



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
San Francisco District

Regulatory Division
1455 Market Street, 16th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103-1398

SAN FRANCISCO DISTRICT

PUBLIC NOTICE

PROJECT: West Fairview Residential Subdivision

PUBLIC NOTICE NUMBER: 2005-29943S

PUBLIC NOTICE DATE: July 22, 2013

COMMENTS DUE DATE: August 22, 2013

PERMIT MANAGER: Katerina Galacatos

TELEPHONE: 415-503-6778

E-MAIL: Katerina.Galacatos@usace.army.mil

1. **INTRODUCTION:** Award Homes (POC: Stephen Schott, tel: 408-985-6048), 404 Saratoga Avenue, Suite 100, Santa Clara, CA 95050, through its agent, LSA Associates, Inc., (POC: Steve Foreman, tel: 510-236-6810), has applied to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), San Francisco District, for a Department of the Army Permit to discharge fill material into jurisdictional waters of the United States associated with the construction of the West of Fairview Residential Subdivision project in Hollister, San Benito County, California. This Department of the Army permit application is being processed pursuant to the provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1972, as amended (33 U.S.C. § 1344 *et seq.*).

2. PROPOSED PROJECT:

Project Site Location: The project site is located in the Hollister Valley West Fairview Road, in southeastern Hollister, San Benito County, California (36.829193°N, -121.366943°W (Figure 1).

Project Site Description: The 124 acre project site is topographically fairly flat grassland that has been used for grazing. One ranch house is located in the northeast corner of the project and several farm buildings are located near the southeast corner. The project site is dominated by non-native species, including wild oats (*Avena fatua*), rip-gut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), soft chess (*Bromus hordeaceus*), hare barley (*Hordeum marinum*), and Italian ryegrass (*Festuca perennis*). There are two jurisdictional streams on the project site (Figure 2). An ephemeral stream (480 linear feet) flows northerly

in the northeast corner of the site. This ephemeral stream has incised steep banks and Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus discolor*) grows along the eastern bank. An intermittent tributary to Santa Ana Creek (175 linear feet,) flows westward at the northern edge of the parcel and is also characterized by incised steep banks. The project site also has a small, 0.04 acre-non-jurisdictional, isolated wetland occurs in the central portion of the project site.

Project Description: As shown in (Figure 3), the applicant proposes to construct 517 single-family homes on standard individual lots, 60 “garden homes” on clustered lots, and 100 apartments on a single 4.6 acre lot. In addition to the 577 developed residential lots, the proposed subdivision would provide 16 undeveloped lots. These include eight lots that would comprise an open space greenway (linear park) along the primary collector road serving the development and bisecting the site from north to south, a 1.5 acre detention basin lot, and a 0.46 acre lot crossed by Santa Ana Creek in the northeast corner of the site would remain undeveloped and would be dedicated to the City for park use. The other six undeveloped lots would consist of private streets serving the clustered residential parcels.

Basic Project Purpose: The basic project purpose comprises the fundamental, essential, or irreducible purpose of the project, and is used by USACE to determine whether the project is water dependent. The basic project purpose is to construct housing.

Overall Project Purpose: The overall project purpose serves as the basis for the Section 404(b)(1)

alternatives analysis, and is determined by further defining the basic project purpose in a manner that more specifically describes the applicant's goals for the project, while allowing a reasonable range of alternatives to be analyzed. The overall project purpose is to construct housing within the City of Hollister.

Project Impacts: The proposed project would impact all 480 linear feet (0.03 acre) of the ephemeral stream in the northeastern portion of the project site.

Proposed Mitigation: The applicant is proposing to purchase 0.1 acre of seasonal wetland credits from the Pajaro River Mitigation Bank to mitigate at a 3.3:1 ratio for impacts to the ephemeral stream. In addition to the seasonal wetland credit purchase, the applicant is proposing to preserve and enhance 3,500 linear feet of stream habitat (an approximate 7.3:1 preservation/management to impact ratio) at the French Ranch Conservation Area.

3. STATE AND LOCAL APPROVALS:

Water Quality Certification: State water quality certification or a waiver is a prerequisite for the issuance of a Department of the Army Permit to conduct any activity which may result in a fill or pollutant discharge into waters of the United States, pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act of 1972, as amended (33 U.S.C. § 1341 *et seq.*). The applicant has recently submitted an application to the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) to obtain water quality certification for the project. No Department of the Army Permit will be issued until the applicant obtains the required certification or a waiver of certification. A waiver can be explicit, or it may be presumed, if the RWQCB fails or refuses to act on a complete application for water quality certification within 60 days of receipt, unless the District Engineer determines a shorter or longer period is a reasonable time for the RWQCB to act.

Water quality issues should be directed to the Executive Officer, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region, 895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101, San Luis Obispo, California 93401, by the close of the comment period.

Coastal Zone Management: Section 307(c) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 1456(c) *et seq.*), requires a non-Federal applicant seeking a federal license or permit to conduct any activity

occurring in or affecting the coastal zone to obtain a Consistency Certification that indicates the activity conforms with the State's coastal zone management program. Generally, no federal license or permit will be granted until the appropriate State agency has issued a Consistency Certification or has waived its right to do so. The project does not occur in the coastal zone, and a *preliminary* review by USACE indicates the project would not likely affect coastal zone resources. This presumption of effect, however, remains subject to a final determination by the California Coastal Commission.

Coastal zone management issues should be directed to the District Manager, California Coastal Commission, Central Coast District Office, 725 Front Street, Suite 300, Santa Cruz, California 95060-4508, by the close of the comment period.

Other Local Approvals: The applicant has applied for the following additional governmental authorizations for the project: *a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement to be issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.*

4. COMPLIANCE WITH VARIOUS FEDERAL LAWS:

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): Upon review of the Department of the Army permit application and other supporting documentation, USACE has made a *preliminary* determination that the project neither qualifies for a Categorical Exclusion nor requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement for the purposes of NEPA. At the conclusion of the public comment period, USACE will assess the environmental impacts of the project in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4347), the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500-1508, and USACE Regulations at 33 C.F.R. Part 325. The final NEPA analysis will normally address the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts that result from regulated activities within the jurisdiction of USACE and other non-regulated activities USACE determines to be within its purview of Federal control and responsibility to justify an expanded scope of analysis for NEPA purposes. The final NEPA analysis will be incorporated in the decision documentation that provides the rationale for issuing or denying a Department of the Army Permit for the project. The final NEPA analysis and supporting documentation

will be on file with the San Francisco District, Regulatory Division.

Endangered Species Act (ESA): Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 1531 *et seq.*), requires Federal agencies to consult with either the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to ensure actions authorized, funded, or undertaken by the agency are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any Federally-listed species or result in the adverse modification of designated critical habitat. As the Federal lead agency for this project, USACE has conducted a review of the California Natural Diversity Data Base, digital maps prepared by USFWS and NMFS depicting critical habitat, and other information provided by the applicant, to determine the presence or absence of such species and critical habitat in the project area. Based on this review, USACE has made a preliminary determination that the California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*) and California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*) have the potential to be present at the project location or in its vicinity, and may be affected by project implementation. The applicant is proposing avoidance and minimization measures as well as the purchase of a 121.3 acre conservation easement at the French Ranch Conservation Preserve that provides both California tiger salamander and California red-legged frog habitat (Figure 4). USACE has also made a preliminary determination that the San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*) is unlikely to be present in the project vicinity. To address project related impacts to these species, USACE has initiated consultation with USFWS pursuant to Section 7(a) of the Act. Any required consultation must be concluded prior to the issuance of a Department of the Army Permit for the project.

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA): Section 305(b)(2) of the MSFCMA of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 1801 *et seq.*), requires Federal agencies to consult with the NMFS on all proposed actions authorized, funded, or undertaken by the agency that may adversely affect essential fish habitat (EFH). EFH is defined as those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity. EFH is designated only for those species managed under a Federal Fisheries Management Plan (FMP), such as the *Pacific Groundfish FMP*, the *Coastal Pelagics FMP*, and the *Pacific Coast Salmon FMP*. As the Federal lead agency for this project,

USACE has conducted a review of digital maps prepared by NMFS depicting EFH to determine the presence or absence of EFH in the project area. Based on this review, USACE has made a *preliminary* determination that EFH is not present at the project location or in its vicinity, and that consultation will not be required. USACE will render a final determination on the need for consultation at the close of the comment period, taking into account any comments provided by NMFS.

Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act (MPRSA): Section 302 of the MPRS of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 1432 *et seq.*), authorizes the Secretary of Commerce, in part, to designate areas of ocean waters, such as the Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones, and Monterey Bay, as National Marine Sanctuaries for the purpose of preserving or restoring such areas for their conservation, recreational, ecological, or aesthetic values. After such designation, activities in sanctuary waters authorized under other authorities are valid only if the Secretary of Commerce certifies that the activities are consistent with Title III of the Act. No Department of the Army Permit will be issued until the applicant obtains the required certification or permit. The project does not occur in sanctuary waters, and a *preliminary* review by USACE indicates the project would not likely affect sanctuary resources. This presumption of effect, however, remains subject to a final determination by the Secretary of Commerce, or his designee.

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA): Section 106 of the NHPA of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 470 *et seq.*), requires Federal agencies to consult with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties listed in or eligible for listing in the *National Register of Historic Places*. Section 106 of the Act further requires Federal agencies to consult with the appropriate Tribal Historic Preservation Officer or any Indian tribe to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties, including traditional cultural properties, trust resources, and sacred sites, to which Indian tribes attach historic, religious, and cultural significance. As the Federal lead agency for this undertaking, USACE will review the applicant's submittal regarding National Historic Preservation Act that will include their review of latest published version of the *National Register of Historic Places*, survey information on file with various city and county municipalities, and other information provided by the applicant, to determine the presence or absence of historic and archaeological

resources within the permit area. USACE will render a final determination on the need for consultation at the close of the comment period, taking into account any comments provided by the State Historic Preservation Officer, the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and Native American Nations or other tribal governments. To address project related impacts to historic or archaeological resources, USACE will initiate consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, pursuant to Section 106 of the Act. Any required consultation must be concluded prior to the issuance of a Department of the Army Permit for the project. If unrecorded archaeological resources are discovered during project implementation, those operations affecting such resources will be temporarily suspended until USACE concludes Section 106 consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer to take into account any project related impacts to those resources.

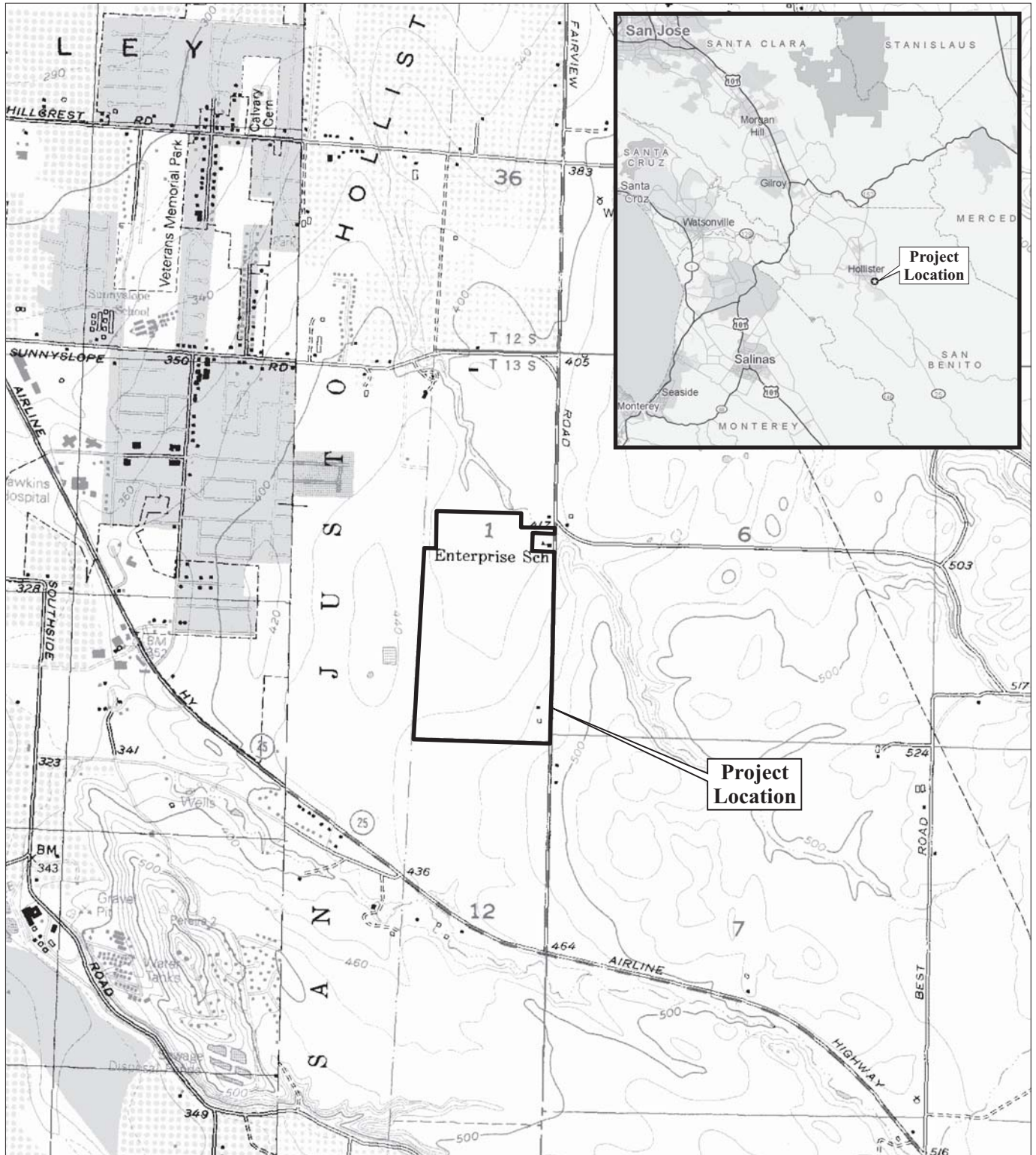
5. COMPLIANCE WITH THE SECTION 404(b)(1) GUIDELINES: Projects resulting in discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States must comply with the Guidelines promulgated by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency under Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1344(b)). An evaluation pursuant to the Guidelines indicates the project is not dependent on location in or proximity to waters of the United States to achieve the basic project purpose. This conclusion raises the (rebuttable) presumption of the availability of a less environmentally damaging practicable alternative to the project that does not require the discharge of dredged or fill material into special aquatic sites. The applicant has submitted an analysis of project alternatives which is being reviewed by USACE.

6. PUBLIC INTEREST EVALUATION: The decision on whether to issue a Department of the Army Permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the project and its intended use on the public interest. Evaluation of the probable impacts requires a careful weighing of the public interest factors relevant in each particular case. The benefits that may accrue from the project must be balanced against any reasonably foreseeable detriments of project implementation. The decision on permit issuance will, therefore, reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. Public

interest factors which may be relevant to the decision process include conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shore erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

7. CONSIDERATION OF COMMENTS: USACE is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State and local agencies and officials; Native American Nations or other tribal governments; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of the project. All comments received by USACE will be considered in the decision on whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a Department of the Army Permit for the project. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, and other environmental or public interest factors addressed in a final environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the project.

8. SUBMITTING COMMENTS: During the specified comment period, interested parties may submit written comments to Katerina Galacatos, San Francisco District, Regulatory Division, 1455 Market Street, 16th Floor, San Francisco, California 94103-1398; comment letters should cite the project name, applicant name, and public notice number to facilitate review by the Regulatory Permit Manager. Comments may include a request for a public hearing on the project prior to a determination on the Department of the Army permit application; such requests shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing. All substantive comments will be forwarded to the applicant for resolution or rebuttal. Additional project information or details on any subsequent project modifications of a minor nature may be obtained from the applicant and/or agent, or by contacting the Regulatory Permit Manager by telephone or e-mail cited in the public notice letterhead. An electronic version of this public notice may be viewed under the *Public Notices* tab on the USACE website: <http://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory>.



Purpose: Medium-sized, Moderate-cost
Residential Development

Datum: NGVD

West Fairview
Project Site Location

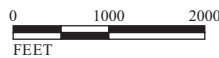
FIGURE 1 OF 4

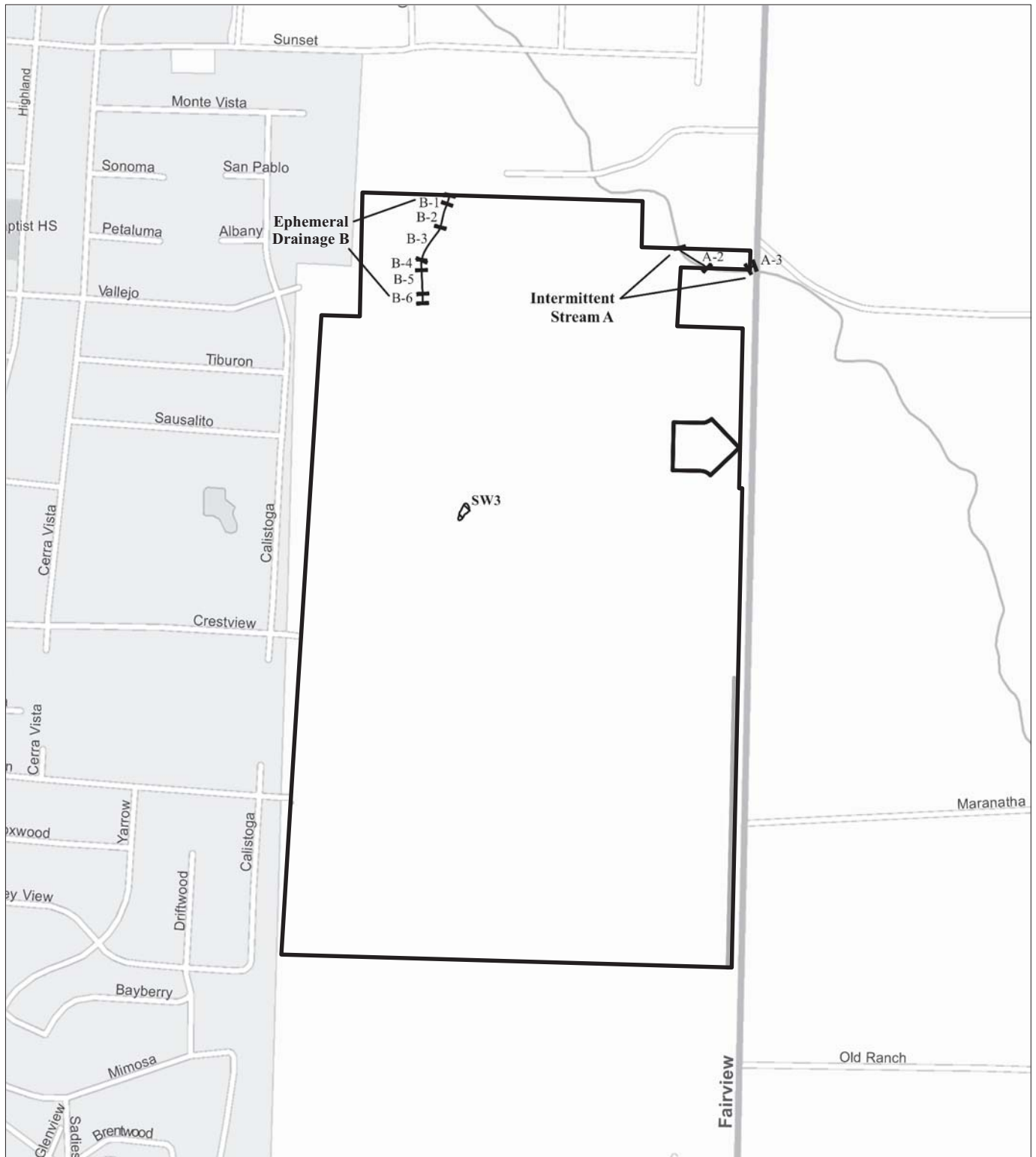
Adjacent to: Unnamed Tributary
to Santa Ana Creek

County of: San Benito

Application by:
Award Homes, Inc.
404 Saratoga Ave., Suite 100
P.O. Box 4008
Santa Clara, CA 95050

LSA





Purpose: Medium-sized, Moderate-cost Residential Development

Datum: NGVD

West Fairview
Jurisdictional Delineation

FIGURE 2 OF 4

Adjacent to: Unnamed Tributary to Santa Ana Creek

County of: San Benito

Application by:

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2011 Delineation Features

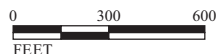
Jurisdictional Features

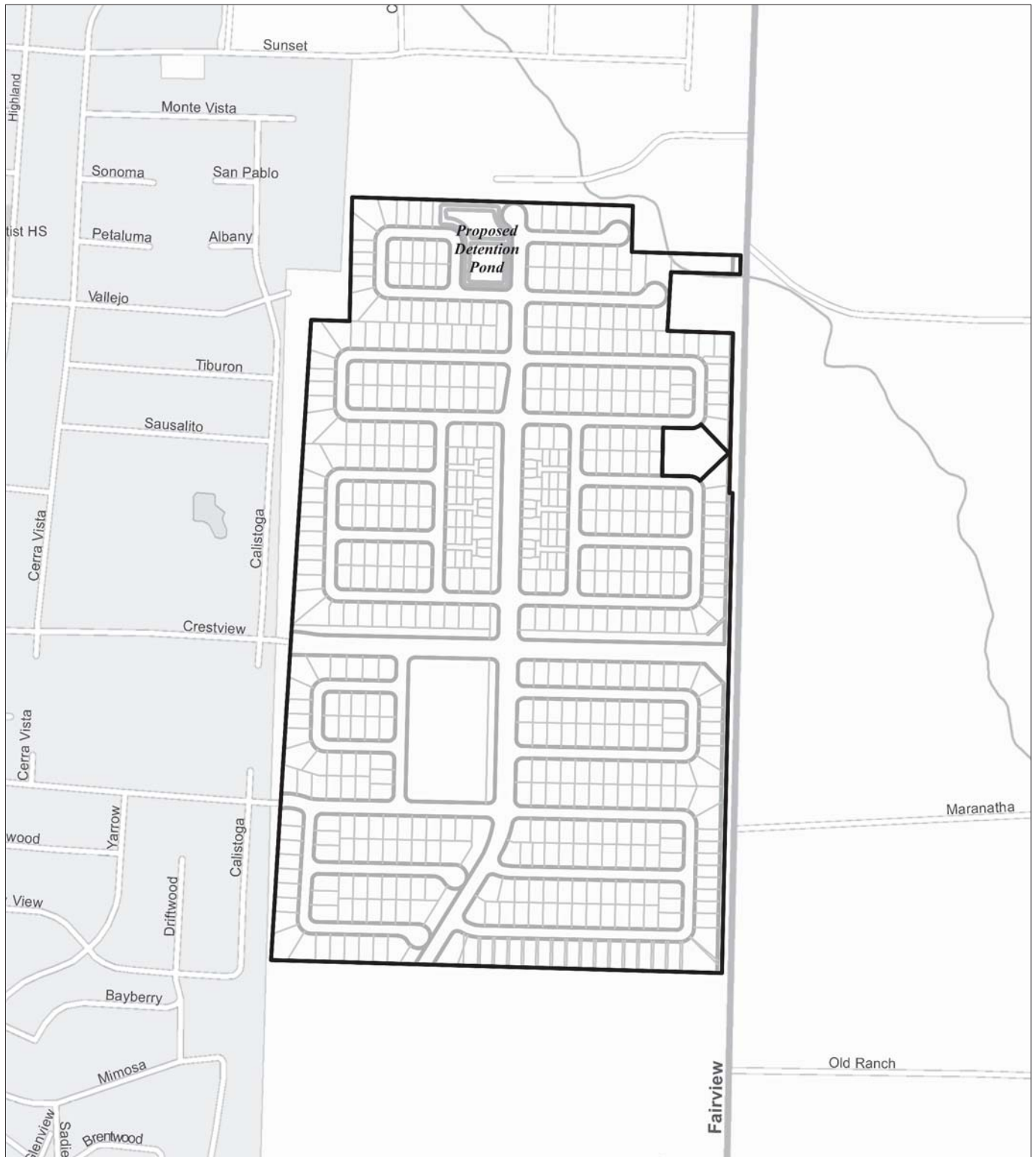
— Stream

Non-jurisdictional Features

▨ Isolated Seasonal Wetland

LSA





Purpose: Medium-sized, Moderate-cost Residential Development

Datum: NGVD

West Fairview

Project Plan

FIGURE 3 OF 4

Adjacent to: Unnamed Tributary to Santa Ana Creek

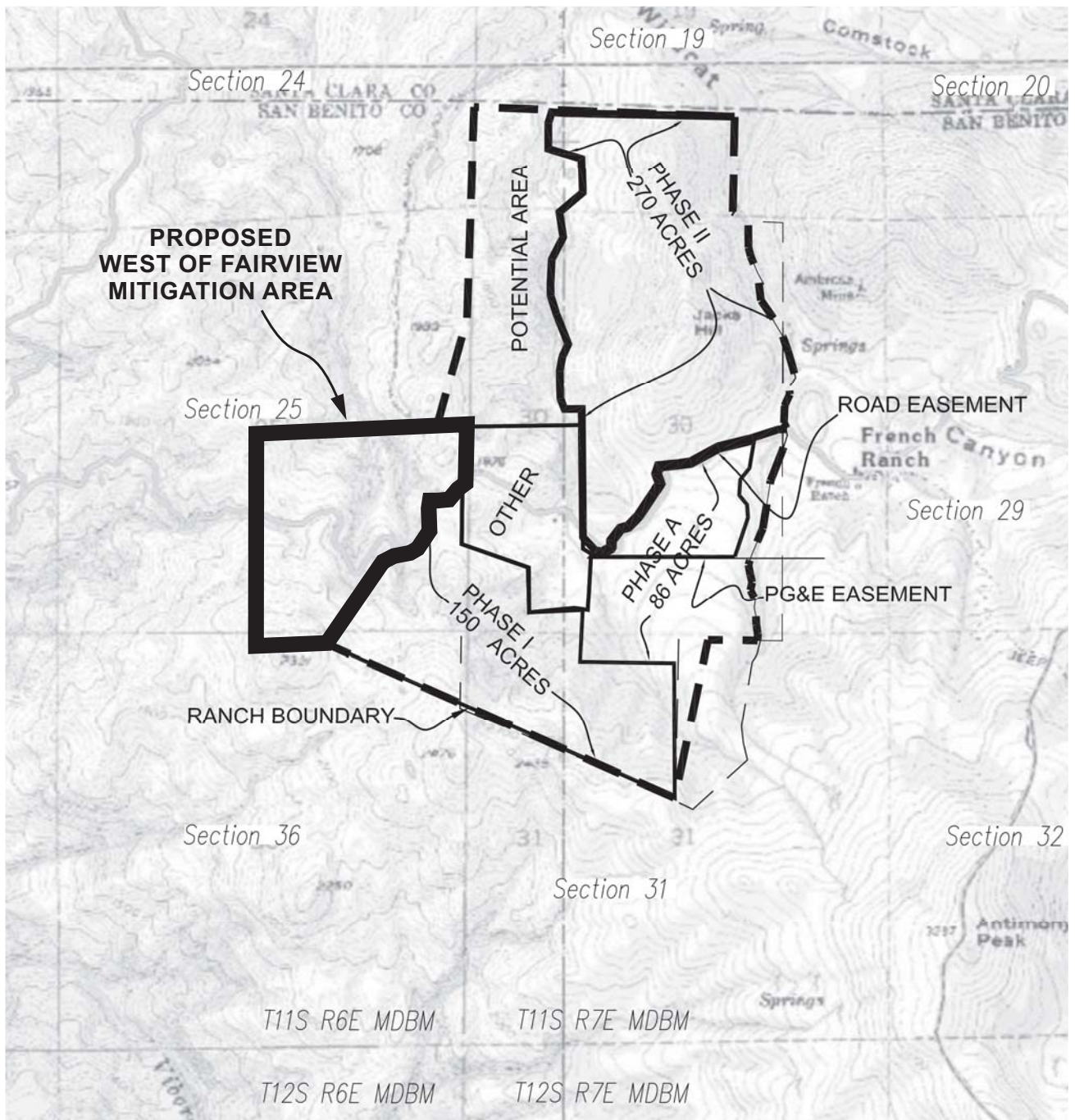
County of: San Benito

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 Santa Clara, CA 95050

LSA





PROPOSED MITIGATION AREAS AT FRENCH RANCH
 LINEWORK AND AREAS BASED ON USGS QUAD SHEET AND PARCEL
 SKETCH PROVIDED BY FRENCH RANCH. AREAS ARE APPROXIMATE
 FOR CONCEPTUAL PURPOSES.

Purpose: Medium-sized, Moderate-cost
 Residential Development

Datum: NGVD

West Fairview
 Proposed Mitigation Area at
 French Road Conservation Area

FIGURE 4 OF 4

Adjacent to: Unnamed Tributary
 to Santa Ana Creek

County of: San Benito

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 404 Saratoga Ave., Suite 100
 P.O. Box 4008
 Santa Clara, CA 95050

LSA

