored and adaptive livestock grazing program at the park to manage vegetation and maintain suitable habitat conditions for native plants and wildlife. The intent of the grazing practice is to reduce non-native grassland vegetation to a lower stature to encourage the germination and establishment of native plants and to sustain wildlife populations. Conducting an actively monitored livestock grazing program optimizes habitat conditions that contribute to the maintenance of viable wildlife populations and is consistent with current research and determinations by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The District would continue to conduct pest management activities at the park in compliance with applicable county, state and federal law and regulations, and in accordance with the District's *Pest Management Policies and Practices* (EBRPD 1987). To further reduce potential impacts to special-status wildlife at the park from use of chemicals, the District will establish appropriate buffers, and plan the timing and extent of integrated pest management projects, so as not to increase harmful exposure to special-status and non-target plant and animal species.

A prescribed burn could have the potential to harm individual animals at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. Open grassland and shrubland, where prescribed burns could take place at the park, provide habitat for a number of special-status wildlife species. To reduce impacts to special-status species from prescribe burns, the District incorporates standard procedures for planning and scheduling prescribed burn projects. Procedures include preparing a *Prescribed Fire and Smoke Management Plan*, which addresses land management goals and proper monitoring and evaluation procedures, for approval by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. The District conducts prescribed burns only during daylight hours to minimize potential impacts to wildlife resources. All prescribed burns are conducted under specific weather conditions that are conducive to flame control and smoke dispersal. The District also minimizes potential adverse impacts to wildlife by limiting the size of treatment areas, which is typically a small fraction of a park's total acreage, to allow wildlife to escape. Furthermore, it is standard procedure for a qualified District biologist to approve all prescribed fires and monitor burn operations. In addition, District biologists develop site-specific methodologies to avoid disturbance and injury to state- and federally-listed wildlife species, and when appropriate, contact the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with information regarding these species. Incorporating these standard practices and Mitigation Measures **BIO-4**, **BIO-5** and **BIO-6** into prescribed burn projects will ensure that potential impacts to species-status wildlife would be less-than-significant.

Several special-status avian species, including golden eagle, Swainson's hawk and white-tailed kite, are known to breed within the project area. Implementation of the project would generally have a beneficial impact on raptors, as the District will manage woodland areas to benefit raptors and avoid construction in areas above the tree line of woodland areas known to support nesting habitat for raptors. Nevertheless, implementation of the project, including opening areas of the park to public access; developing recreation areas and new trails during the bird-nesting season; and pruning and removing individual trees, could result in harassment of wildlife, especially of raptors, through disturbance to trees or nests. This would be considered a significant impact under CEQA, as the California Department of Fish and Game Code (Section 3503) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act protect nesting raptors.

Park development and maintenance could involve pruning and removing individual trees to maintain park user safety and tree health. While the District promotes the preservation of healthy native trees whenever possible, it recognizes that reasonable management of trees, particularly in developed park areas, is necessary to sustain their health and to identify hazardous trees to minimize the potential of property damage or visitor injury. Selective removal of mature trees has the potential to result in adverse effects to nesting birds, which could constitute a potentially significant impact if it disturbs or harms a species protected under state or federal law. To reduce potentially significant impacts to protected birds to a less-than-significant level, the District will implement Mitigation Measures **BIO-7**, **BIO-8** and **BIO-9**.

> **Potential Impact:** Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
> **Mitigation: BIO-1**, **BIO-2**, **BIO-3**, **BIO-4**, **BIO-5**, **BIO-6**, **BIO-7**, **BIO-8** and **BIO-9**.
>
> **MITIGATION BIO-1:** Concurrent with determining the final alignment of new

trails, a qualified wildlife biologist will conduct site-specific, pre-construction surveys to determine the presence of any special-status species that could be affected. Based on survey findings, avoidance and/or mitigation measures for biotic impacts will be determined on a case-by-case basis including contacting appropriate resource agencies for consultation.

MITIGATION BIO-2: Construction of new trails located in potential Alameda whipsnake habitat will be confined to the period of July 1st through October 31st. This represents an active period for Alameda whipsnake and should minimize potential impacts because snakes are expected to move readily during construction.

MITIGATION BIO-3: Ground-clearing for construction will be confined to the minimum area necessary, and appropriate erosion control measures will be incorporated.

MITIGATION BIO-4: To minimize impacts to special-status wildlife, prescribed burns will be conducted according to permit guidelines restricting burns to the season that presents the least risk to the animals.

MITIGATION BIO-5: During a prescribed burn, if the District's biological monitor finds species of concern within the burn area, individual animals will be hazed or otherwise removed from the project area by a qualified wildlife biologist. Burns may be suspended for the amount of time necessary to perform this action.

MITIGATION BIO-6: To reduce the chance of injury of an animal during burning of piles, slash piles will be disassembled and reformed immediately prior to burning. This method will decrease the potential risk of harming any species taking refuge in a pile.

MITIGATION BIO-7: Prior to the removal of mature trees during bird nesting season, February 1st through July 31st, the District will conduct site-specific, pre-construction tree surveys to determine the presence of nests of legally protected bird species. If any trees to be removed contain active nests, the District will consult with the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine under what conditions these trees can be legally removed. In addition, construction activities near these trees will be conducted only after the young have fledged, as determined by a qualified wildlife biologist. Such surveys will not be required outside of bird nesting season.

MITIGATION BIO-8: Within upland habitats, if special-status bird species are encountered within or adjacent to trail alignments or recreation areas during the survey or construction period, construction activities will be scheduled outside of the bird nesting season between August 1st and January 31st.

MITIGATION BIO-9: If active special-status bird nests or other protected species are identified in public use areas, to avoid disturbance, the District may

seasonally restrict public access to areas during the breeding season; close trails, in accordance with Ordinance 38 (EBRPD Visitor Use Regulations); or develop appropriate buffers around successful nest locations, to avoid disturbance to breeding or migrating wildlife.

Aquatic Wildlife

Special-status amphibians and reptiles known to occupy and breed in the creeks and ponds of Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park include California red-legged frog and Western pond turtle. Native steelhead trout historically occurred in Alameda Creek. Sinbad Creek provides habitat for the federally-threatened steelhead trout, although this species is not believed to migrate up this far because of downstream blockages in Alameda Creek. Primary threats to the California red-legged frog include habitat destruction, degradation and fragmentation. In these regards, project implementation would benefit the California red-legged frog and other native aquatic wildlife because it promotes a land use practice that is compatible with the conservation of these species. The project would maintain existing rangeland, permanently protecting the land from being converted to land uses that eliminate California red-legged frog habitat. Additionally, the LUP includes measures to manage aquatic habitats and drainages to benefit native wildlife including: repairing erosion in Cook and Sinbad Creeks along with road repair and trail stabilization; replanting degraded stream corridors with native plants collected on site; implementing pond enhancements including dam repairs, dredging, stabilizing berms and re-contouring pond bottoms; capturing and removing bullfrogs and non-native predatory fish; implementing stream habitat restoration projects; managing grazing of pond margins to maintain vegetation; and avoiding construction of new trails, where practicable, within a 100-foot buffer of aquatic habitats with permanent waterbodies and riparian or emergent vegetation known to support California red-legged frog.

The LUP proposes activities at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, including park development projects adjacent to wetlands, restoring stock ponds and vegetation management projects that have the potential to disturb aquatic wildlife and wetland habitat. The District will implement Mitigation Measures **BIO-10, BIO-11**, **BIO-12** and **BIO-13** to avoid or minimize potential adverse impacts.

The District would conduct routine pond maintenance activities that may include: clearing debris from culverts and replacing culverts; dam repairs and dredging, as required, to maintain water-holding capacity; stabilizing berms and spillways; and re-contouring pond bottoms to provide both deep and shallow water habitats necessary for amphibian life cycles. The overall intention of pond maintenance and restoration activities is to benefit native wildlife, particularly special-status species, while providing livestock with water. Providing open water habitat is essential for maintaining viable California red-legged frog breeding populations. Pond maintenance activities typically result in beneficial effects to the pond environment, as wetlands quickly restore themselves with an increase in function and long-term value.

Pond restoration projects would continue to be conducted under existing individual permits issued by responsible state and federal agencies. As part of the project, the District will continue to comply with the terms and conditions outlined in existing permits to avoid impacts

to special-status aquatic wildlife. These conditions, among others, include conducting routine maintenance activities during the period of August 1st through October 31st or under dry site conditions; inspecting sites for special-status aquatic wildlife prior to and during maintenance projects, and, if found, relocating these species to an appropriate site under the direction of a properly qualified wildlife biologist; and utilizing spoil materials for pond reinforcement or removing and depositing spoils to predetermined upland location(s). Compliance with conditions identified in existing permits and a biological opinion issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and implementation of mitigation measures would avoid or limit impacts to special-status aquatic wildlife.

Vegetation management projects, specifically livestock grazing and prescribed burning, have the potential to disturb aquatic wildlife and their habitat. Livestock grazing is a long-term existing use at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. Cattle and sheep are utilized in the park and stocking levels are managed to assure that an adequate amount of vegetation remains on the ground at all times. The number of livestock and the period of time the animals are allowed to remain on the land throughout the growing season are commensurate with forage availability and other resource management considerations. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has adopted a special rule under section 4(d) of the Endangered Species Act that exempts routine ranching activities, including livestock grazing within normally acceptable intensity levels; routine management and maintenance of stock ponds; maintenance of unimproved roads; routine maintenance and construction of grazing infrastructure like fences and corrals; and control and management of noxious weeds. The USFWS has determined that a closely monitored grazing program is compatible with the conservation of California red-legged frog and California tiger salamander. Stock ponds built for livestock ranching have become important breeding sites for the California red-legged frog. In pond environments, managed grazing helps sustain open water habitat by removing or controlling emergent vegetation around shallower, tadpole-rearing, margins of the pond and increasing the water retention period of that pond. Therefore, impacts to ponds would be less-than-significant.

Prescribed burn activities have the potential to impact special-status aquatic wildlife if water from ponds or creeks in which these species occur is used for fire control. In addition, prescribed burn activities have the potential to impact special-status aquatic wildlife if fire burns too close and ash enters the waterbody. For all prescribed burn projects the District prepares a fire management plan that identifies water sources on a project map. Water sources containing special-status aquatic wildlife will be identified on this map. To avoid impacts to special-status aquatic wildlife during prescribed burn projects, the District will implement Mitigation Measure **BIO-14** to avoid drawing water from ponds or creeks that are known to support these species to suppress a fire. Moreover, the District will implement Mitigation Measure **BIO-15**, establishing appropriate upland buffers around each waterbody within the prescribed burn project area. By implementing these mitigation measures into the project, potentially significant impacts to special-status aquatic wildlife would be avoided or minimized.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
Mitigation: BIO-10, **BIO-11**, **BIO-12**, **BIO-13**, **BIO-14** and **BIO-15**.

MITIGATION BIO-10: All construction activities that have the potential to affect wetland areas will take place during the dry season, between August 1st and October 31st, or as otherwise determined by permitting agencies, and in compliance with the federal Clean Water Act.

MITIGATION BIO-11: A qualified wildlife biologist(s) will survey ponds for special-status aquatic wildlife prior to and during pond maintenance projects. If found, individuals will be relocated to an appropriate site by a qualified wildlife biologist permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

MITIGATION BIO-12: Spoil materials generated during pond maintenance projects will be utilized for pond reinforcement or removed and deposited at predetermined upland location(s).

MITIGATION BIO-13: The District will enact seasonal closure zones when deemed appropriate to restrict park activity around breeding or migrating amphibians and other sensitive wildlife.

MITIGATION BIO-14: To avoid impacts to special-status aquatic wildlife during prescribed burns, the District will identify water sources that are known to support these species on the project map and will avoid drawing water from them to suppress a fire.

MITIGATION BIO-15: To prevent ash from entering waterbodies during prescribed burns, the District will establish appropriate upland buffers around each waterbody within the prescribed burn project area.

c) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? In general, implementation of the LUP would be beneficial to wetlands and would not result in a significant environmental impact. Several recommendations in the LUP call for restoring natural water courses, including managing Sinbad Creek, to minimize erosion and sedimentation. The LUP limits facility development and trail construction in riparian and other wetland areas to protect them from disturbance and includes implementation measures aimed at protecting wetlands. For example, implementation of the LUP would remove or restore highly erosive trail routes adjacent to waterbodies and periodically restore ponds throughout the project area. Additionally, the District would continue to manage livestock grazing on pond margins to maintain vegetation. Nevertheless, the LUP proposes activities at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, including park development projects adjacent to wetlands, maintaining stock ponds and cattle water development, and vegetation management projects, that have the potential to disturb aquatic wildlife and wetland habitat. Implementation of Mitigation Measures **BIO-10**, **BIO-12**, **BIO-15**, **BIO-16**, **BIO-17** and **BIO-18** would avoid or minimize potential adverse impacts on wetlands.

Implementation of the LUP would require the construction of at least ten drainage crossings to complete the proposed trail system. Stream channel crossings would include culverts, fords, bridges or similar structures. Although many of the drainages in the park only convey water during storm events or because of a nearby spring or seep, they may fall under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board. CDFG would require notification and a Streambed Alteration Agreement under Section 1600 of the CDFG code should trail construction require crossing a perennial creek or seasonal drainage within the riparian flow zone. However, if a crossing, such as a bridge, can be installed without disturbing the creek bed, channel or bank with no riparian vegetation removed, no permit will be necessary.

The Water Board has regulatory authority over wetlands and waterways under both the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) and the State of California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California Water Code, Division 7). Under the CWA, the Water Board has regulatory authority over actions in waters of the United States, through the issuance of water quality certifications under Section 401 of the CWA, which are issued in conjunction with permits issued by the ACOE, under Section 404 of the CWA. When the Water Board issues Section 401 certifications, it simultaneously issues general Waste Discharge Requirements for the project, under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Activities in areas that are outside of the jurisdiction of the ACOE (e.g., isolated wetlands, vernal pools, seasonal streams, intermittent streams, channels that lack a nexus to navigable waters, or stream banks above the ordinary high water mark) are regulated by the Water Board, under the authority of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Activities that lie outside of ACOE jurisdiction may require the issuance of either individual or general Waste Discharge Requirements. The District will obtain all necessary permits for new or repaired stream channel crossings. To ensure that impacts to waterbodies as a result of implementation of drainage crossings would be less-than-significant, the District will implement Mitigation Measures **BIO-16**, **BIO-17** and **GEO-1** and **GEO-2**, described below in Section 4.6 *Geology and Soils*.

Toxic substances typically involved in construction activities include gasoline, lubricants and other petroleum-based products. These products could enter waterbodies as a result of spills or leakage from machinery or storage containers if not appropriately controlled. Aquatic organisms exposed to these substances could be killed through exposure to lethal concentrations or exposure to non-lethal levels that cause physiological stress and increased susceptibility to other sources of mortality. Petroleum products also tend to form oily films on the water surface that could reduce dissolved oxygen levels available to aquatic organisms. To minimize the potential for adverse impacts from incidents associated with potentially hazardous materials to a less-than-significant level, the District incorporates into all of its projects Best Management Practices described below in subsection b) of Section 4.8 *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
Mitigation: BIO-10, **BIO-16**, **BIO-17**, **BIO-18** and **GEO-1** and **GEO-2**, Section 4.6

MITIGATION BIO-16: No equipment will be operated in standing or flowing water. Heavy equipment working in or adjacent to wetlands will be placed on mats or other measures must be taken to minimize soil disturbance.

MITIGATION BIO-17: Where possible, stream channel crossings associated with roads and trails will consist of a clear-span bridge with footings located outside of the channel; bridges will be located to minimize impacts to riparian vegetation. For new or repaired stream channel crossings, the District will obtain necessary permits from the California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board.

MITIGATION BIO-18: For construction projects adjacent to wetlands and waterbodies, the District will develop and implement Best Management Practices for control of erosion, sediment and pollutants. Best Management Practices may include: re-planting exposed areas; using dikes, basins, ditches, clean straw, erosion control fabric and other temporary measures; installing catchments for source pollutants; and including a sufficient vegetated buffer between parking areas and wetlands.

d) Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites? Generally, implementation of the LUP would benefit the movement of migratory species and wildlife migration corridors, as it would incorporate 2,360 acres of open space into Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, bringing the project area's total acreage to 6,532. The open space to be added to the park has been acquired by the District over many years, and preserving this land in permanent open space allows habitat connectivity to be maximized. Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park forms part of the Alameda watershed providing habitat for a variety of wildlife species including critical breeding and foraging habitat for a number of federal- and state-listed species including: Alameda whipsnake, California red-legged frog, Western pond turtle, golden eagle and other raptors, along with habitat that historically sustained federally-threatened steelhead trout.

The LUP contains implementation measures to facilitate movement of migratory species and protect migratory corridors. The park's major drainage Sinbad Creek, which is a tributary to Alameda Creek, supported large populations of rainbow and steelhead trout as recently as 30 years ago. The LUP specifies that aquatic habitats along Sinbad Creek and tributary drainages will be managed, including providing important habitat connections, to benefit native amphibians, reptiles and potential future rainbow and steelhead trout populations.

The LUP includes numerous measures to enhance habitat for California red-legged frog, California tiger salamander and Western pond turtle including: managing Sinbad Creek to minimize erosion; implementing stream restoration projects; planting riparian vegetation along pond banks, Sinbad Creek and seasonal drainages; implementing pond repairs such as dredging; controlling bullfrogs and non-native predatory fish; and managing livestock grazing on pond margins. Implementation of these measures would ensure that the project would benefit the movement of native amphibians and reptiles.

The project area is entirely within the area designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as critical habitat for Alameda whipsnake. Specific LUP recommendations call for managing the park to benefit Alameda whipsnake. For example, the LUP includes a recommendation seeking to minimize new trail construction where such development would traverse critical Alameda whipsnake habitat. In addition, the District will implement Mitigation Measure **BIO-2**, confining development and construction activities on trails to the period of July 1st through October 31st when these snakes are active, minimizing potential impacts to this species.

The LUP includes an implementation measure to continue managing woodland areas to benefit raptor nesting and foraging activities: no construction is proposed in the southwest portion of Sunol Ridge that has a long history of raptor nesting. Moreover, the LUP includes the following measures to enhance habitat for the golden eagle and other raptors: avoid construction of new trails in areas above the tree line of woodland areas known to support nesting habitat for raptors over multi-year periods and avoid pruning trees in areas known to support raptors during nesting periods, typically February 1st through July 31st. Nevertheless, project activities, including opening areas of the park to the public, trail construction and vegetation removal, have the potential to result in significant impacts to migratory birds. Therefore, implementation of Mitigation Measures **BIO-2**, **BIO-7**, **BIO-8**, **BIO-9** and **BIO-13** would reduce potential impacts to the movement of migratory bird species to a level of insignificance.

> **Potential Impact:** Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
> **Mitigation: BIO-2**, **BIO-7**, **BIO-8**, **BIO-9** and **BIO-13**.

e) Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? With project implementation, the District will continue to comply with all regulations, ordinances and policies pertaining to biological resources and obtain necessary permits prior to implementing projects or activities. In 1999, a conservation easement was recorded on 657 acres of open space located in the northern portion of the project area. The conservation easement was established to protect and enhance habitat for California red-legged frog and Alameda whipsnake. To meet this goal, the *Pleasanton Ridge Conservation Bank Establishment and Management Plan* includes measures directed at improving and protecting: watershed integrity; water quality; native vegetative cover and diversity; native species diversity and richness; quality of foraging, refugial, breeding, and dispersal habitat; and connectivity with adjacent habitats. With implementation of the LUP, the District will continue to manage the conservation easement in accordance with the *Pleasanton Ridge Conservation Bank Establishment and Management Plan*, incorporating Best Management Practices for managing regional wildlife resources, and state and federal laws protecting rare, threatened and endangered species. Therefore, implementation of the LUP would be consistent with local ordinances and policies designed to preserve and protect biological resources, and associated impacts would be less-than-significant.

> **Potential Impact:** Less-than-Significant
> **Mitigation:** None Required

f) Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? The project area is not under an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan, and the project would not conflict with any approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, implementation of the LUP would result in no impact with respect to habitat conservation plan compliance.

Potential Impact: No Impact
Mitigation: None required

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5 of the *CEQA Guidelines*?	☐	■	☐	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the *CEQA Guidelines*?	☐	■	☐	☐
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	■	☐	☐
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	■	☐	☐

Environmental Setting

This section presents the environmental setting and impact assessment for cultural resources at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. Cultural resources are places or objects or any other physical evidence associated with human activity considered important for scientific, historic or religious reasons to cultures, communities, groups or individuals. Cultural resources include human-made artifacts, structures and sites possessing significance such as a Native American burial or an architectural landmark. For this analysis, cultural resources are categorized into prehistoric (also called archaeological) resources and historic resources. Prehistoric resources are those that date to before the introduction of writing and are generally associated with Native Americans. Known prehistoric resources within the project area include several isolated bedrock mortars used for processing food, a grinding rock, stone implements and a midden deposit, which is darkened soils indicating a concentration of ash and organic debris, the by-products of food preparation and consumption. Historic resources are those from periods

dating after the introduction of writing in modern times, and that are generally 50 years or older. At Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, historic resources are plentiful, particularly from the American Farm Period (1850 to 1970s) and include houses, foundations, privies, corrals, bridges, fences, stock ponds, pipelines, roads, trails and fruit orchards. Remnants of this period also include the Nipper and Tyler Ranch complexes, an olive grove and other homestead sites. See Section 3.1.2.9, *Cultural Resources*, of the LUP, for a comprehensive discussion of the project area's ethnography and cultural features.

Over the years, District staff, interns and consultants have conducted oral histories, archival research, mapping and field work at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, in an effort to inventory and evaluate cultural resources. As part of the LUP planning process, the District hired a professional cultural resources firm to conduct field reviews of proposed development areas and to prepare an archaeological sensitivity map of the entire project area (Archaeological Resource Service 2011). Based on previous cultural resource data gathered over many years and the accumulated knowledge of the history of the project area, there is a high likelihood that much of the area contains unrecorded prehistoric and historic cultural resources (Archaeological Resource Service 2011). The distribution of known cultural resources sites at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park reflects where prior cultural resource surveys have been conducted rather than the actual distribution of historic and prehistoric sites.

The District manages cultural resources according to state and federal law, and a primary goal of the LUP is to preserve these resources in place through protection and specialized management. The LUP also provides the opportunity for the District to interpret on-site cultural resources to benefit present and future generations. However, in general, the District attempts to avoid disturbing cultural resources to the extent possible. The District will manage specific areas that contain historical resources and landscape features, remnants of early ranching and farming activity to ensure that the integrity and context of these resources are retained. Furthermore, the District will keep the location of known archaeological resource sites confidential as they are vulnerable to disturbance and destruction.

Discussion

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5 of the *CEQA Guidelines*? Section 15064.5 of the *CEQA Guidelines* defines a resource as "historically significant" if it is associated with events important to California's history, is associated with the lives of important persons, embodies distinctive construction characteristics, or contributes important prehistoric or historic information. A significant adverse impact would occur if the project would cause the historical resource to be "materially impaired," as defined in Section 15064.5 of the *CEQA Guidelines*.

On the project area, cultural resources that have been previously recorded with the State Department of Parks and Recreation include prehistoric site CA-Ala-510, an isolated bedrock mortar and four historical resources recorded in 2006: P-01-010826, a fence; P-01-010827, a wagon road; P-01-010828, dirt road; and P-01-010829, a fence. In 2011, the District commissioned an archaeological consultant to survey proposed development areas associated

with the LUP. At the proposed Garms Staging Area, which is not currently open to the public, but will be opened with implementation of the project, an unrecorded prehistoric midden was identified. At the existing Foothill Staging Area, a scatter of historic domestic-type artifacts, including ceramics, pieces of bottles and other glass, were observed. The proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area, located on land that was recently transferred to the District, contains potentially significant historic structures that should be evaluated by an architectural historian to determine their significance prior to making any changes to their condition (Archaeological Resource Service 2011). The project area also includes several historic resources that have been identified on open parkland, but that have not been formally recorded. These resources are associated with former home sites and include ranch buildings, barns, corrals, stables, fences, stock ponds, ranch roads and a wooden bridge. The dominant cultural landscape reflects the American Farm Period, which extends from 1850 to the 1970s. None of the historic buildings or resources on open parkland are listed under any historic designation criteria nor do any appear eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources.

Structures and landscape features from the American Farm Era are associated with the Nipper, Bachelder, Perkins, Rupert and Cook families. Former Nipper Ranch buildings are located roughly a mile north of the Town of Sunol and originally consisted of a house, cabin, barn and blacksmith shop; only the house and barn still stand. Fruit orchards have been removed. The Nipper Ranch complex was evaluated for significance by an architectural historian when all four buildings were standing and was determined not to be historically significant (Hill 1999).

The former Tehan Falls property is located in the northeast portion of the project area and consists of a house foundation and chimney. A park residence is located on the former Poole property; this is not a potentially historic structure. The former Garms residence, located in the proposed Garms Staging Area, is a two-story building probably built in the 1930s that is now used as a park security residence and a park office. Remnants of a horse stable are evident towards the north end of this area. The former Garms residence does not appear to be a potentially significant historic feature because it has been extensively remodeled (Archaeological Resource Service 2011). The Tyler Ranch complex is located on the site of the proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area on the southwestern edge of the project area. This complex includes a vacant house, barn, tack room, workshop, chicken coop, spring and a series of corals and animal pens. There are also two abandoned cabins on the eastern section of the property. These buildings have not been formally evaluated to determine their significance.

The location of the proposed Aquila Camp has been identified as having a high archaeological sensitivity and has not been evaluated for cultural resources (Archaeological Resource Service 2011). Therefore, ground-disturbing activities related to campsite development, such as grading and excavation, could potentially disturb prehistoric deposits. To reduce potential impacts to cultural resources to a less-than-significant level, the District will incorporate Mitigation Measure **CULT-1**, requiring on-site monitoring of ground-disturbing activities related to developing the Aquila Camp.

As a result of their centralized locations and relatively flat topography, the areas in which historical resources are located have been selected to serve as park recreation/staging units. Staging areas may include parking, picnic tables, restrooms, drinking water, shelters, interpretive

signs, trees, landscaping, fencing and gates. Ground-disturbing activities in areas that were previously developed have the potential to unearth potentially significant historic deposits.

The LUP does not propose development or any alterations to the Nipper Ranch complex aside from making it part of the interpretive program. Therefore, implementation of the recommendations contained in the LUP would not have the potential to result in an adverse change to its significance. The LUP proposes to develop a staging area in the Tyler Ranch complex. Construction activities in the Tyler Ranch Staging Area, such as grading and excavation, could potentially affect the historical significance of these buildings and unearth historic or prehistoric deposits, a potentially significant impact. However, current federal, state and local laws, as well as recommendations included in the LUP and mitigation measures incorporated into the project would reduce potential impacts to historic resources to a less-than-significant level. The following recommendations and mitigation measures would reduce potential impacts to known cultural resources to a less-than-significant level.

To minimize potential impacts to historic resources in the Tyler Ranch complex, the District will use site-sensitive planning to avoid impacts to structures and minimize impacts to the site's setting. The District would only introduce elements that are compatible with the site's historic building fabric and rustic character. Further, to reduce potential impacts related to known historical resources to a less-than-significant level, the District would incorporate Mitigation Measures **CULT-1** and **CULT-2**.

> **Potential Impact:** Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
> **Mitigation: CULT-1** and **CULT -2**
>
> **MITIGATION CULT-1**: A monitor will be present during initial grading and other earth-disturbing activities associated with development of the Garms Staging Area, the Tyler Ranch Staging Area and Aquila Camp. Concurrent with determining the final alignment of new trails, an archaeologist will conduct an evaluation of Sinbad Creek and other nearby drainages in the vicinity of proposed trail creek crossings and, if necessary, relocate trails and related creek crossing structures to avoid disturbance of previously undiscovered cultural resources. If no historic or subsurface deposits, or other indications of a cultural resource, are observed, then monitoring will no longer be warranted throughout construction.
>
> **MITIGATION CULT-2:** Prior to taking any action affecting the physical condition of structures greater than 50 years of age in the Tyler Ranch Staging Area and throughout the project area, the District will hire an architectural historian to evaluate structures/sites and determine their eligibility for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources and will obtain recommendations for adaptive reuse or demolition. If structures are determined to be historically significant then treatment in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the *Treatment of Historic Properties* for recording, preserving, rehabilitating, restoring and reconstructing historic buildings will be warranted.

b, c, d) Would the project: b) cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the *CEQA Guidelines*?; c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?; or d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? As discussed above in the *Environmental Setting* section, there is a high likelihood that much of the project area contains unrecorded prehistoric and cultural resources. In general, it is expected that portions of the project area lying along drainages and ridges with rocky outcrops would reveal a high sensitivity for prehistoric sites (Archaeological Resource Service 2011). Project implementation would likely not adversely affect known significant cultural resources: park facilities identified in the LUP have been sensitively located so as to avoid impacts to known cultural resources and the LUP does not propose development of areas with known prehistoric resources. Further, the District will consider the potential cultural resource sensitivity of the location of future projects and will have an archaeological monitor present in areas proposed for development that have a high potential archaeological sensitivity. Nevertheless, project implementation has the potential to damage unknown cultural resources. The proposed project would involve excavating, grading and continuing a vegetation management program that includes prescribed burns and grazing, which could potentially affect unknown prehistoric resources. Implementation of the LUP would result in new areas of parkland being opened to the public, which could result in potential for disturbance of unidentified cultural resource deposits resulting from recreational use or trail development and maintenance, particularly in areas along springs and creeks. However, to avoid or reduce potentially significant impacts to archaeological or paleontological resources to a less-than-significant level, the District will follow current laws and its established protocol for appropriate treatment of cultural resources and incorporate into the project the following Mitigation Measure **CULT-2**, above, as well as Mitigation Measures **CULT-3**, **CULT-4** and **CULT-5**.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
Mitigation: CULT-2, **CULT -3**, **CULT-4** and **CULT-5**

MITIGATION CULT-3: In the event that prehistoric, archaeological or paleontological artifacts or remains are encountered during project construction, all earth-disturbing activities will be halted within at least 50 feet and artifacts will be protected in place (in accordance with EBRPD Board Resolution No. 1989-4-124 and state and federal law) until the find is evaluated by an archaeologist or trained cultural resource professional, and appropriate mitigation, such as curation, preservation in place, etc., if necessary, is implemented.

MITIGATION CULT-4: In the event of accidental discovery of human remains, the County Coroner will be notified, and, if the remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be notified to identify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD), in accordance with state and federal law. The disposition of the remains will be coordinated between the District, the County Coroner, NAHC, MLD and the archaeological consultant.

MITIGATION CULT-5: The District will continue to map all known cultural

resource sites and record them in the *Cultural Resources Site Atlas*.

4.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	■	☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	■	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	■	☐
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	■	☐
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	■	☐	☐
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	■	☐
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☐	☐	■	☐
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	■	☐

Environmental Setting

The earth's crust comprises horizontal rock masses called tectonic plates that are in active contact with one another at their edges. Earthquakes are caused when potential energy stored in adjacent plates is released and a relative shift in the position of the plates occurs. The resulting rupture of displaced earth is called an earthquake fault. A fault line is a scar on the earth's surface where material has been displaced. The project area is located within the San Andreas Fault Zone. The project area, as is most of the San Francisco Bay Area, is located in a region of common and intense seismic activity. The San Andreas Fault Zone is at the junction of two tectonic plates: the Pacific plate, on the west side of the fault system and the North American Plate to the east, of which the project area is located. The forces of tectonic plates

grinding one another, as well as ongoing erosion of rivers, has in large part, resulted in the orientation of Pleasanton, Main and Sunol ridges, which trend northwest. These ridges are among the most significant topographic features in Alameda and Contra Costa counties; Sunol Ridge is the highest ridge of the three at about 2,200 feet above sea level. The San Andreas Fault system includes several individual faults in addition to the San Andreas itself. Calaveras Fault, which runs parallel to Pleasanton Ridge and Interstate 680, extends through the eastern edge of the project area; in recent times this has been one of the most active faults in the western United States. The active Hayward Fault is located outside of the project area to the west. In the event of seismic activity on the Hayward or Calaveras faults or other faults in the area, ground shaking has the potential to cause damage to structures and result in ground failures such as landslides, liquefaction and mud slides in the project area. Ground shaking intensity at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is generally classified as severe, with some areas classified as severe to violent (Alameda County 1993, City of Pleasanton 2009). Slopes of the majority of land within the project area exceed 25 percent and slope stability, except for ridge tops and a few areas adjacent to Foothill Road, is generally classified as unstable and prone to erosion, landslides, debris flow and soil creep (The Planning Collaborative 1985). However, because the project area contains relatively few improvements and major improvements, including houses, are not proposed in active fault zones, the District's environmental analysis did not reveal a presence of geologic or geotechnical constraints that would significantly jeopardize public safety or impact park development.

Discussion

a) Would the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i) **Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.** The eastern edge of the project area is directly underlain by the active Calaveras Fault: the proposed Garms Staging Area falls within a fault rupture hazard zone and the existing Foothill Staging Area appears to be located east of the fault rupture hazard zone (City of Pleasanton 2009). Though the exact location of certain areas of the Calaveras Fault west of Foothill Road are unknown because it has been obscured by extensive landslide deposits, the State of California has designated the Calaveras Fault as an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The purpose of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act is to prevent construction of new buildings, particularly structures for human occupancy, across known active faults to reduce damage as a result of surface fault rupture. In general, structures for human occupancy are required to maintain a 50-foot setback from all seismically active faults. The LUP does not propose new habitable development within either the existing Foothill Staging Area or the proposed Garms Staging Area that would place a substantial number of people or structures at risk in the event of rupture along the Calaveras Fault. In addition, the District will minimize construction of roads, paved parking areas, utilities and other major improvements in the Calaveras Fault Zone. Further, the District will design park structures in staging areas, including a park office, service yard, security residence and restrooms, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, and will continue to incorporate

applicable design standards of the California Building Code and city and county codes and permits. Therefore, implementation of the project would result in a less-than-significant impact.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required.

ii) **Strong Seismic Ground Shaking.** Within the project area, the main hazard from earthquakes is related to ground shaking. The seismically active Calaveras Fault passes directly through the eastern edge of Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park and the Hayward Fault lies to the west, outside of the project area. An earthquake on either of these faults, as well as other active faults in the area, is capable of having a potentially significant effect on project lands. Therefore, the project area is at risk for ground shaking during a seismic event. Ground shaking intensity is generally classified as "severe," with areas to the south and east in the "severe to violent" range (City of Pleasanton 2009). Earthquake damage at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park could include landslides, rupture of underground pipes, collapse of buildings, loss of electrical power, downed electrical transmission lines and fires.

Implementation of the project would result in opening new areas to the public, which would increase the number of people using the area, potentially exposing people to ground shaking risks. However, while the project may provide a new park security residence at the Tyler Ranch Staging Area, the project does not recommend components or features that would increase exposure of persons to a greater risk of ground shaking over existing conditions. Moreover, the District would incorporate applicable California Building Code standards related to geologic and seismic conditions into the project. Thus, potential substantial adverse impacts, including the risk of loss, injury, or death, related to seismic ground shaking from an earthquake, would be less-than-significant.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required.

iii) Seismic-related Ground Failure and Liquefaction. Liquefaction is a specialized form of ground failure generated by earthquake shaking. In these instances, certain soil conditions, including water-saturation, cause soil to behave like a liquid as it loses its strength. The potential for liquefaction is a function of the occurrence of strong ground shaking and soil susceptibility. When strong ground shaking occurs, loose to medium dense, saturated sandy soils (i.e., located below groundwater level) are susceptible to liquefaction. The project area is not in a specifically identified liquefaction hazard zone: according to the Pleasanton General Plan, lands that comprise the project area do not have a susceptibility to liquefaction (City of Pleasanton 2009). However, there is a potential that unstable soil may exist in low-lying areas with a high groundwater table. Building structures on unstable soils would have the potential to create future liquefaction, subsidence or collapse problems. The LUP does not propose development which would directly place a substantial number of people or structures at risk in the event of seismically induced ground failure such as liquefaction. Moreover, if during excavation activities to implement the project unstable soils are encountered, the District, as required by the California Building Code, will provide appropriate foundation support to

buildings to protect them from ground failure. Therefore, implementation of the project would have a less-than-significant adverse impact associated with seismic-related ground failure.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

iv) Landslides Slope instability can be caused by natural forces, such as earthquakes or heavy rainfall or human activities such as over-steepening slopes or removing vegetation. Low lying areas and flat lands are generally less at risk in the event of landslides. Steep slopes, exceeding 25 percent grade, constitute most of the project area, and are generally more prone to landslides than areas with gentle grades. Perhaps half of the land that comprises the project area is classified as unstable, meaning that it is underlain by or immediately adjacent to landslide deposits. Most of this land occurs to the north and on east facing slopes of Pleasanton Ridge (The Planning Collaborative 1985, EBRPD 1987). Much of the land covering the project area is subject to earthquake induced landslides. Areas of the park closest to Foothill Road have the highest rainfall-induced landslide susceptibility, while areas to the west range from "few landslides" to "mostly landslides" (ABAG 2011). However, the project area and adjacent areas have a very low population density and the LUP does not propose to develop structures intended for human occupancy in a landslide-prone area. Therefore, implementation of the proposed LUP would result in a less-than-significant impact concerning exposing people or structures to landslide hazards.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? Loam soils derived from underlying sedimentary rock dominate the project area. Eastern side slopes of Pleasanton Ridge have a moderate erosion hazard while steeper side slopes to the west and the crest have soils that exhibit a severe erosion hazard (EBRPD 1987). Existing soil erosion problems in the project area range from moderate to severe and are associated with both natural forces and human activity. Evidence of erosive soils caused by natural activity is evident on Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, particularly on moderately to extremely steep slopes; rodent activity has also exacerbated erosion. Soil erosion at the park has resulted from past land use practices including recreational use; poor placement of roads and trails; improper road and trail design; poor construction and placement of drainage systems; bootleg or unofficial trails; excessive grazing pressure; and past cultivation practices.

The project proposes the following activities that have the potential to result in soil erosion and loss of topsoil: continuing a managed livestock grazing program; constructing new parking lots and minor structures; developing picnic and camping areas; excavating for vault toilets and utility lines; developing, maintaining and restoring roads and trails; installing trail bridges and drainage crossings; and expanding recreational use into open space areas that are currently closed to the public. The total volume of project earthwork would be relatively small, but cannot be precisely determined until final site design is developed at a later project stage. Full implementation of the LUP will result in 52 acres of new developed area. However, the majority of proposed improvements would be located in areas that are currently or were

formerly developed or disturbed and relatively level, and would not be subject to substantial erosion or loss of topsoil as a result of project development. Nevertheless, implementation of several aspects of the project has the potential to generate soil erosion. Therefore, to ensure a less-than-significant erosion impact, the District will incorporate Best Management Practices and Mitigation Measures **GEO-1** and **GEO-2**, described below.

The District would continue to implement a managed livestock grazing program at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park as part of its existing vegetation management program to achieve wildfire control objectives, to maintain the open space character of the landscape and to optimize habitat conditions for resident native plant and animal species. Livestock grazing, if not properly managed, has the potential to lead to overgrazed conditions, which results in removing the protective plant cover, and can lead to soil erosion and loss of topsoil, particularly on steep slopes. The District would continue to implement a managed livestock grazing program at the park to maintain grassland cover and reduce potential impacts related to erosion to a less-than-significant level.

The District has prepared a range analysis to identify areas that are suitable for cattle grazing and has identified discrete grazing units. The range analysis also provides District staff with an estimate of the number of livestock that the land can support (carrying capacity) consistent with resource conservation objectives (see the *Grazing Management Plan*, Appendix E of the LUP). Additionally, a closely monitored grazing program includes proper distribution of animals – by appropriately locating watering places, fencing to prevent animals from congregating and supplemental feeding – to obtain uniform grazing. The Park Supervisor and staff, using professionally recognized standards in the field of range management, regularly monitor the grass cover to ensure that a proper amount of plant material remains at all times. Maintaining a cover of live vegetation, which acts as a protective layer over the soil, is the most successful long-term approach to minimizing soil erosion. Moreover, a proper vegetative cover maximizes forage production: a properly used range produces more forage than an overgrazed range. Park staff and tenant ranchers will continue to employ a flexible and adaptive grazing program and if necessary the District will modify the livestock regime to correlate to the amount of vegetation available for livestock to consume, to ensure that a proper amount is retained to protect the land from erosion and allow nutrient recycling back into the soil. District staff will continue to identify existing and potential soil erosion problems, and implement corrective measures to repair damage and control the cause. If staff identifies improper livestock use as the cause of erosion, adjustments will be made to the program, such as reducing animal numbers, improving animal distribution, altering the grazing season or lengthening rest and rotation periods, to reduce potential erosion impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Trail maintenance and development, including trail realignments and repair, typically involves ground-disturbing activities such as grading and/or mowing the trail surface, replacing existing culverts, installing new drainage structures, trenching and backfilling. A principal goal of the LUP is to avoid or minimize soil loss and to restore erosive conditions of roads and trails, particularly those adjacent to stream channels. To reduce the potential for soil erosion, as a rule, the District avoids steep, unstable or erosion-prone alignments when building trails, contours new trails to encourage proper drainage, and minimizes trail width and earthmoving. In addition, the District minimizes construction of facilities and major improvements on high-

risk areas subject to erosion. The LUP contains numerous implementation measures and Best Management Practices that address minimizing erosion including repairing erosion in Cook and Sinbad creeks; and replanting degraded stream corridors and incorporating erosion- and sediment-control measures where trails are located in riparian zones to minimize the mobilization of sediment to creeks and other waterbodies; implementation of these actions would have beneficial impacts related to soil erosion. Moreover, the LUP has identified five miles of existing trails that are overly steep, redundant or environmentally unsustainable that will be modified to minimize erosion. The District will continue to monitor areas with accelerated soil erosion or slope failure and avoid development in these areas and if necessary install drainage and erosion control measures. To ensure that existing and new roads and trail improvements and drainage crossings will be constructed to minimize soil erosion to a level that is less-than-significant, the District will incorporate Mitigation Measures **GEO-1** and **GEO-2**.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
Mitigations: GEO-1 and **GEO-2**

MITIGATION GEO-1: When installing drainage crossings and developing trails near waterbodies, per California Department of Fish and Game permit conditions, work will be restricted to the dry season between April 1st and October 31st or between August 1st and October 31st in areas that have the potential to support California red-legged frog or California tiger salamander.

MITIGATION GEO-2: The District will implement appropriate Best Management Practices for minimizing potential erosion and sedimentation when developing trails, conducting road improvements and installing stream crossings based on site conditions, scale of work and distance to creeks and seasonal wetland areas. These measures could include: conducting activities during the dry season; using dikes, basins, ditches, straw, erosion control fabric and other temporary measures (e.g., water bars, fiber rolls); and installing catchments for source pollutants while in-water work within jurisdictional waters will be limited to the period between August 1st and October 31st.

c) Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? As discussed in response a-iii, above, portions of Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park are subject to geologic hazards and are inappropriate for development, particularly the steepest slopes, which are potentially unstable and have a high erosion hazard. Therefore, structures would not be located in areas with unstable soils and the LUP proposes to develop park facilities, including staging areas, on the flattest areas of the site, which tend to be on the perimeter of the park. Therefore, there would be a less-than-significant impact because proposed development would not increase the potential for geologic instability or public exposure to landslides or other geologic hazards.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

d) Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property? Expansive materials occur in the substrate of clays and clayey loams, which tend to swell as they absorb water and shrink as water is drawn away. Buildings, utilities and roads can be damaged by expansive soils creating potential safety concerns. However, soils that make-up the project area generally range from low to moderate shrink-swell potential, indicating that they have a relatively constant soil volume with a change in moisture content. Small areas have a soil type that has a high potential for shrink-swell processes (EBRPD 1987, Soil Conservation Survey 1966). Implementation of the project would result in a less-than-significant impact because proposed development is generally not located on soils with a high clay content and the project does not propose developing significant structures that would directly increase the risk of injury, damage or death as a result of expansion or contraction of soils.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

e) Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water? In general, soils that comprise the project area exhibit severe limitations for septic tank systems (EBRPD 1987). The LUP proposes to install several vault toilets at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. These restroom facilities would be self-contained and would not involve septic tank leach lines or sewage lagoons. Vault toilets, which the District often places in remote areas or areas not served by municipal sewer systems, are economical, efficient and provide for an environmental security, as they are designed to retain liquid content, minimizing groundwater contamination. Vault toilets would be located in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, permits and safe design considerations. Compliance with local and state health and water quality regulations would result in a less-than-significant environmental impact.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

4.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	■	☐	☐
b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	■	☐

Environmental Setting

Gasses that trap heat in the atmosphere are known as greenhouse gases (GHGs) because they allow the sun's ultraviolet radiation to penetrate the atmosphere creating a warming effect like a greenhouse, but do not let the infrared radiation emitted from the Earth escape. An increase in GHG emissions results in an increase in Earth's average temperature, which is commonly referred to as global warming. Global warming is expected to affect weather patterns, average sea levels, precipitation rates and other climatic conditions; these changes are collectively known as climate change. Climate change is defined as any significant change in climate measurement, including temperature, precipitation and wind patters, over a period of time. (ICF Jones & Stokes 2008). Global climate change has been identified as affecting public health because higher temperatures result in more air pollution, increased smog and associated human risks.

California State law recognizes the following gases as GHGs: Carbon Dioxide (CO_2), Methane (CH_4), Nitrous Oxide (N_2O), Hydrofluorocarbons, Perfluorocarbons and Sulfur Hexafluoride. In general, climate change may result from natural or human activities that change atmospheric composition. The prevailing scientific opinion is that most of the warming observed throughout the world over the last 50 years is caused by human activities. Primary greenhouse gasses occur naturally in the atmosphere, but are largely emitted by human activities, accelerating the rate at which these compounds accumulate in the earth's atmosphere. Carbon dioxide emissions, which were relatively stable prior to 200 years ago, constitute approximately 85 percent of the state's GHG emissions; and transportation now accounts for the largest portion of GHG emissions. Carbon dioxide is the reference gas for climate change, meaning that emissions of GHGs are typically reported in carbon dioxide-equivalent (CO_2e) measures.

In 2006, California passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32), which provides a comprehensive framework to reduce GHG emissions in California. AB 32 sets forth a series of target dates by which statewide emissions of GHGs would be

progressively reduced to 1990 levels by 2020 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) is the lead agency for implementing AB 32.

Senate Bill 375, passed in 2008, is the first in the nation to link government transportation funding, urban land use and greenhouse gas reduction goals. The legislation focuses on reducing vehicle miles traveled and provides incentives to local governments to develop higher density, transit-oriented development as the means of reaching the greenhouse gas reduction targets described in AB 32.

Individual projects contribute to the cumulative effects of climate change by emitting greenhouse gases during construction and operational phases. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District has established thresholds of significance for operational-related GHG emissions which apply to the project area; a land use development project would result in a significant impact under the BAAQMD thresholds if it was either in non-compliance with a qualified Climate Action Plan or a qualified General Plan or generated annual emissions of more than 1,100 metric tons per year (MT/yr) of CO_2e. BAAQMD does not have an adopted threshold of significance for construction-related GHG emissions. However, lead agencies are expected to quantify and disclose GHG emissions that would occur during construction, and make a determination on the significance of these construction-generated GHG emission impacts in relation to meeting AB 32 GHG reduction goals (BAAQMD 2011).

Discussion

a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Construction-Related Impacts

Implementation of specific components of the proposed project during construction would temporarily generate the emission of GHGs. These activities include staging area construction and trail and campsite development. Construction activities would involve the use of heavy equipment and require workers to drive to and from the project area. However, construction activities would be limited in scope and duration and would not generate significant GHG emissions. As explained above, the BAAQMD does not have an adopted threshold of significance for construction-related GHG emissions and recommends implementing basic construction management practices to control emissions and dust. The District will implement Mitigation Measure **AIR-1** into its construction projects to ensure that potential construction-related emissions are reduced to levels that are less-than-significant.

> **MITIGATION AIR-1**: To control dust emissions the District will be required to employ the following Best Management Practices for managing dust:
> - Water all exposed surfaces and unpaved access roads;
> - Excavate during calm air periods;
> - Cover haul trucks transporting soil, sand or other loose material off-site;
> - Reestablish bare soils with vegetation;
> - Limit vehicle speeds on unpaved road to 15 miles per hour;

- Minimize idling times to five minutes or less; and
- Properly maintain and tune construction equipment.

Operational-Related Impacts

The District's core mission, to acquire and preserve open space lands in perpetuity, has an overall beneficial impact on GHG reduction because it prevents conversion of natural open space to urban uses and allows for the capture of CO_2 by vegetation in parklands across Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Increased levels of CO_2 and other GHG's in the atmosphere contribute to climate change. Trees and plants capture CO_2 from the atmosphere and permanently store carbon, which is known as carbon sequestration. Therefore, District lands act as *carbon sinks* because they are net capturers of CO_2.

Carbon sequestration is important in regulating the expected effects of climate change. A 2008 study of District lands concluded that the average amount of CO_2 sequestered annually is approximately 91,157 metric tons, which represents an equivalent offset of roughly 0.2 percent of the state's total GHG emissions or, in other terms, removing over 16,000 vehicles from the road annually (ICF Jones & Stokes 2008). Therefore, implementation of the proposed project, which would preserve in perpetuity more than 6,500 acres of open space, supports California's goals for GHG reduction set forth in recent legislation described in the *Environmental Setting* above.

Activities sustained over long periods of time have the potential to result in significant GHG emissions. The BAAQMD has established a screening-level criteria to provide lead agencies with an indication of whether operation of a proposed project could result in potentially significant air quality impacts. The screening criteria were derived using default emissions assumptions in the Urban Land Emissions Model (URBEMIS) and indicate the size and scope of projects that would result in significant GHG emission impacts according to land use. The screening level criteria developed by BAAQMD do not contain any directly applicable land use to a regional park. However, a comparable land use, a city park, with active recreational areas, such as lighted ball fields, playgrounds, courts and parking lots, totaling more than 600 acres would result in a significant operational GHG emission impact. Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, at full project build-out, would have a total developed area of 408 acres, including staging areas, trails, picnic areas and campsites; project implementation would result in 52 acres of new developed area and opening 34 miles of trails, half of which are existing. Therefore, the proposed project meets the screening criteria and would not result in the generation of operational-related criteria air pollutants and/or precursors that exceed thresholds of significance. Moreover, the LUP contains pedestrian and bicycle-friendly design measures and encourages non-motorized recreational activities within the park, which would not contribute to cumulative GHG emissions. As such, operation of the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant cumulative impact with respect to operational-related GHG emissions.

Implementation of the project would generate long-term operational GHG emissions, but increases are anticipated to be incremental and would be expected to be less-than-significant. Operational activities that would result in GHG emissions include an increase in vehicle trips by park users visiting the site; an increase in District staff vehicles driving in the park for purposes

of maintenance, operations and police and fire protection; on-going use of maintenance equipment; and an increase in energy demand in the form of electricity, water consumption and solid waste disposal at landfills. In addition, implementation of the LUP could result in the use of prescribed burns for purposes of fuel and wildlife, which have the potential to generate significant GHG emissions on a temporary basis.

Vegetation management techniques, particularly prescribed burns, which appear to conflict with short-term GHG emissions goals, are aimed at reducing plant biomass or fuel loads, which in turn would reduce emissions from vegetation fuel in the event of an uncontrolled wildfire. Wildfires release methane (CH_4) as a result of incomplete combustion of organic matter. Therefore, a reduction in biomass, achieved through occasional prescribed burns, has the potential to reduce long-term overall GHG emissions associated with wildfires in the project area. GHG emissions generated by prescribed burns would be off-set by accomplishing fire management goals intended to reduce the frequency and severity of wildfire at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. Additionally, open fires would be prohibited at the park at backpack camps and cooking would be on camp stoves only. Therefore, continuing to implement prescribed burns and enforcing park regulations prohibiting open fires would result in a long-term cumulative reduction in GHG emissions in the project area.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

b) Would the project conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? Currently 4,172 acres of Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park are open to the public. Implementation of the project would preserve in perpetuity an additional 2,360 acres of open space, bringing the total number of acres open to the public to 6,532. As described above, implementation of the LUP would result in an overall net benefit on GHG reduction through carbon sequestration by trees and plants. Further, the recommendations and management strategies contained in the LUP would support implementation of GHG reduction plans throughout the region. Most relevant are the *Community Climate Action Plan for Unincorporated Areas* adopted by Alameda County in June 2011 (Alameda County 2011) and the *City of Pleasanton Climate Action Plan*, which is currently being developed (ESA 2011). The Land Use Plan for Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is consistent with the objectives and measures contained in both of these Climate Action Plans and therefore, impacts related to conflicts with plans adopted to reduce GHG emissions would be less-than-significant.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

4.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

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

a, b, c) Would the project: a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?; b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?; or c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? At Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, the District will continue to use hazardous materials, such as pesticides and petroleum fuels, under

specifically regulated circumstances. The District employs an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program to minimize the impact of undesirable species on natural resources and to reduce pest-related health and safety risks to the public within developed facilities and recreation areas. To achieve these goals, the IPM program uses various techniques which target animal and plant pests with minimum impact to non-target species. Implementation of the LUP could result in a slight increase in the use of pesticides at the park. However, continued implementation of existing District policies and practices in compliance with local, county and state law and regulations would ensure that risks from the use of pesticides would be less-than-significant. Pesticide and other chemical use on District property is performed only by licensed or certified pest control operators. The District's IPM Specialist advises park staff and concessionaires on how to reduce the need and number of annual pesticide applications. Throughout District parklands, pesticides are properly stored, transported and disposed of in accordance with applicable requirements and are inventoried as part of required plans for hazardous materials. The District tracks the amounts of all pesticides applied and submits usage reports to the County Agricultural Departments monthly and annually. Therefore, the continued compliance with applicable regulations for pesticide use would ensure that risks from the routine transport, storage and use of hazardous substances are less-than-significant.

Implementation of the LUP would also result in a slight increase in the use of petroleum fuels. Continued implementation of District practices regarding routine vehicle maintenance would minimize potential hazards from petroleum fuels to less-than-significant levels. Proposed construction activities would require use of small quantities of potentially hazardous materials, such as petroleum fuels, oils and solvents used for equipment. Foothill High School, on Foothill Road and George C. Lydicksen Elementary School, on Highland Oaks Drive, both within Pleasanton Unified School District, are located within a quarter-mile of the proposed Garms Staging Area. Spills, upsets or other project-related accidents, along with the transporting of materials could result in the release of fuel or other hazardous substances that have the potential to create a hazard to the public or environment. To minimize the potential for adverse impacts from incidents associated with transport, handling, use, release, emission or disposal of potentially hazardous materials to a less-than-significant level, the District incorporates the following Best Management Practices into all of its construction projects:

- Inspect equipment for leaks immediately prior to the start of project activities and regularly inspect equipment throughout construction activities;
- The contractor(s) must prepare an emergency spill response plan prior to the start of the project and maintain a spill kit on-site throughout the duration of each project. In the event of a spill or release of any chemicals during activities associated with the proposed project, on or adjacent to park property, the contractor will immediately notify the appropriate District staff. Emergency containment procedures will be initiated immediately to prevent contamination; and
- Hazardous materials will be disposed of outside of park boundaries at an authorized location.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required.

d) Would the project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? There would be no impact because Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is not included on the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List - Site Cleanup (Cortese List), pursuant to Government Code §65962.5 (AB 3750) (California Department of Toxic Substances Control).

Potential Impact: No Impact
Mitigation: None required.

e, f) e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?; or f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? The easternmost portion of the project area is located approximately five miles from the nearest airport, Livermore Municipal Airport, a general aviation airport. The land use plan for the airport designates areas that are within the airport's influence area or areas that may be affected by airport operations; the project area is well outside of the influence area (City of Pleasanton 2009). Therefore, with respect to airport related hazards, implementation of the proposed project would have no impact on people living or working in the project area.

Potential Impact: No Impact
Mitigation: None required.

g) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? The project would not impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan.

Potential Impact: No Impact
Mitigation: None required.

h) Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands? The land comprising the project area, located at the wildland-urban interface, is subject to wildfire risk and is classified by the state as a "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone" (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection). Fires in these zones can burn with very high intensity and cause significant damage to natural resources and infrastructure including homes within and adjacent to the project area. Implementation of the project has the potential to expose people and structures to wildfire risks, a potentially significant impact. Therefore, the LUP incorporates programs described in detail below, which would significantly reduce the potential for wildfires at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, and therefore lessen the risk to park visitors, neighbors and private structures.

The LUP does not propose constructing major structures. The park contains three security residences and the LUP proposes to develop an additional residence at the Tyler Ranch Staging Area. These on-site residences are located throughout the project area and will continue to be occupied to maintain a positive security presence at the park.

The District will continue to manage Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park to minimize the risk of unplanned fires by coordinating fire prevention efforts with other agencies, and by maintaining its vegetation management program to manage the vegetative fuel load that includes managed livestock grazing, defensible space clearances and prescribed burning. The District, with assistance from other fire management agencies, will continue to aggressively suppress wildfires. Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is located in a concurrent fire response jurisdiction with the District, Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). CAL FIRE has jurisdictional and direct protection responsibility for wildfires in the northern and southern area of the park; the middle portion of the park is under the jurisdiction and direct protection responsibility of the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire District. CAL FIRE can respond to a report of fire in the park from its Sunol Station within 15 minutes. Depending on the magnitude of the fire, CAL FIRE crews, dozers, air resources, supervisory overhead and additional engines could also be dispatched. The Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department would likely dispatch additional fire engines and resources, as necessary, within a similar travel time. These are likely to be the first ground resources on scene, followed by District fire engines. The District has two helicopters, both of which are capable of delivering water and firefighters to the project area within approximately ten minutes flight time from the Hayward Airport. On-site sources of water for fire suppression include the various stock ponds and a number of fire hydrants including: three along the Sinbad Creek Trail, one at the Foothill Staging Area, four along the ridge and one near the former Garms property along Foothill Road. In addition, the District will consider additional water improvements related to the grazing program that could also provide water for fire suppression. Continued implementation of these policies would minimize the risk of unplanned wildfire to a less-than-significant level.

Implementation of the LUP would attract overnight campers to the parkland which could potentially result in an increased risk from wildfires. However, the likelihood of a fire would be limited and less-than-significant at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park because the District would continue to monitor weather and fire conditions, and depending on the fuel, humidity and wind indices, could close the park entirely to public use; camping would be by reservation only and minors must be accompanied by adults. Open fires would be prohibited at backpack camps and cooking would be on camp stoves only, resulting in a less-than-significant impacts with respect to wildfires.

The District's program of fire prevention and suppression at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is primarily accomplished through cattle grazing, which at this parkland is a principal objective of the grazing program. In grasslands, cattle grazing is effective at reducing the volume of dried plant material that acts as fuel, to fire-safe levels. Fuel reduction in the park can reduce the probability that a wildfire would burn uncontrolled or move off-site, and reduce the risk posed by wildfire to people, property and other resources. In addition, by reducing the volume of fuel, the intensity of a fire entering a grazed area can be reduced, which generally increases

firefighters' ability to control a fire.

Prescribed burns are often needed on District property within the wildland-urban interface to reduce the volume of dried plant material to fire-safe levels. Thus, prescribed burns can also reduce wildfire risk, and the District incorporates fire-safety measures into its prescribed burn operations to minimize the potential that a controlled burn would expose people or structures to significant risk. The District Fire Department conducts a small number of prescribed burns every year on its property District-wide including several hundred acres of summer and fall grassland burns. Burns are designed to meet specific land management objectives such as fire hazard reduction, grassland restoration or to reduce the presence of non-native or pest plant species. All prescribed burns are conducted under controlled conditions and during weather that is conducive to smoke dispersal.

Prior to conducting a prescribed burn for a particular site, the District Fire Department prepares a burn plan which is reviewed and approved by the District's Operations and Planning and Stewardship Departments, CAL FIRE and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. Each plan includes a detailed project description containing: the fuel type to be burned, required weather prescription, detailed site map, firing techniques, smoke management plan, list of fire department resources needed during the burn day, and public notifications and safety considerations.

Prior to burning, existing fire control lines, such as paved and fire roads, are enhanced with temporary control lines. Personnel used to supervise the burn, perform the actual firing, staff the fire engines, and control and extinguish the flames are all fully trained and briefed. Smoke production and weather conditions are continuously monitored throughout the burn, and all burning material is completely extinguished at the end of each day. These numerous fire-safety measures are followed for every prescribed burn, and effectively reduce the risk to people and structures to level of less-than-significant.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required.

4.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	■	☐	☐
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	☐	☐	■	☐
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	☐	☐	■	☐
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	☐	☐	■	☐
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	☐	☐	■	☐
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☐	☐	■	☐
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	☐	☐	■	☐
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	■	☐
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	☐	☐	■	☐
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	☐	☐	☐	■

Environmental Setting

Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is located within the Alameda Creek watershed, the largest in the East Bay. The project area contains intermittent drainages that flow into Sinbad, Palomares, Devany and Arroyo de la Laguna creeks and their tributaries. Cook, Sinbad, Gold, Hedd and Tehan creeks and a tributary to Palomares Creek are ephemeral streams with headwaters

originating on Pleasanton and Main Ridges. In addition, there are seven unnamed ephemeral drainages originating from Sunol Ridge. Seasonal creeks drain into Stonybrook and Palomares Creeks to the west, Devany Creek to the north and Arroyo de La Laguna to the east. All of these drainages feed into Alameda Creek and ultimately into San Francisco Bay. Major surface water sources consist of ephemeral streams that flow only during winter and spring months, scattered low production springs and small, constructed stock ponds. Twenty-seven springs or seasonal ponds are located in the park, primarily on or near ridge tops. Depth to groundwater is expected to vary from within a few feet of the surface to depths greater than 50 feet.

a, f) Would the project: a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements; or f) otherwise substantially degrade water quality? Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is made up of predominantly natural open space land with relatively few improvements. A goal of the LUP is to protect and enhance water quality at the park. Implementation of the LUP would involve minimal development, and as such, would not result in the generation of substantial new sources of water pollution. In addition, the District has entered into routine maintenance agreements with the Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Army Corps of Engineers and the California Department of Fish and Game that specify Best Management Practices in waterways, streams and ponds, which the District must follow to avoid impacts to water quality.

Potential sources of water pollution associated with project implementation would include septic tanks, stormwater runoff carrying pollutants, and road and trail-related erosion and sedimentation. Installation and operation of septic tanks at the park is subject to permit from the Alameda County's Public Health Department. Project implementation would result in the creation of several areas of new impervious surface in the form of staging areas, parking lots and minor buildings. At full project build-out, if paved for 90 vehicles, the Tyler Ranch Staging Area would create the largest area of impervious surfaces at about 37,000 square feet. Paving of the Garms Staging Area would result in the creation of roughly 35,000 square feet of impervious surfaces. However, prior to implementing these paving projects, the District would prepare and implement stormwater pollution prevention plans (SWPPP) detailing how runoff will be controlled. Post-construction, the Tyler Ranch Staging Area and the Garms Staging Area projects could be subject to Provision C.3 standards of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board's Municipal Regional Permit governing discharges from municipal storm drain systems. To minimize the risk to water quality, retention basins would be included at these two staging areas to ensure that stormwater runoff will be detained on-site, so that peak flows and durations match pre-project conditions.

The LUP contains numerous recommendations to improve water quality at the park. For example, implementation of the LUP calls for repairing erosion along Cowing and Sinbad Creek trails to improve water quality of nearby streams; replanting degraded stream corridors with native plants; decommissioning and re-routing environmentally unstable trails throughout the park; continuing to manage ponds, creeks and wetland areas to benefit native wildlife; and continuing a managed livestock grazing program to assure that an adequate amount of green or dried vegetation (depending on the season) remains on the ground at all times. In addition, Park staff will continue to employ the following activities to reduce the risk of adverse water quality impacts: monitoring trail surfaces to identify substandard conditions; and installing,

where necessary, new drainage structures and minor realignment of roads and trails, subject to existing routine maintenance agreements described above.

To further reduce potential impacts to water quality and discharge of water pollutants to the maximum extent practicable during project construction, the District will employ Best Management Practices through the implementation of Mitigation Measures **AIR-1**, **GEO-1** and **GEO-2**. Implementing these measures would reduce potential short-term impacts associated with sediment and pollution discharges to a less-than-significant level. Over the long-term, compliance with local and state regulations, Provision C.3 standards and adherence to Best Management Practices specified in the above-mentioned routine maintenance agreements would minimize the risk of unmanaged runoff and sedimentation and reduce the risk of water quality violation to a less-than-significant level.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
Mitigation: See **AIR-1**, Section 4.3, **GEO-1, GEO-2,** Section 4.6

b) Would the project substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)? Existing uses of water from on-site sources include springs and groundwater for purposes of irrigation, livestock grazing and the Poole park security residence; these uses would continue to be minimal and with project implementation would not result in an increase in the volume of groundwater used over existing conditions. The LUP proposes to develop the Aquila Camp, which would rely on potable water piped in from a nearby spring; use of this campsite would be seasonal and would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge. Development proposed in the LUP would convert only relatively small areas of pervious surfaces to impervious surfaces, and would not potentially reduce infiltration and groundwater recharge or levels. Additionally, the preservation of the 6,532-acre project area in its natural state would continue to provide ample opportunity for groundwater recharge, which would more than offset groundwater use. Therefore, project implementation would result in less-than-significant impacts associated with groundwater recharge.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

c, d) Would the project: c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; or d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site? An important goal of the LUP is to protect and restore natural watercourses. This goal is supported by LUP recommendations to restore degraded stream corridors; repair erosion in Cook and Sinbad creeks; perform routine road and trail maintenance to minimize

soil erosion; minimize soil disturbance during construction projects; and minimize the creation of impervious surfaces. Additionally, the project recommends abandoning or restoring existing trails where sedimentation is threatening water quality and locating new trails to minimize slope erosion and sediment delivery. Appendix K of the LUP includes Trail Construction and Trail Modification Best Management Practices, which will be implemented to limit and control erosion and sedimentation. Therefore, implementation of the LUP would serve to protect and restore the natural drainage patterns on Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park to the maximum extent practicable and impacts associated with substantial erosion would be less-than-significant.

Proposed park improvements would include installing or replacing several seasonal drainage crossings, but implementation of these projects would not modify a stream, creek drainage course, or alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or result in substantial erosion. Livestock grazing, when not properly managed, has the potential to increase water runoff and contribute to soil erosion. Typically, a healthy cover of vegetation promotes infiltration of rainwater and slows its erosive forces. Overgrazing can strip the vegetative cover and in so doing, reduce the soil's ability to absorb water. Unabsorbed water tends to wash downslope, eroding soil as flow increases, and can wash sediment into creeks and drainages, and result in increased off-site runoff.

The District closely monitors its livestock grazing program to minimize on- and off-site erosion and to avoid or reduce impacts to water quality. The District has prepared a *Grazing Management Plan* for Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, which contains a specific management strategy for individual grazing units on the parkland (see the *Grazing Management Plan*, Appendix E of the LUP). Implementation of the *Grazing Management Plan* would minimize erosion and protect soil and result in more uniform grazing. For example, installation of new fencing would create additional grazing areas or pastures, giving the District more flexibility over livestock rotation, and importantly, allow the land to rest and recover and ensure that an adequate amount of vegetation remains on the ground at all times. In addition, the Park Supervisor would continue to regularly monitor and inspect vegetation to ensure that a sufficient amount of standing vegetation remains following grazing. The grazing program is flexible and adaptive: if monitoring identifies problems in land management practices, park staff would take remedial actions, such as removing cattle, to ensure that desired conditions are maintained. Closely regulating the number of livestock and careful management of the season, frequency, duration and intensity of grazing, would protect the soil, encourage nutrient recycling and minimize water runoff. Therefore, continuation of the managed livestock grazing program would have a less-than-significant impact on siltation and surface water runoff.

Implementation of the LUP would minimize the creation of impervious surface. The project would expand natural surface trails throughout the project area and construct a few buildings and roadways that could increase the amount of impervious surface. The proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area, if paved to accommodate 90 vehicles, would create roughly 37,000 square feet of new impervious surfaces. The 75-space parking area in the Garms Staging Area would be paved, as would related access roads, creating roughly 35,000 square feet of new impervious surfaces. At both of these parking areas a permanent, on-site stormwater retention basin would be created to capture parking-lot-generated runoff and prevent it from leaving the site.

Therefore, impacts related to flooding as a result of substantial increases in the rate or amount of stormwater runoff would be less-than-significant.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

e) Would the project create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff? The project area is more than 6,500 acres made up overwhelmingly of natural open space, with minimal areas of impervious surface. In general, implementation of the LUP would serve to protect and restore natural open space, and would not create substantial new sources of stormwater runoff. Nevertheless, project implementation would result in the creation of new impervious surfaces in the form of parking lots, staging areas, access roads and several structures and facilities. Individual projects creating or converting 10,000 square feet or more of impervious surface would be subject to Provision C.3 requirements of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board's Municipal Regional Permit for control of stormwater discharge. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that potential stormwater impacts are reduced to less-than-significant levels. Over time, pollutants from parked vehicles could collect on-site and seep into the groundwater basin or be carried off-site with rainfall runoff. The amount of polluted runoff would be negligible, and therefore, the project would have a less-than-significant impact on water quality.

Project implementation would involve construction activities, such as trenching, grading, and cut and fill activities, which have the potential to temporarily disturb soils. Disturbed soils are susceptible to high rates of erosion, resulting in sediment transport. Individual development projects with the potential to disturb more than one acre of surface area would be subject to the Construction General National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permit requirements, including preparation of a StormWater Pollution Prevention Plan that includes erosion and sediment controls. Any construction involving work within a water channel would likely require a California Department of Fish and Game Streambed Alteration Agreement, Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permit and Water Quality Certification. These existing regulatory mechanisms would ensure that sufficient Best Management Practices for erosion and sedimentation are incorporated into design and construction projects to reduce potential pollutants in stormwater discharges to a less-than-significant level.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

g, h) Would the project: g) place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?; or h) place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows? An impact is considered significant if the proposed project would substantially increase exposure of people and/or property to the risk of injury and damage in the event of a 100-year flood. The project area lies within the Alameda Creek watershed, a drainage basin encompassing approximately 700 square miles between Mount Hamilton and Mount Diablo. Alameda Creek, the second largest

drainage to the San Francisco Bay, flows from Mount Hamilton until it meets the Arroyo de la Laguna near the Town of Sunol and then runs west through Niles Canyon to the Bay. The Arroyo de la Laguna, which collects surface water runoff from the Tri-Valley region (Amador Valley, Livermore Valley and San Ramon Valley), originates at the confluence of Alamo Canal and the Arroyo Mocho north of the project area, and flows in a southerly direction along the eastern side of Pleasanton Ridge where it meets Alameda Creek in Sunol. Much of the low-lying valley areas are in a floodplain and historically flooded during large storm events; silt material covers much of the area. Arroyo de la Laguna runs generally parallel to Foothill Road, which borders the Foothill Staging Area; Arroyo de la Laguna is located about 150 feet to the east. It appears that the eastern edge of the Foothill Staging Area, adjacent to Foothill Road, is located within the 100-year flood zone (City of Pleasanton 2009, FEMA). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) publishes Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) that delineate flood hazard zones for communities. FEMA has mapped areas subject to flooding during a 100-year storm event. A 100-year floodplain is defined as an area that statistically would be expected to flood once in 100 years, or that would have a 1 percent chance of flooding in any given year. Therefore, the project could have a potentially significant affect on flood flows or expose people or structures to a significant risk if it placed housing or structures in the Foothill Staging Area.

At the Foothill Staging Area, implementation of the project would increase the level of development with improvements such as expanding parking capacity and picnic areas, and developing a group day camp and trails. However, the project does not include construction of housing or other major structures that would potentially impede or redirect flood flows. Therefore, the project would result in a less-than-significant impact with respect to flooding.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

i) Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam? Construction of major improvements, such as buildings, roads, pipelines, septic tanks and pipelines, will be minimized in high-risk areas subject to flooding. However, isolated portions of the project area are at risk of small-scale flooding if a pond's earthen dam or levee failed. In addition, during a major storm event, a creek or drainage could temporarily flood. These rare events would not expose people or structures to significant risks because on-site ponds are small waterbodies and floods during a major storm event would be isolated.

The Foothill Staging Area, adjacent to the Arroyo de la Laguna, is located within a dam failure inundation hazard area for Lake Del Valle Dam. The 235-foot Del Valle Dam impounds a reservoir with a total capacity of 77,100 acre-feet. The Del Valle Dam reservoir normally operates at no more than 50 percent of its maximum capacity in order to maintain flood control storage capacity (City of Pleasanton 2009). The Foothill Staging Area is located within the 40- to 140-minute inundation area in the event of a Del Valle Dam failure. The potential for the Del Valle Dam to fail as the result of a flood or earthquake is comparatively low because the dam it is relatively new, has never exceeded storage capacity and was designed with a wide base. Nevertheless, dam failure could potentially inundate the Foothill Staging

Area. However, in the event of dam failure visitors to the staging area would have a minimum of 40 minutes to leave the area to avoid flood flows, and the City of Pleasanton has an adopted city-wide evacuation plan. Therefore, because potential impacts associated with failure of the Del Valle Dam would not be likely and the Foothill Staging Area would not expose people or structures to significant risks impacts would be less-than-significant.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

j) Would the project Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow? Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is located in an inland area, and most of the land is at high elevations. Therefore, there would be no risk associated with tsunamis, which are large seas waves. Additionally, because the project area is not low-lying or near a lake or reservoir, there is no risk posed to the project area by seiches, which are waves caused by large-scale, short-duration events that result from oscillation of confined bodies of water. The land comprising Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park contains numerous ancient and modern landslides. However, the project does not propose construction of buildings for human occupancy or any significant topographical alterations that could cause inundation by mudflow. Therefore, there would be no impact that would expose people of structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving seiche, tsunami or landslide-induced mudflows.

Potential Impact: No impact
Mitigation: None required

4.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
LAND USE AND PLANNING -- Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	■
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	■
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	■

a) Would the project physically divide an established community? The project area is contiguous open space and the project is contained within its boundaries. Though there are several private inholdings located within the park, no established communities are located

within the project area. Therefore, implementation of the LUP would not physically divide an established community.

Potential Impact: No Impact
Mitigation: None required

b) Would the project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? The project does not propose to change any adopted land use plans. Recommendations in the LUP are in conformance with the land use designations of the Alameda County *East County Area Plan* (ECAP), which designates portions of the project area as Parklands and Large Parcel Agriculture, and is consistent with its goals and directives (Alameda County Planning Department 2002). The LUP is also consistent with Alameda County's Measure D, the 2000 Save Agricultural and Open Space Lands Initiative. ECAP includes policies advocating park, recreation and nature areas within the open space adjacent to each community and maintaining ridgelines and steep slopes as open space. Additional ECAP policies promote expanding the District regional park system and working cooperatively with surrounding communities and the District to retain Pleasanton Ridgelands as permanent open space (Alameda County Planning Department 2002). The proposed project is consistent with the City of Pleasanton General Plan and the 1993 City of Pleasanton initiative Measure F, to preserve remaining agricultural open space and designate publicly-owned lands as Park and Recreation (City of Pleasanton 2009). The proposed project is also consistent with the District's *1997 Master Plan* policies, as it would continue to provide the public with outdoor recreation opportunities (EBRPD 1997); therefore, the project is in conformance with relevant adopted plans and policies and there are no potentially significant impacts of the project concerning land use.

Potential Impact: No Impact
Mitigation: None required

c) Would the project conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan? The Pleasanton Ridge Conservation Easement covers roughly 657 acres in the northern portion of the park. The *Pleasanton Ridge Conservation Bank Establishment and Management Plan* sets forth management guidelines for this area; implementation of the project would not conflict with the Pleasanton Ridge Conservation Easement. The land comprising the project area is not under an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan, and implementation of the LUP would not conflict with any approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plans.

Potential Impact: No Impact
Mitigation: None required

4.11 MINERAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	■
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	■

a, b) Would the project: a) result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?; or b) result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan? Much of the eastern part of the City of Pleasanton is designated as regionally significant sand and gravel deposits, and the area contains the largest single concentration of sand and gravel deposits in the Bay Area. The California Division of Mines and Geology has designated the sand and gravel land as an "Aggregate Resource Area of Regional Significance" (City of Pleasanton 2009). The project area is well outside of this designation. Major mineral resources located on the project area are common and include sand, gravel, stone, salt and related resources. The project area is not known to contain significant amounts of "rare" or "valuable" minerals known in the county. Implementation of the LUP would neither affect existing mineral resources, as minerals would not be extracted, nor result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Potential Impact: No Impact
Mitigation: None required

4.12 NOISE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
NOISE -- Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	■	☐	☐
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?	☐	☐	■	☐
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	■	☐	☐
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	■	☐	☐
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	■
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	■

Environmental Setting

A significant adverse impact would occur if the project would result in temporary or permanent exposure of people or sensitive receptors to excessive noise levels or generate noise levels in excess of established local standards. Several noise standards apply to the proposed project area because it is within multiple jurisdictions. The proposed Garms Staging Area is located within the City of Pleasanton. The City of Pleasanton General Plan does not contain any directly applicable noise standards for regional parks though it has established a "normally acceptable" noise level of 65 decibels (dBA) or less for outdoor sports, recreation and neighborhood parks (City of Pleasanton 2009). The existing Foothill Staging Area and the proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area are located within unincorporated Alameda County. The California Office of Noise Control in the State Department of Health Services has developed guidelines for local governments to use when setting standards for human exposure to noise. Based on the California Office of Noise Control Land Use Compatibility Guidelines, the County has set a normally acceptable noise standard of 50 – 70 dBA for parks (Alameda County Planning Department 1993). For this report, implementation of the project would result in a potentially significant noise impact if exterior noise levels exceed 60 dBA.

Discussion

a, c, d) Would the project result in: a) exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?; c) a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?; or d) a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

Ambient Noise Levels

Potential noise impacts of the project have been compared to the standards for acceptable noise levels to determine their level of significance. As primarily open space land, overall noise levels at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park are typically quite low, ranging generally between 30 and 45 dBA Ldn (the average A-weighted noise level during a 24-hour day). This noise level is similar to a typical living room or quiet office. Ambient noise levels in the project area are generally dependent on wind and temperature, as well as how close a significant noise source is. Ambient noise on the eastern and southern edges of the project area is generally louder, particularly at the proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area, as a result of the staging areas proximity to transportation sources, such as roadways, freeways and railroad tracks. Nearby freeways and arterial streets with heavy traffic are the most pervasive noise sources in the area. Railroad corridors in the vicinity of the Town of Sunol generate on-going noise. Livermore Municipal Airport, a general aviation airport, is located east of the project area. Aircraft flying into and out of this and other airports can generate annoying discreet noise events. Occasional aircraft noise is audible throughout the project area and the existing frequency and noise levels would continue at current levels with project implementation.

Potential Noise Sources and Impacts

In general, the relatively low noise levels in the project area would not change with project implementation. Implementation of the project would not result in development or land use changes that would substantially alter the existing ambient noise levels of the park. However, implementation of the project would generate temporary and periodic increases in ambient noise levels at staging areas and within areas of the park that are currently not open to the public. The project proposes to open the Garms and Tyler Ranch staging areas that are currently closed to the public. This would generate periodic, on-site noise, including human voices, and vehicles along roadways and in staging areas. Additionally, expansion of outdoor park activities, including picnicking and camping, would result in temporarily elevated noise levels in specific areas of the park. However, noise sources would not permanently increase the ambient noise level nor exceed normally acceptable noise standards; therefore, they would constitute a less-than-significant noise impact.

Children and medically fragile people are particularly sensitive to noise and therefore, schools, childcare facilities, convalescent homes and hospitals are generally considered sensitive noise receptors. According to the City of Pleasanton General Plan, noise sensitive receptors near to the project area include Foothill High School, located on Foothill Road more than 1,000 feet

from the proposed entrance to the Garms Staging Area, and George C. Lydicksen Elementary School, located on Highland Oaks Drive over 500 feet from the proposed Wildflower Trailhead on the northern edge of the staging area (City of Pleasanton 2009). Additional noise-sensitive receptors on or adjacent to the project area include wildlife, park users and houses located adjacent to park boundaries.

In particular, houses located within the nearby Lemoine Ranch Estates subdivision could be affected by noise associated with constructing the Garms Staging Area and opening it to the public. Homes adjacent to the Tyler Ranch Staging Area could also be adversely affected by noise generated by the public and construction activities in the staging area. Existing noise levels in residential areas adjacent to the Garms Staging Area typically range from about 60 to 70 dBA Ldn (City of Pleasanton 2009). At the Tyler Ranch Staging Area, existing noise levels are slightly lower, in the range of 50 to 60 dBA Ldn. Noise levels at the new staging areas, including vehicle engines and human voices, will typically be about 50 dBA and should not rise above the existing background noise level, which is dominated at both sites by motor vehicles. This noise level conforms to acceptable standards, as it does not exceed 60 dBA. Moreover, the park will continue to be open only during daylight hours; therefore, project implementation would not affect the existing ambient noise environment during late evening and early morning hours. Therefore, project implementation would result in a less-than-significant noise impact related to the public's use of the park.

In general, the loudest noise impacts associated with project implementation would be generated by construction activities at the Garms and Tyler Ranch Staging Areas. Noise from heavy construction equipment may generate noise levels for short periods in excess of acceptable noise standards. Activities associated with construction of the Garms Staging Area and the Tyler Ranch Staging Area could result in maximum noise levels of up to 70-80 dBA at the nearest homes. However, potential noise would be temporary and localized and would not result in a substantial permanent increase in background noise levels in the project vicinity. With incorporation of Mitigation Measures **NOISE-1, NOISE-2 and NOISE-3**, restricting work hours and requiring properly muffled equipment, potential impacts associated with construction activities would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
Mitigation: NOISE-1, NOISE-2 and NOISE-3

MITIGATION NOISE-1: Hours of work will be Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Requests to work off-hours, on weekends and holidays will be at the discretion of the District's representative.

MITIGATION NOISE-2: Internal combustion engines will be equipped with a muffler type recommended by the manufacturer. Equipment and trucks will utilize the best available noise-control techniques (e.g., engine enclosures, shrouds, intake silencers, ducts, etc.) whenever feasible and necessary.

MITIGATION NOISE-3: Noisy, stationary construction equipment will be located as far as possible from nearby residences.

b) Would the project result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels? Implementation of the project would involve construction of staging areas, park facilities and trails which would generate temporary ground borne vibration. However, in specific project areas, including those nearby homes, the District will incorporate standard vibration and noise control procedures to ensure that ground borne vibration impacts would be reduced to levels that are less-than-significant.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

e, f) e) for a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?; or f) for a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? Livermore Municipal Airport, the closest airport to the project area, is located more than five miles away. Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is not located within a private airport land-use plan, within two miles of a public-use airport or in the vicinity of a private airstrip. Therefore, implementation of the LUP would not expose people living or recreating in the project area to excessive noise levels associated with airport or aircraft operations.

Potential Impact: No impact
Mitigation: None required

4.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING

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

a) Would the project induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? The proposed LUP is a long-term guide that recommends park management, access, and facility and infrastructure improvements contained entirely within Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, which first opened to the public in the 1980s. The project area contains several existing park security residences and private inholdings and proposes developing a new park security residence at the Tyler Ranch Staging Area. However, implementation of the project would not result in population growth to the surrounding area.

Potential Impact: No impact
Mitigation: None required

b, c) Would the project: b) displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?; or c) displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? The proposed project would not displace existing housing, displace temporarily nor permanently persons residing in the area, nor require the construction of replacement housing. Therefore, the project would not have any impact on population growth in the area.

Potential Impact: No impact
Mitigation: None required

4.14 PUBLIC SERVICES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
PUBLIC SERVICES				
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	☐	☐	■	☐
Police protection?	☐	☐	■	☐
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☐

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with fire protection, police protection, schools or parks? Implementation of the proposed project would not result in the need for expanded or new governmental facilities or create the need for additional parks, schools or other public facilities. However, opening new parkland to the public has the potential to result in additional demands on fire and police services, a potentially significant impact.

The District maintains a staff of fully equipped and professionally trained police officers and a fire department based out of the District public safety headquarters in Lake Chabot Regional Park, Castro Valley. The District regularly patrols Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park by helicopter. Park rangers, security residents, grazing tenants and volunteer safety patrollers provide ground patrols. The project area is under the concurrent jurisdiction of the District and City of Pleasanton police departments. Mutual aid resources from the District and Livermore-Pleasanton Fire departments provide fire protection and emergency medical services to the project area. In the event of a large wildfire, additional fire resources would be available from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (CAL FIRE) nearby Sunol Station.

Opening new parkland to the public will increase traffic on local roads and human activity in Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, which could generate a slight permanent increase in demand for police and fire protection services. To minimize potential impacts on city and other agency services, the District will increase its police officer staffing dedicated to the project area to continue daily patrols and to ensure adequate public safety resources and response times. At full project build-out, the District will incorporate into the project budget additional ranger and

police office staff to increase staff presence, as well as the District's ability to maintain the safety of neighbors and park visitors. Therefore, the project would result in a less-than-significant impact because it would not generate a need for substantial public services beyond those presently available or planned.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

4.15 RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
RECREATION --				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	■
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	■

a, b) Would the project: a) increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?; or b) does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? A primary purpose of the proposed project is to incorporate 2,360 acres of land bank parcels into the existing 4,172 acres of Pleasanton Ridge Regional park that are open to the public as a critical step towards opening additional parkland to the public. Goals of the project are to minimize public safety risks, improve public access and increase recreational opportunities and educational programs at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, all beneficial recreational impacts. Implementation of the LUP could result in an increase in visitor use of the park, but because the project includes expanding parkland open to the public by 2,360 acres, as well as opening new parking areas and public access points, the project would not result in the physical deterioration of the existing regional park.

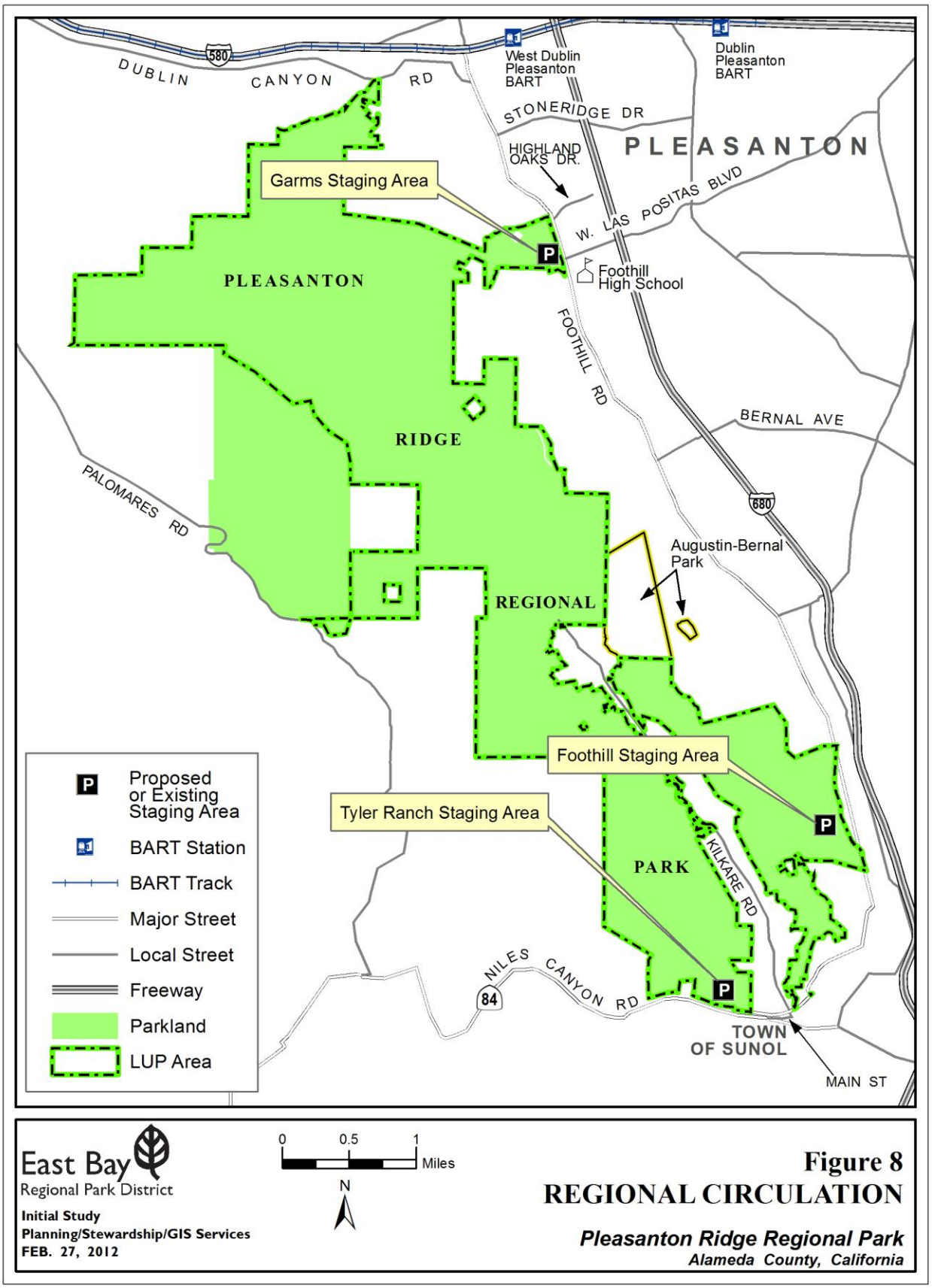
Potential Impact: Beneficial Impact
Mitigation: None required

4.16 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC -- Would the project:				
a) Exceed the capacity of the existing circulation system, based on an applicable measure of effectiveness (as designated in a general plan policy, ordinance, etc.), taking into account all relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	☐	■	☐	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	☐	☐	■	☐
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	☐	☐	☐	■
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	■	☐
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	■	☐
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	☐	☐	☐	■

Environmental Setting

As depicted in Figure 8, *Regional Circulation*, the project area is accessible by the following major roadways: Interstate 580 to the North; Foothill Road and Interstate 680 to the east; and State Route 84, also known as Niles Canyon Road, to the south. Primary vehicle access to the park is from Foothill Road, an arterial road that parallels Interstate 680 to the west and provides direct access to the existing Foothill Staging Area. The park is currently not accessible from the west from Palomares Road. The Foothill Staging Area is the only vehicle parking area serving the park; it provides parking for approximately 75 vehicles in several connected lots. Parking can reach capacity at the Foothill Staging Area during peak days. The City of Pleasanton Augustin Bernal Community Park, located along the eastern border of Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, contains a gated parking area with a trail that connects to the project area. This access is limited to City of Pleasanton residents and non-residents who obtain a visitor pass from the City.


DUBLIN CANYON RD
580
West Dublin Pleasanton BART
Dublin Pleasanton BART
STONERIDGE DR
HIGHLAND OAKS DR.
PLEASANTON
Garms Staging Area
W. LAS POSITAS BLVD
Foothill High School
PLEASANTON
RIDGE
FOOTHILL RD
BERNAL AVE
PALOMARES RD
680
Augustin-Bernal Park
REGIONAL
Foothill Staging Area
Tyler Ranch Staging Area
PARK
KILKARE RD
NILES CANYON RD
84
TOWN OF SUNOL
MAIN ST
Proposed or Existing Staging Area
BART Station
BART Track
Major Street
Local Street
Freeway
Parkland
LUP Area
East Bay Regional Park District
Initial Study
Planning/Stewardship/GIS Services
FEB. 27, 2012
0 0.5 1 Miles
N
Figure 8
REGIONAL CIRCULATION
Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
Alameda County, California

Discussion

a) Would the project exceed the capacity of the existing circulation system, based on an applicable measure of effectiveness (as designated in a general plan policy, ordinance, etc.), taking into account all relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit? The purpose of this analysis is to evaluate traffic impacts resulting from implementation of the LUP on the nearby street system, focusing on those streets and intersections that are likely to be affected by project-generated traffic. The operating conditions on certain streets and intersections can be objectively evaluated using a traffic level of service (LOS) rating system to describe the degree of traffic congestion. This system ranges from LOS A, representing light traffic, to LOS F, signifying extreme congestion. Peak-period traffic (or commute hour traffic) is typically evaluated by comparing projected traffic volumes to roadway and intersection capacities. For routes that generate low volumes of traffic, such as the southernmost extent of Foothill Road, level of service is not a useful standard for measuring traffic impacts. On low volume local roads, average daily traffic or ADT can be a more useful standard for evaluating traffic conditions. ADT is the average number of vehicles passing a specific point in both directions in a 24-hour period. A significant impact would occur if project-generated traffic would cause roadways or intersections to operate below acceptable standards. The traffic analysis conducted by the District indicates that with the implementation of Mitigation Measure **TRAN-1**, the project would result in a less-than-significant impact to local roadways.

The LUP proposes to expand the existing Foothill Staging Area by 25 parking spaces. In addition, as shown in Figure 8, project implementation would result in two new staging areas being developed along Foothill Road: 1) the Garms Staging Area, located to the north at the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection, which would provide parking for 75 vehicles; and 2) the Tyler Ranch Staging Area, located at the southern terminus of Foothill Road, which, at full build-out, would provide parking for up to 90 vehicles, including space for several horse trailers and a turn-around. It is anticipated that all park users arriving in vehicles would continue to access the park via Foothill Road. Limited secondary vehicle access to the east side of the project area will continue to be provided from the City of Pleasanton's Augustin Bernal Community Park. Based on historical use patterns and the District's many years of experience, recreational traffic generally peaks on Sundays during spring and fall months and is lowest on weekdays. This is an important consideration from a traffic impact perspective because Sundays are typically the lowest travel days of the week for commute traffic.

The Oak Tree Trailhead, formerly known as Thermalito Trailhead, to the south in the Town of Sunol, will remain open for walk/bike-in (non-vehicular) access. As opportunities arise, the District will work with Alameda County to develop a formal trail connection between the Oak Tree Trailhead, the Town of Sunol and the Tyler Ranch Staging Area; a potential trail would likely parallel the south side of Foothill Road. Project implementation will also result in opening additional non-vehicular access from several other walk/bike-in trailheads, including the proposed Devany Canyon Trailhead along the northeast perimeter and the proposed Wildflower Trailhead north of the Garms Staging Area. Walk/bike-in access from adjacent

neighborhoods may also be considered in the future, including those with developed trail networks that could connect homeowner association open space areas with Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park; these visitors would not contribute to vehicle traffic.

Existing and Project Traffic

Construction-related traffic

Construction-related vehicles and trucks would access the three staging areas on Foothill Road. The number of construction vehicles and trucks generated by the project is difficult to accurately determine, but construction activities would be relatively short-term, temporary events occurring periodically over a number of years, and would not be expected to add a substantial number of vehicles to the existing average daily traffic volumes on Foothill Road. Therefore, construction-related traffic would result in a less-than-significant impact.

Visitor-related traffic

Though all park users arriving in vehicles to the project area would use Foothill Road, the staging areas are several miles apart and therefore, this evaluation looks at potential, project-generated traffic and resulting impacts discretely at the three staging areas, from south to north.

The project proposes to develop a parking lot in phases to accommodate up to 90 vehicles at full build-out at the Tyler Ranch Staging Area. This size is proposed to ensure that future use will be accommodated inside the park, thereby avoiding impacts to local roadways from park visitors that may otherwise park illegally on Foothill Road, which, at the staging area, is signed no parking.

The Tyler Ranch Staging Area is located at the terminus of Foothill Road at the southern edge of the project area. Foothill Road in this area is a local, two-lane rural residential roadway. The road dead-ends at the park entry and does not provide through access. No level of service data is available for nearby intersections, but ADT volumes are available. The ADT volume for the year 2000, the latest available data, on Foothill Road, east of Kilkare Road, was 3,300 vehicles. On Kilkare Road, north of Foothill Road, ADTs in 2010, the latest available data, was 1,100 vehicles (Keener 2011). West of the Foothill Road/Kilkare Road intersection, the traffic volume on Foothill Road drops sharply. On this section of Foothill Road, ADTs are roughly 200 vehicles. The Foothill Road/Kilkare Road intersection typically has little congestion and few recorded accidents (Keener 2011).

Vehicle trip assumptions for the proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area are based on observations by District staff of vehicle use patterns in other, similar District parking areas and on visitor surveys conducted at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. This analysis assumes, based on park surveys conducted by Strategy Research Institute, that park visitors to the Tyler Ranch Staging Area will stay, on average, for two hours at the park (SRI 2009). The average length of stay for visitors at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is longer than many regional parks because reaching the interior of the park requires a substantial climb. Conservatively, on a peak day, such as a spring Sunday, the District assumes that the staging area would, on average, fill to capacity twice daily, thus serving up to 180 vehicles over a 24-hour period. Because two trips per vehicle

(one inbound trip and one outbound trip) are assumed, the Tyler Ranch Staging Area would generate a peak total of 360 daily vehicle trips. It should be noted that the projected vehicle trip generation rate is very conservative (i.e., high) and the lot would be filled to this capacity only several days each year. Recreational purpose vehicle trips, which are relatively low during the week, rise towards the end of the week and peak on Sundays and holidays; therefore, the project would generate few vehicle trips at the Tyler Ranch Staging Area during the weekday peak commute traffic periods.

The existing Foothill Staging Area has roughly 75 parking spaces. Implementation of the LUP would increase parking at this site by 25 spaces, for a total of 100 spaces. No level of service data is available in this area of Foothill Road. According to year 2000 data, the latest available, ADT on Foothill Road in the general area of the Foothill Staging Area, north of Kilkare Road in Alameda County, was 3,300 vehicles (Keener 2011). This section of Foothill Road typically has little, if any, congestion.

Vehicle trip assumptions for traffic generated at the Foothill Staging Area are based on current patterns and usage observed by park staff at this existing parking area. This a popular destination and the primary existing vehicle access into the park. The Foothill Staging Area parking lot can reach capacity on peak days and is used by both local users (based on use surveys, half of all users live between 1 and 5 miles from the park), as well as those that live beyond Pleasanton city limits and unincorporated Alameda County (SRI 2009). The District anticipates that future traffic patterns resulting from project implementation will follow existing patterns or perhaps would be slightly less, as the project could disperse vehicle traffic to the two new staging areas.

The District assumes that motorists to this staging area would stay, on average, for two hours. Conservatively, on a peak day, the District anticipates that the Foothill Staging Area would fill to capacity twice, thus accommodating 50 vehicles a day. Two trips per vehicle are assumed for a peak total of 100 daily vehicle trips. As stated above, this estimated vehicle trip generation rate is considered very conservative (i.e., high).

The proposed Garms Staging Area, located immediately west of the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection, would provide parking for 75 vehicles. This stretch of Foothill Road can be quite busy, particularly during peak morning and afternoon commute periods. Existing traffic in the vicinity of the proposed Garms Staging Area does not meet City of Pleasanton standards for acceptable level of traffic congestion. ADT volume in the northbound direction at the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection was 9,770 (4,547 in the northbound direction and 5,223 in the southbound direction) in April 2011, the latest available data. In April 2011, the weekday a.m. peak hour traffic was 491 vehicles in the northbound direction and 750 vehicles in the southbound direction (Candland 2011). Peak morning hour traffic volume at the nearby Foothill Road/Foothill High School intersection is LOS F, which is below city standards. The unacceptable LOS is a result of a combination of commute traffic and traffic related to the nearby Foothill High School. Other times, including the afternoon peak hour commute and throughout the weekend, the Foothill Road/Foothill High School intersection operates within acceptable levels. The City of Pleasanton General Plan proposes improvements to the Foothill Road/Foothill High School intersection, including widening the

southbound approach to provide an additional left-turn lane and northbound to provide a separate right-turn lane. These improvements are slated to be implemented by 2015 and would improve the intersection to LOS D, which meets the City of Pleasanton's standard (City of Pleasanton 2009).

Vehicle trip assumptions for the proposed Garms Staging Area are based on District staff estimates of the use of this new parking area, which is likely be quite popular because of its easy access and proximity to a densely populated area. The proposed staging area will accommodate up to 75 vehicles. Like the Tyler Ranch and Foothill staging areas, the District assumes that motorists to the Garms Staging Area would stay, on average, for two hours. However, the District anticipates that the proposed Garms Staging Area, as a result of its proximity to the urban interface and freeways, will be more popular than either the Foothill or Tyler Ranch staging areas. Therefore, it is assumed that on a peak day, this staging area would fill to capacity three times, thus accommodating 225 daily vehicles. Two trips per vehicle are assumed for a peak total of 450 daily vehicle trips. This estimated vehicle trip generation rate is considered very conservative, and would likely be much lower overall on weekdays and lower still during weekday peak periods.

Impact of Project Traffic

At the southern terminus of Foothill Road, at the proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area, ADT is roughly 200 vehicles. During peak times at full build-out, project implementation would generate 360 daily vehicle trips. With the addition of park-related traffic at full build-out of the Tyler Ranch Staging Area, the projected ADT on the southernmost stretch of Foothill Road would be about 560.

For roads that generate low volumes of traffic, such as the southern extent of Foothill Road, level of service is not a useful standard for measuring traffic impacts. Other measures, including travel time savings, and driver comfort and convenience are also not practical because existing and future traffic volumes are below the capacity of this road. Rather, appropriate standards for impact assessment would include road width, accidents, sight distances, speeds, grades and curves (AASHTO 2001). The southernmost section of Foothill Road has few recorded traffic safety or operational deficiencies (delay, blocked traffic, accidents). Although opening the Tyler Ranch Staging Area to vehicle traffic would generate additional traffic, the probability of traffic delays on Foothill Road will remain low and would result in a less-than-significant impact related to roadway delays.

According to year 2000 data, the latest available, ADT on Foothill Road in the general area of the Foothill Staging Area was 3,300 vehicles (Keener 2011). This section of Foothill Road typically has little, if any, congestion and operates with acceptable levels of traffic congestion. Implementation of the project would result in 25 additional parking spaces at the Foothill Staging Area, generating up to 100 vehicle trips a day. This roadway would experience additional traffic, but within capacity of this two-lane roadway. The addition of the new traffic is less than 3 percent of the year 2000 ADTs for the route, a volume that is not considered significant. Therefore, no mitigation is necessary.

Along the stretch of Foothill Road in the vicinity of the proposed Garms Staging Area the peak weekday morning hour typically is LOS F, as a result of commuters and traffic related to Foothill High School. The City of Pleasanton's traffic standard is LOS D or better.

As described above, on a peak day project implementation would generate an estimated 450 vehicle trips at the Garms Staging Area; because of the nature of recreational traffic, trip generation would be much less on weekdays. These additional vehicle trips would not significantly affect either the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection or the Foothill Road/Foothill High School intersection, which, without City of Pleasanton planned improvements, would remain at LOS F, an unacceptable level. To ensure that traffic volumes generated by opening the Garms Staging Area will, at a minimum, meet city standards of LOS D, the District, in cooperation with the City of Pleasanton, would implement Mitigation Measure **TRAN-1**.

> **Potential Impact:** Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
> **Mitigation: TRAN-1**
>
> **MITIGATION TRAN-1:** In cooperation with the City of Pleasanton, implement roadway improvements at the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection concurrent with developing the Garms Staging Area. Intersection improvements could include modifying crosswalks, widening approaches, providing a left-turn lane from the southbound approach, and installing a traffic signal and headwalls.

b) Would the project conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways? The newly created Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) was formed through the merger of the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency and the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority. Alameda CTC is the designated congestion management agency in Alameda County and oversees the Congestion Management Program and is responsible for acquiring and disseminating state and federal funding for road project implementation. Alameda CTC establishes methodologies and procedures for local agencies to determine the impacts of a potential project on highways and transit corridors, but not intersections. The most recent Congestion Management Program was updated in 2009 (Alameda County Congestion Management Agency 2009), although an update to the program is underway as of this writing.

The project is consistent with the Alameda County Transportation Commission's 2009 Congestion Management Program and existing general plan guidelines for the City of Pleasanton and City of Hayward (City of Pleasanton 2009, City of Hayward 2002). According to the Guidelines for the Congestion Management Program, an analysis of freeway and arterial segment levels of service is required if a project is likely to generate 100 or more p.m. *additional* peak-hour vehicle trips to designated roadways above baseline conditions. The p.m. (afternoon) was chosen because in most Alameda County cities, traffic is worse in the p.m. peak hour than in the morning on weekdays or weekend peak periods. The 100-trip threshold was chosen because it is the level at which most cities ordinarily require a traffic impact study

to be prepared. The District has determined that the proposed project would generate well below the 100 p.m. peak-hour vehicle trip generation threshold. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

c) Would the project result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks? The Livermore Municipal Airport, a general aviation airport, is located approximately five miles east of the project area. Implementation of the proposed project would not involve land use changes or generate high levels of traffic which could affect air traffic patterns or increase safety risks related to air traffic. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Potential Impact: No Impact
Mitigation: None required

d) Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? Private vehicles are not permitted in Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park except on access roads and in staging areas. The District would use appropriate standards for designing new trails and continue to undertake a program of regular road and trail maintenance, which is essential for providing safe access for trail users and park maintenance and public safety vehicles. Implementation of the LUP would not result in development that would generate incompatible or potentially dangerous traffic uses. As discussed in subsections a) and b) above, implementation of the project would generate additional traffic volume on regional and local roads, but within the capacity of affected roadways with implementation of **TRAN-1**.

Primary access to the park is from Foothill Road, an arterial road which provides direct access to the existing Foothill Staging Area and the proposed Garms and Tyler Ranch staging areas. At its northernmost extent, Foothill Road, at the Interstate 580 interchange is a divided four-lane road. In the vicinity of the proposed Garms Staging Area, Foothill Road is owned and maintained by the City of Pleasanton and is two-lane roadway with a median, designated turning lanes, Class II bike lanes in either direction, curbs and a sidewalk on the eastern (northbound direction) side of the road. Traffic here is of a relatively high-volume, particularly during weekday mornings because of commute and Foothill High School-related traffic. Foothill Road generally narrows and carries lower volumes of traffic heading south, but still provides through access to freeways and local roads. In the vicinity of the Foothill Staging Area, Foothill Road is owned and maintained by Alameda County and has a paved shoulder, but no median, curbs, sidewalks or designated bike lanes. In the vicinity of the proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area, Foothill Road, owned and maintained by Alameda County, terminates at the park entrance and has no curbs or sidewalks and little paved shoulder. The road here is a low-volume roadway that provides local access to about 20 homes. Most of the length of Foothill Road is well-used by bicyclists.

There are relatively few recorded traffic accidents at the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection in the vicinity of the Garms Staging Area. City of Pleasanton records show that between January 2002 and October 2011 there were eight reported accidents at the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection, three of which resulted in injuries, but no fatalities (Candland 2011). At the Garms Staging Area, the District, in cooperation with the City of Pleasanton, would improve ingress and egress with intersection improvements prior to opening the staging area to the public. Improvements at the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection would include signal modifications and widening approaches to provide for separate turning lanes, which would reduce potential roadway hazards to levels that are less-than-significant.

The District has determined that traffic generated at the proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area, as described in subsection a) above, would not add significant traffic nor significantly degrade the safety or performance of Foothill Road. The terminus of Foothill Road, which is owned and maintained by Alameda County, is an unstriped, two-lane rural residential road.

Foothill Road demonstrates few traffic safety or operational deficiencies (delay, blocked traffic or accidents) in the vicinity of the proposed Tyler Ranch Staging Area. It is a low-volume road that presents relatively few opportunities for encounters between vehicles. Consequently, there is a low incidence of documented traffic accidents on the southernmost extent of Foothill Road. There are no recorded accidents in this immediate area: Alameda County records show that between January 2007 and December 2009, there were no reported accidents involving vehicles, pedestrians or bicycles on the section of Foothill Road from Kilkare Road to its terminus (Alameda County 2011b).

Proposed park development would not generate a significant volume of traffic on Foothill Road, as discussed in subsection a) above; therefore, the probability of traffic delays or accidents on this road will remain low. Project implementation would also not significantly degrade the safety of the southern section of Foothill Road. Nevertheless, as opportunities arise, the District will coordinate with the Alameda County Public Works Department to implement off-site road improvements in the vicinity of the Tyler Ranch Staging Area.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

e) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access? Project implementation would result in intermittent and temporary traffic interruptions related to improvements to staging areas, particularly on Foothill Road during intersection improvements and development of the proposed Garms Staging Area. However, disruptions would be short-term and the project would not permanently alter roads or other infrastructure used or identified as emergency access routes.

The District will continue to maintain park staging areas and interior park access routes to provide access for emergency vehicles. The LUP contains several implementation recommendations intended to maintain adequate emergency access. Section 3.3.3.1 of the LUP identifies emergency vehicle and maintenance access routes. The Foothill Staging Area and the

Oak Tree Trailhead serve as primary access points for emergency vehicles. In addition to these primary emergency access areas, the LUP identifies specific service-width trails in the interior of the park that serve as emergency access routes for District staff and provide evacuation routes for park users. Moreover, there are a number of emergency access routes that cross private lands through easements and the LUP calls for the District to maintain contact with neighboring property owners whose property may be needed for operational and public safety use. Finally, the LUP addresses emergency evacuation of the Kilkare residential community living along Kilkare Road and identifies a secondary, escorted evacuation route through the park. Therefore, LUP implementation would result in a less-than-significant impact with respect to inadequate emergency access.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

f) Would the project conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)? There is no direct public bus or train service to Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. However, the Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA), known as Wheels, provides public bus service within the cities of Pleasanton, Dublin, Livermore and portions of unincorporated Alameda County. Bus Route 10, which connects to the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) train system, provides service every day of the week and stops about a mile north of the proposed Garms Staging Area at the intersection of Stoneridge and Foothill roads. Bus Routes 602 and 604 provide weekday service from points east to Foothill High School, a short walk to the proposed Garms Staging Area. There are two BART stations located in proximity to the park: 1) the Dublin/Pleasanton Station located at the intersection of Owens and Willow roads approximately six miles from the Foothill Staging Area and two miles from the proposed Garms Staging Area; and 2) the West Dublin/Pleasanton Station located in the median of the I-580 corridor just west of the I-680 interchange. Additionally, the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE), which provides regional rail service between Stockton and San Jose, offers weekday service near downtown Pleasanton several miles from both the existing Foothill Staging Area and the proposed Garms Staging Area. Bicycles are allowed on all three public transportation systems.

Implementation of the LUP would not result in changes on roadways providing access to Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park that would affect access by alternative modes of transportation, including bus, bicycle, horse or people on foot. Foothill, Niles Canyon, Palomares and Dublin Canyon roads, which ring the project area, are either part of or proposed to be included in the county's bicycle network (Alameda County 2011a).

Implementation of the LUP would encourage the expansion and increased use of transit and other alternative modes of transportation. Areas of Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park that are now open to the public contain about 29 miles of official, hiking, bicycling and equestrian trails. Project implementation would open another 34 miles of official trails inside the park, for a total trail system of 63 miles at full build-out. Development of the Garms Staging Area would result in crosswalk improvements at the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection. In the vicinity of the proposed Garms Staging Area, both Foothill Road and West Las Positas Boulevard currently have Class II striped bike lanes.

A goal of the LUP is to create a safer, more convenient bicycle and pedestrian network providing access to Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park and it includes a recommendation that the District work with the City of Pleasanton to encourage the development of additional bike lanes and sidewalks along Foothill and Dublin Canyon roads. Additionally, long-term, the District, in cooperation with Alameda County, will explore the potential for providing a formal, off-road trail just beyond the southern border of the park, parallel to Foothill Road, to provide a connection between the Oak Tree Trailhead, Tyler Ranch Staging Area and downtown Sunol. Therefore, there would be no impact related to alternative transportation modes.

Potential Impact: No Impact
Mitigation: None required

4.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☐	■
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	■	☐
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	■	☐
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	■	☐
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	■
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	■	☐
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	■	☐

Environmental Setting

Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is predominantly an undeveloped, open space park with few improvements. The existing park has almost no impervious surface and uses minimal water, wastewater, stormwater and solid waste disposal services. No existing or proposed facilities are connected to municipal wastewater systems; wastewater from public toilets is stored on site in septic tanks before removal and disposal and park security residences are serviced by individual septic systems. Water for drinking fountains and park residences comes from City of Pleasanton water lines, which traverse the park. Irrigation water and water for livestock generally comes from on-site sources such as springs and groundwater. Trash cans are provided in the Foothill Staging Area and park users are encouraged to remove their waste from the park. Solid waste disposal is provided by the Pleasanton Garbage Service.

a, e) Would the project: a) exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?; or e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that

it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? There would be no impact because no existing or proposed facilities are connected to municipal wastewater systems. Within the project area, each of the three existing staff security residences, including the staff office and service area, is serviced by an individual septic system (consisting of a septic system, distribution box and leach or drain field). Public restrooms at the park include vault toilets at the Foothill Staging Area that store wastewater on-site in septic tanks before removal and disposal by a District pumping truck on a regular schedule. Operation of on-site septic tanks is regulated by permit from the Alameda County Public Health Department. No existing facilities are connected to municipal wastewater systems.

The Land Use Plan proposes additional vault toilets that store effluent in on-site septic tanks at the following locations: Garms Staging Area (two double vault toilets), Tyler Staging Area (one double vault toilet), two group day campsites (one vault toilet at each site), the Sinbad Creek Camp (one double vault toilet) and the Aquila Camp. The project would not increase the amount of wastewater generated to the municipal system nor require additional wastewater capacity, and the District will continue to comply with local regulations and permit conditions related to locating vault toilets. Therefore, the project would have no impact on the municipal sewage collection system.

Potential Impact: No Impact
Mitigation: None required

b) Would the project require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? As described above, implementation of the LUP would not require the construction or expansion of wastewater facilities. City of Pleasanton municipal water lines traverse Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. Two water lines extend along the ridge from Bernal and Santos Ranch roads to a water tank located outside of the park boundary. A third water line runs along Kilkare Road extending from the Town of Sunol into the park along the Sinbad Creek Trail. The potable water lines serve the Nipper and Garms residences, drinking fountains in the Foothill Staging Area, several drinking fountains in the interior of the park and the back country camp area near the terminus of Kilkare Road. The District has an agreement with the City of Pleasanton to use water for fire suppression, including use of fire hydrants located at the Foothill Staging Area and along the Valle Vista Trail.

At full build-out, the project would increase the number of people visiting the park, the amount of staff working in the park and add a security residence to the Tyler Ranch Staging Area. In addition, municipal water service would be extended to the new service yard at the Tyler Ranch Staging Area and to the proposed Sinbad Creek Camp. The project would not require irrigation or construction of facilities or uses that would require large quantities of water. Proposed land use changes would not result in a substantial increase in the amount of municipal water used or wastewater generated: the increase in water use would be similar to that of several single-family residences. Therefore, impacts related to construction and expansion of

water or wastewater facilities from implementation of the project would be less-than-significant.

Potential Impact: Less-Than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

c) Would the project require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park is made up of predominantly natural open space land with relatively few improvements. The existing park has almost no impervious surface and minimal stormwater infrastructure. A primary goal of the LUP is to protect and manage natural resources and to this end, the plan minimizes development and impervious surfaces. Therefore, project implementation would not substantially increase the volume of stormwater generated at the park. The project would expand natural surface trails throughout the project area and construct a few buildings and roadways that could increase the amount of impervious surface. The Tyler Ranch Staging Area could be paved, resulting in the creation of 37,000 square feet of impervious surfaces at full project build-out. The proposed 75-space parking area in the Garms Staging Area would be paved, as would access roads, creating roughly 35,000 square feet of new impervious surfaces. To minimize impacts of stormwater runoff at the Tyler Ranch Staging Area and the Garms Staging Area, the District would include permanent, on-site stormwater retention basins at each site to allow runoff from parking areas to infiltrate the underlying soil and prevent stormwater from leaving the project area. The water retention facilities would be subject to Provision C.3 guidelines of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board's Municipal Regional Permit governing discharges from municipal storm drain systems. C.3 guidelines require that for a project that creates or replaces 10,000 square feet or more of impervious surface an applicant must prepare a stormwater control plan for detaining runoff or promoting infiltration so that peak flows and durations match pre-project conditions. Continued compliance with state and local stormwater regulations would ensure that the project would not require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities. Therefore, impacts to stormwater infrastructure resulting from implementation of the LUP would be less-than-significant.

Potential Impact: Less-Than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed? As described above, the City of Pleasanton owns the municipal water supply mains that traverse Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. Use of water from on-site sources, including springs and groundwater, for purposes of irrigation, grazing, the Poole park security residence and the Aquila Camp, would be minimal. The continued operation of drinking fountains, security residences and service yard, coupled with the addition of new drinking fountains, residence and the Sinbad Creek Camp, would also require only a minimal amount of water sources from water utility companies. Overall, implementation of the LUP would not substantially increase

the volume of water used and would not require the need for new or expanded entitlements; therefore, associated impacts would be less-than-significant.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

f, g) Would the project: f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs? or g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste? The project would comply with local, state and federal statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Hazardous materials are processed and disposed of according to state and federal regulations.

Solid waste material types generated at the park consist mostly of bottles, cans, paper, food and litter from park users and plant debris and construction materials from park staff. There are currently five public trash containers located in the Foothill Staging Area and the park generates roughly three cubic yards of refuse per month during peak (i.e., spring) months. Park staff regularly collects solid waste generated by park residences, the park office, the Foothill Staging Area and other trash cans in the park and takes it to the service yard, where it is picked up monthly by Pleasanton Garbage Service (PGS). PGS takes the solid waste to the Pleasanton Transfer Station, which has a design capacity of 720 tons per day (City of Pleasanton 2009). Solid waste is sorted at the transfer station and ultimately taken to the Altamont Landfill and Resource Recovery Facility in Livermore, where it is disposed.

Project implementation would result in construction activities that would generate solid waste. Solid waste generated from construction activities would be subject to local and state ordinances governing solid waste disposal, ensuring that impacts would be less-than-significant. The District expects an increase in the long-term volume of waste generated from proposed recreation uses, as visitor use and park staff is anticipated to increase as a result of project implementation. Based on similar-size parklands in the District system, it is anticipated that the project would generate solid waste to fill one 20-yard dumpster a month. In the future, park staff will collect solid waste from the park and take it to the park service yard, where it will continue to be taken off-site by PGS, sorted at the Pleasanton Transfer Station and disposed of in the Altamont Landfill. Altamont Landfill has sufficient capacity for solid waste disposal for the next 30 years (Nettz 2012). Therefore, the District finds that the project would have a less-than-significant impact on solid waste facilities.

Potential Impact: Less-than-Significant
Mitigation: None required

4.18 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	■	☐	☐
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	■	☐	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	■	☐	☐

a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? The District has evaluated potentially significant adverse impacts to the natural environment resulting from implementation of the proposed project and has incorporated previously mentioned mitigation measures to reduce potential adverse project-related impacts to levels that are less-than-significant.

A principal goal of the LUP is to define recommendations and management actions to protect and benefit the environment. As described in detail above, the LUP contains numerous recommendations and implementation measures to realize this goal. LUP recommendations include benefitting the park's overall biodiversity and minimizing wildfire hazard with tools such as grazing, prescribed burns, integrated pest management programs and site-specific restoration work; monitoring and managing the overall landscape character of the park and cultural resources; and controlling and minimizing erosion potential to protect and enhance riparian and wetland habitat values. Therefore, LUP implementation would be beneficial for the quality of the environment, and associated impacts would be less-than-significant with incorporation of mitigation measures. **Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.**

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)? Implementation of the LUP would not result in impacts that are cumulatively considerable. The LUP does not propose substantial development and its implementation would not induce substantial growth. As discussed in this document, the potentially significant impacts that could be caused by project implementation would be reduced to a less-than-significant level by features included in the project or by the incorporation of mitigation measures. The resources most likely to be cumulatively affected by the project would be air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise and vehicle traffic.

The San Francisco Bay Area Basin, where the project area is located, is non-attainment for ozone and national particulate matter ambient air quality standards. Prescribed burns would follow all permits conditions and would be implemented only on days when air pollution generated would not adversely affect ambient air quality. The contributions of the project would not be cumulatively considerable because proposals are consistent with applicable air quality plans and project implementation would not violate air quality standards. Project implantation would preserve over 6,500 acres of open space in perpetuity, which represents ongoing carbon sequestration and would not result in a cumulative adverse impact on regional air quality or a cumulatively considerable volume of GHGs. Project implementation would result in temporary noise increases related to construction and an increase in noise in areas now not open to the public, but would not substantially contribute to the degradation of ambient noise levels on and around the park. Project implementation would result in an increase in the number of people visiting and working on the park, but impacts would not be cumulatively considerable, as project traffic combined with existing and known future projects would not significantly affect local traffic operations. Therefore, implementation of the LUP would not result in a significant cumulative environmental impact. **Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.**

c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? In general, implementation of the project would protect and manage natural resources in Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park while having long-tem beneficial physical and social impacts on humans because it would promote enjoyment of natural open space and environmental and interpretive education. Environmental effects from the proposed project would generally not have substantial adverse effects on humans. The project would neither introduce new land uses or development which would have substantial adverse effects on humans nor place substantial numbers of people at risk of injury or damage from natural disasters; the LUP contains numerous measures to reduce the risk of unplanned fires. Continued compliance with applicable regulations would minimize potential risks to humans to the maximum extent practicable. Project implementation could also result in construction accidents and related hazards, but with incorporation and implementation of proposed mitigation measures, impacts to humans from the proposed project would be reduced to levels that are less-than-significant. **Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.**

5.0 REPORT PREPARATION AND REFERENCES

5.1 REPORT PREPARERS

East Bay Regional Park District Staff: Brian Wiese, Chief of Planning and Stewardship; Philip Webster, Cartographer; Glenn Gilchrist, Civil Engineer; Bob Ploss, Senior Park Designer; David Riensche, Wildlife Resource Analyst; David Amme, Wildland Vegetation Program Manager; Wilde Legard, Botanist; Nancy Brownfield, Integrated Pest Management Specialist; Steve Quick, Park Supervisor; and Raphael Breines, Senior Park Planner.

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6.0 MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITY MATRIX

Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible for Implementing	Responsible for Monitoring
AIR QUALITY			
AIR-1: To control dust emissions the District will be required to employ the following Best Management Practices for managing dust: • Water all exposed surfaces and unpaved access roads; • Excavate during calm air periods; • Cover haul trucks transporting soil, sand or other loose material off-site; • Reestablish bare soils with vegetation; • Limit vehicle speeds on unpaved road to 15 miles per hour; • Minimize idling times to five minutes or less; and • Properly maintain and tune construction equipment.	During Construction	Contractor or Heavy Equipment Operator	Construction Inspector or Roads and Trails Supervisor
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
BIO-1: Concurrent with determining the final alignment of new trails, a qualified wildlife biologist will conduct site-specific, pre-construction surveys to determine the presence of any special-status species that could be affected. Based on survey findings, avoidance and/or mitigation measures for biotic impacts will be determined on a case-by-case basis including contacting appropriate resource agencies for consultation.	No More Than 30 Days Prior to Construction	Staff Biologist or Consulting Biologist	Stewardship Manager

Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible for Implementing	Responsible for Monitoring
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (continued)			
BIO-2: Construction of new trails located in potential Alameda whipsnake habitat will be confined to the period of July 1st through October 31st. This represents an active period for Alameda whipsnake and should minimize potential impacts because snakes are expected to move readily during construction.	During Construction	Heavy Equipment Operator and Staff Biologist	Roads & Trails Supervisor and Stewardship Manager
BIO-3: Ground-clearing for construction will be confined to the minimum area necessary, and appropriate erosion control measures will be incorporated.	During and Post Construction	Contractor of Heavy Equipment Operator	Construction Inspector or Roads & Trails Supervisor
BIO-4: To minimize impacts to special-status wildlife, prescribed burns will be conducted according to permit guidelines restricting burns to the season that presents the least risk to the animals.	During Prescribed Burns	Assistant Fire Chief and Staff Biologist	Stewardship Manager
BIO-5: During a prescribed burn, if the District's biological monitor finds species of concern within the burn area, individual animals will be hazed or otherwise removed from the project area by a qualified wildlife biologist. Burns may be suspended for the amount of time necessary to perform this action.	During Prescribed Burns	Staff Biologist or Consulting Biologist	Stewardship Manager and Assistant Fire Chief
BIO-6: To reduce the chance of injury of an animal during burning of piles, slash piles will be disassembled and reformed immediately prior to burning. This method will decrease the potential risk of harming any species taking refuge in a pile.	During Prescribed Burns	Assistant Fire Chief	Stewardship Manager

Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible for Implementing	Responsible for Monitoring
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (continued)			
BIO-7: Prior to the removal of mature trees during bird nesting season, February 1st through July 31st, the District will conduct site-specific, pre-construction tree surveys to determine the presence of nests of legally protected bird species. If any trees to be removed contain active nests, the District will consult with the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine under what conditions these trees can be legally removed. In addition, construction activities near these trees will be conducted only after the young have fledged, as determined by a qualified wildlife biologist. Such surveys will not be required outside of bird nesting season.	No More than 30 Days Prior to Construction	Staff Biologist or Consulting Biologist	Stewardship Manager and Regulatory Agencies
BIO-8: Within upland habitats, if special-status bird species are encountered within or adjacent to trail alignments or recreation areas during the survey or construction period, construction activities will be scheduled outside of the bird nesting season between August 1st and January 31st.	Prior to and During Construction	Staff Biologist or Consulting Biologist	Stewardship Manager
BIO-9: If active special-status bird nests or other protected species are identified in public use areas, to avoid disturbance, the District may seasonally restrict public access to areas during the breeding season; close trails, in accordance with Ordinance 38 (EBRPD Visitor Use Regulations); or develop appropriate buffers around successful nest locations, to avoid disturbance to breeding or migrating wildlife.	Ongoing	Staff Biologist and Park Staff	Stewardship Manager and Park Supervisor
BIO-10: All construction activities that have the potential to affect wetland areas will take place during the dry season, between August 1st and October 31st, or as otherwise determined by permitting agencies, and in compliance with the federal Clean Water Act.	During Construction	Contractor or Roads & Trails Supervisor and Ecological Services Coordinator	Construction Inspector

Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible for Implementing	Responsible for Monitoring
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (continued)			
BIO-11: A qualified wildlife biologist(s) will survey ponds for special-status aquatic wildlife prior to and during pond maintenance projects. If found, individuals will be relocated to an appropriate site by a qualified wildlife biologist permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.	No More than 30 Days Prior to and During Maintenance	Qualified Wildlife Biologist	Stewardship Manager
BIO-12: Spoil materials generated during pond maintenance projects will be utilized for pond reinforcement or removed and deposited at predetermined upland location(s).	During Maintenance	Contractor or Heavy Equipment Operator	Construction Inspector or Roads & Trails Supervisor
BIO-13: The District will enact seasonal closure zones when deemed appropriate to restrict park activity around breeding or migrating amphibians and other sensitive wildlife.	Ongoing	Staff Biologist and Park Staff	Stewardship Manager and Park Supervisor
BIO-14: To avoid impacts to special-status aquatic wildlife during prescribed burns, the District will identify water sources that are known to support these species on the project map and will avoid drawing water from them to suppress a fire.	Prior to and During Prescribed Burns	Wildlife Program Manager	Assistant Fire Chief
BIO-15: To prevent ash from entering waterbodies during prescribed burns, the District will establish appropriate upland buffers around each waterbody within the prescribed burn project area.	Prior to Prescribed Burns	Wildlife Program Manager	Assistant Fire Chief
BIO-16: No equipment will be operated in standing or flowing water. Heavy equipment working in or adjacent to wetlands will be placed on mats or other measures must be taken to minimize soil disturbance.	During Construction	Contractor or Heavy Equipment Operator	Construction Inspector or Roads & Trails Supervisor

Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible for Implementing	Responsible for Monitoring
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (continued)			
BIO-17: Where possible, stream channel crossings associated with roads and trails will consist of a clear-span bridge with footings located outside of the channel; bridges will be located to minimize impacts to riparian vegetation. For new or repaired stream channel crossings, the District will obtain necessary permits from the California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board.	Prior to Construction	Project Manager from Design Department, Contractor and Staff Biologist or Consulting Biologist	Construction Inspector or Roads and Trails Supervisor, Stewardship Manager and Regulatory Agencies
BIO-18: For construction projects adjacent to wetlands and waterbodies, the District will develop and implement Best Management Practices for control of erosion, sediment and pollutants. Best Management Practices may include: re-planting exposed areas; using dikes, basins, ditches, clean straw, erosion control fabric and other temporary measures; installing catchments for source pollutants; and including a sufficient vegetated buffer between parking areas and wetlands.	Prior to, During and Post Construction	Project Manager from Design Department and Contractor or Heavy Equipment Operator	Construction Inspector or Roads and Trails Supervisor
CULTURAL RESOURCES			
CULT-1: A monitor will be present during initial grading and other earth-disturbing activities associated with development of the Garms Staging Area, the Tyler Ranch Staging Area and Aquila Camp. Concurrent with determining the final alignment of new trails, an archaeologist will conduct an evaluation of Sinbad Creek and other nearby drainages in the vicinity of proposed trail creek crossings and, if necessary, relocate trails and related creek crossing structures to avoid disturbance of previously undiscovered cultural resources. If no historic or subsurface deposits, or other indications of a cultural resource, are observed, then monitoring will no longer be warranted throughout construction.	Prior to and During Construction	Archaeologist	Construction Inspector and Chief of Planning, Stewardship and GIS Services

Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible for Implementing	Responsible for Monitoring
CULTURAL RESOURCES (continued)			
CULT-2: Prior to taking any action affecting the physical condition of structures greater than 50 years of age in the Tyler Ranch Staging Area and throughout the project area, the District will hire an architectural historian to evaluate structures/sites and determine their eligibility for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources and will obtain recommendations for adaptive reuse or demolition. If structures are determined to be historically significant then treatment in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties for recording, preserving, rehabilitating, restoring and reconstructing historic buildings will be warranted.	Prior to Construction	Architectural Historian	Chief of Planning, Stewardship and GIS Services
CULT-3: In the event that prehistoric, archaeological or paleontological artifacts or remains are encountered during project construction, all earth-disturbing activities will be halted within at least 50 feet and artifacts will be protected in place (in accordance with EBRPD Board Resolution No. 1989-4-124 and state and federal law) until the find is evaluated by an archaeologist or trained cultural resource professional, and appropriate mitigation, such as curation, preservation in place, etc., if necessary, is implemented.	During Construction	Contractor or Roads & Trails Supervisor and Archaeologist	Construction Inspector and Chief of Planning, Stewardship and GIS Services
CULT-4: In the event of accidental discovery of human remains, the County Coroner will be notified, and, if the remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be notified to identify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD), in accordance with state and federal law. The disposition of the remains will be coordinated between the District, the County Coroner, NAHC, MLD and the archaeological consultant.	During Construction	Park Supervisor, County Coroner, NAHC, MLD and Archaeologist	Chief of Planning, Stewardship and GIS Services

Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible for Implementing	Responsible for Monitoring
CULTURAL RESOURCES (continued)			
CULT-5: The District will continue to map all known cultural resource sites and record them in the *Cultural Resources Site Atlas*.	Ongoing	Park Staff and GIS Technician	Park Supervisor and Chief of Planning, Stewardship and GIS Services
GEOLOGY AND SOILS			
GEO-1: When installing drainage crossings and developing trails near waterbodies, per California Department of Fish and Game permit conditions, work will be restricted to the dry season between April 1st and October 31st or between August 1st and October 31st in areas that have the potential to support California red-legged frog or California tiger salamander.	During Construction	Contractor or Roads & Trails Supervisor and Ecological Services Coordinator	Construction Inspector
GEO-2: The District will implement appropriate Best Management Practices for minimizing potential erosion and sedimentation when developing trails, conducting road improvements and installing stream crossings based on site conditions, scale of work and distance to creeks and seasonal wetland areas. These measures could include: conducting activities during the dry season; using dikes, basins, ditches, straw, erosion control fabric and other temporary measures (e.g., water bars, fiber rolls); and installing catchments for source pollutants while in-water work within jurisdictional waters will be limited to the period between August 1st and October 31st.	During and Post Construction	Contractor or Heavy Equipment Operator	Construction Inspector or Roads and Trails Supervisor
NOISE			
NOISE-1: Hours of work will be Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Requests to work off-hours, on weekends and holidays will be at the discretion of the District's representative.	During Construction and Maintenance	Contractor or Heavy Equipment Operator	Construction Inspector or Roads and Trails Supervisor

Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible for Implementing	Responsible for Monitoring
NOISE (continued)			
NOISE-2: Internal combustion engines will be equipped with a muffler type recommended by the manufacturer. Equipment and trucks will utilize the best available noise-control techniques (e.g., engine enclosures, shrouds, intake silencers, ducts, etc.) whenever feasible and necessary.	During Construction and Maintenance	Contractor or Heavy Equipment Operator	Construction Inspector or Roads and Trails Supervisor
NOISE-3: Noisy, stationary construction equipment will be located as far as possible from nearby residences.	During Construction and Maintenance	Contractor or Heavy Equipment Operator	Construction Inspector or Roads and Trails Supervisor
TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC			
TRAN-1: In cooperation with the City of Pleasanton, implement roadway improvements at the Foothill Road/West Las Positas Boulevard intersection concurrent with developing the Garms Staging Area. Intersection improvements could include modifying crosswalks, widening approaches, providing a left-turn lane from the southbound approach, and installing a traffic signal and headwalls.	Prior to Opening the Garms Staging Area	Chief of Design and Construction and Chief of Planning, Stewardship and GIS Services	Assistant General Manager, Planning/ Stewardship & Development and City of Pleasanton