

3.9.1 Introduction

This analysis provides a brief overview of existing recreational uses of Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park and recreational facilities in the general vicinity, particularly coastal recreation facilities. The Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park provides public access to the miles of coastal sand dunes in the northwestern coast of Santa Barbara County, approximately 2.5 miles west of the City of Guadalupe. The Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park provides access to the beach and sand dunes for beach going and coastal recreational activities such as swimming, kayaking, surfing, and fishing. No formal trails are located within the sand dunes; however, the dunes are open for hiking and public access except during nesting season for the western snowy plover. The Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park also provides limited developed park facilities in a unique coastal setting, including approximately 60 parking spaces, an informational kiosk, restrooms, and picnic tables. This section examines the impacts of the Proposed Project and alternatives on both coastal access and developed recreation and provides recommended mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potential adverse impacts.

The information in this section is based on the 1982 Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR), associated studies, information provided by the Dunes Center and the City of Santa Maria, and regional information available in previous environmental impact reports prepared by the County, the County's Comprehensive Plan and Local Coastal Program, including the Coastal Land Use Plan, and the County's Coastal Zoning Ordinance. This section also reflects information developed during field reconnaissance by AMEC staff and information from County Planning & Development staff.

3.9.2 Environmental Setting

3.9.2.1 Regional Overview

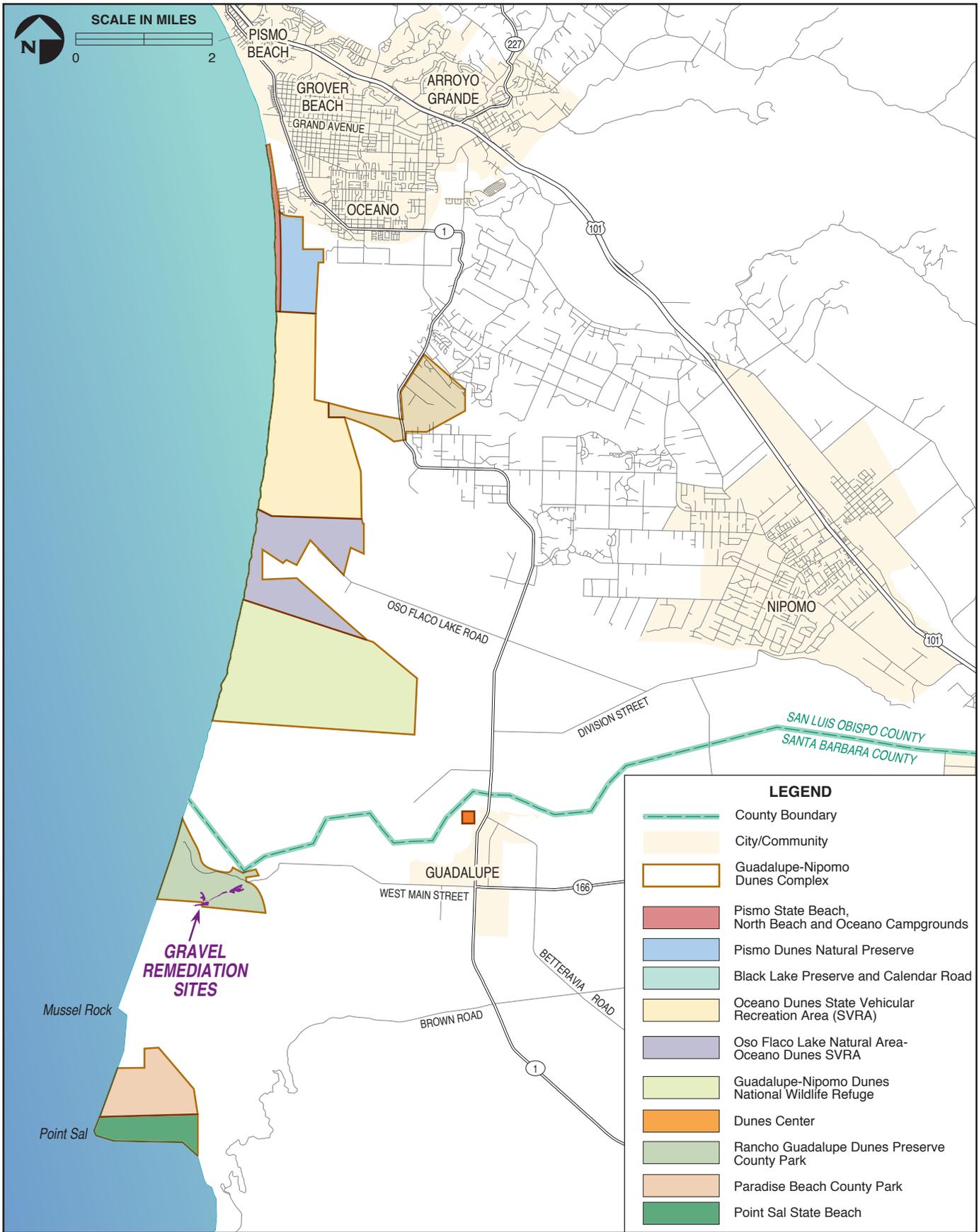
The Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park is located in the rural northwestern region of the County, adjacent to the Santa Maria River Estuary. The Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park is a recreational area located in the coastal zone of the County in the southern portion of the coastal dune system known as Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Complex. The dune complex extends approximately 18-miles near the City of Pismo Beach in southern San Luis Obispo County to Mussel Rock in northern Santa Barbara County. At approximately 15,000 acres, the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Complex provides substantial recreation opportunities, primarily within nine publicly managed areas.

The Guadalupe Nipomo Dunes Complex and adjacent coastal areas support a variety of recreational and coastal access facilities which are heavily used by local residents and visitors. These beaches and shoreline experience high levels recreational users annually. However, developed coastal access and shoreline recreational facilities are limited along the 18 miles of shoreline between the City of Pismo Beach and Mussel Rock (see Figure 3.9-1). Most of the developed coastal access and

waterfront park facilities on the Guadalupe Nipomo Dunes are located within the nine publicly managed areas, six of which are located in San Luis Obispo County.

Coastal access and recreation in these publicly managed areas are provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), California State Parks, the County of Santa Barbara, and the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County. The 18-mile reach of shoreline supports two developed public campgrounds, vehicular recreation areas, wildlife refuge and natural preserves, and public open space areas. Developed beach parks, coastal access and coastal recreational areas in the greater Guadalupe Nipomo Dunes include:

- ***Pismo State Beach, North Beach and Ocean Campgrounds.*** This approximately 1,000 acre park occupies approximately 1.5 miles of shoreline and provides access to a wide sandy beach, popular for family beach use, camping, swimming, surfing, and walking. The park contains two full-service campgrounds, a nature center, a 9-hole golf course and restaurant. A shuttle service between the park, Grover Beach, and Pismo Beach is also available (California State Parks 2014).
- ***Pismo Dunes Natural Preserve.*** The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County manages approximately 480 acres of natural open space containing sand dunes, a large pocket lake, freshwater wetlands. This open space is accessed by a series of unimproved sand trails with limited nearby parking. Typical activities bird and wildlife watching, walking and limited horseback riding.
- ***Black Lake Preserve.*** This preserve encompasses over 480 acres containing sensitive species among dune and wetland habitats. The area is closed to public access except for docent-led hikes.
- ***Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA).*** Encompassing approximately 1,400 acres, this SVRA provides public access to approximately 2 miles of shoreline and adjacent dune areas. This area is highly popular for off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation, including motorcycles and all terrain vehicles (ATVs). This SVRA also offers visitors other recreational activities such as swimming, surfing, surf fishing, camping, and hiking. Post 2 is 1 mile south on the beach from Pier Avenue and marks the beginning of the OHV area. All OHVs must be transported to this point before off-loading. Fenced and signed areas are closed to vehicular use either because the property beyond is private or because the area contains sensitive plant and animal life. During the March 1 - September 30 western snowy plover breeding season, small fenced enclosures are constructed around the nests to protect western snowy plovers and their offspring from the surrounding recreational use (California State Parks 2014a).
- ***Oso Flaco Lake Natural Area.*** This approximate 1,450-acre open space supports a 1.5-mile-long boardwalk that crosses a freshwater lake and vegetated dunes, providing access to a beach. This area accommodates hiking, bird watching, fishing, swimming and kayaking.
- ***Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes National Wildlife Refuge.*** The approximate 2,500-acre refuge managed by the USFWS is situated in a remote location within the greater Guadalupe-Nipomo Dune complex. Public access is provided via the beach from the neighboring Oso Flaco Lake Natural Area or the Park. Because it is far from associated parking areas, this refuge offers visitors a more remote wilderness experience for hiking, wildlife viewing, and surf fishing (USFWS 2014).



- **Dunes Center.** The Dunes Center in downtown Guadalupe provides public educational opportunities with different animal specimens, interactive activities, as well as a collection of short films about the local area.
- **Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park.** This 620-acre County park provides access to the beach for coastal recreational activities such as swimming, kayaking, surfing, and fishing as well as access to extensive sand dunes for hiking and wildlife viewing. No formal trails are located within the sand dunes; however, the dunes are open for hiking and public access except during breeding season for the western snowy plover (March 1 through September 30). The Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park also provides approximately 60 parking spaces, an informational kiosk, restrooms, and picnic tables near the shoreline, adjacent to the Santa Maria River estuary.
- **Paradise Beach County Park.** Santa Barbara County is currently the fee simple owner of approximately 560 acres at Point Sal, including Paradise Beach. Access to this area is via the Point Sal Trail, a moderately strenuous 6-mile hike to the beach from a parking area located along Brown Road (County of Santa Barbara 2014).
- **Point Sal State Beach.** California State Parks and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management collectively own 40 acres of land that include and provide access to a wide sandy beach and rocky headlands at Point Sal. This remote area is accessible only by trail to hikers and mountain bikes, a trail that leads from a roadside parking area to pristine sandy beaches and tide pools (California State Parks 2014b). This area receives low to moderate use for hiking, biking, fishing, and surfing.

3.9.2.2 Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park

The Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park encompasses approximately 620 acres of dunes and beach along more than 1.5 miles of coastline. The Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park provides free coastal public parking in approximately 60 parking spaces, which provides access to the generally wide beach and a sandy offshore bottom that are well-suited to coastal access and recreation. The Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park also contains restrooms, an information kiosk, and three picnic tables. Because it is far from urban centers, the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park generally receives moderate to low use for coastal access, hiking, sightseeing, fishing, kayaking, and surfing. The Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park is considered a unique resource along the northern Santa Barbara County coast, as this area has limited coastal access facilities.

Beach and Offshore Area. The sandy beach is used for passive and active recreation including sight-seeing, relaxation, sunbathing, surf fishing, bird watching and walking. These uses increase during warmer weather and decrease during cooler winter months. High winds and coastal fog that can occur throughout the year can further limit coastal recreation. Coastal access parking at the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park provides access to wide sandy beaches that extend south to Point Sal and north into the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes National Wildlife Refuge.

Upland Dune Area. The dunes within the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park are accessible from the County parking area, except from the March 1 - September 30 western snowy plover breeding season, when bollard fences and signs are placed to notify the public of access closure for protection of snowy plovers and their nests. No public access to the dunes is allowed during this time. For the rest of the year, the public can hike from the beach areas into the remote dunes, which provide opportunities for wildlife and bird watching. No formal trails are located within the dunes.

3.9.2.3 Project Site

The existing dedicated public coastal access for the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park is located approximately 0.75 mile to the northwest of the Project Site. Public access to the Project Site is available only via hiking from the coast. Those hiking into the dunes are provided with a serene landscape within this remote area to view the natural setting and wildlife. Existing Gordon Sand Company operations and the Proposed Project's gravel sites lessen the undeveloped natural qualities of the Project Site, primarily in the eastern portion, within the dunes. Because of the remoteness of the site and lack of formal public access, the Project Site is anticipated to receive low levels of public use; however, no formal recreation use counts have been performed.

3.9.3 Regulatory Setting

The land use and planning analysis was conducted in conformance with the goals and policies of state and local regulations.

3.9.3.1 Federal

The Federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972, as administered by the State of California through the California Coastal Act, applies to this Project. There are no federal regulations, authorities, or administering agencies that regulate land use, public access, or recreation that are specifically applicable to recreational resources with respect to the proposed Project Site.

3.9.3.2 State

The California Coastal Act (§30000 et seq), Coastal Resources Planning and Management Policies, include provisions (§30210 – 30223) for the protection and management of public access and coastal recreational resources. The Coastal Act policies concerning recreational resources that are relevant to the Proposed Project are listed below:

Coastal Act § 30210: In carrying out the requirements of Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution, maximum access, which shall be conspicuously posted, and recreational opportunities shall be provided for all the people consistent with public safety needs and the need to protect public rights, rights of private property owners, and natural resource areas from overuse.

Coastal Act § 30211: Development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation.

Coastal Act § 30212(a): Public access from the nearest public roadway to the shoreline and along the coast shall be provided in new development projects except where:

- (1) It is inconsistent with public safety, military security needs, or the protection of fragile coastal resources,
- (2) Adequate access exists nearby, or,
- (3) Agriculture would be adversely affected.

Dedicated accessway shall not be required to be opened to public use until a public agency or private association agrees to accept responsibility for maintenance and liability of the accessway.

Coastal Act § 30212.5: Wherever appropriate and feasible, public facilities, including parking areas or facilities, shall be distributed throughout an area so as to mitigate against the impacts, social and otherwise, of overcrowding or overuse by the public of any single area.

Coastal Act § 30213: Lower cost visitor and recreational facilities shall be protected, encouraged, and, where feasible, provided. Developments providing public recreational opportunities are preferred.

Coastal Act § 30214(a): The public access policies of this article shall be implemented in a manner that takes into account the need to regulate the time, place, and manner of public access depending on the facts and circumstances in each case including, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Topographic and geologic site characteristics.
- (2) The capacity of the site to sustain use and at what level of intensity.
- (3) The appropriateness of limiting public access to the right to pass and repass depending on such factors as the fragility of the natural resources in the area and the proximity of the access area to adjacent residential uses.
- (4) The need to provide for the management of access areas so as to protect the privacy of adjacent property owners and to protect the aesthetic values of the area by providing for the collection of litter.

Coastal Act § 30221: Oceanfront land suitable for recreational use shall be protected for recreational use and development unless present and foreseeable future demand for public or commercial recreational activities that could be accommodated on the property is already adequately provided for in the area.

Coastal Act § 30223: Upland areas necessary to support coastal recreational uses shall be reserved for such uses, where feasible.

3.9.3.3 Local

Santa Barbara County regulates the physical development of land through its Comprehensive Plan and Coastal Land Use Plan (County of Santa Barbara 2009). New development must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the requirements and standards of the Land Use and Development Code (LUDC).

Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan

The guiding element that defines the blueprint for physical development is the Land Use Element. Other state-mandated elements include the Circulation, Conservation, Noise, Open Space, Housing, and Safety Elements. In addition, the County of Santa Barbara has the following elective elements: Agricultural, Environmental Resource Management (ERME), Scenic Highway, Seismic Safety, Hazardous Waste, and Energy Elements. The County's Comprehensive Plan also includes community, regional, and rural region plans that serve as blueprints for physical development of unincorporated towns and watershed-based areas. The County's Comprehensive Plan provides general goals, policies, and programs, which are applicable to the Proposed Project. The Comprehensive Plan is required to maintain internal consistency between all adopted elements. Three separate zoning ordinances also play a key role in providing detailed guidance on implementing the Plan. Substantial public involvement is emphasized in the drafting and adoption of

all of these elements, community plans and implementing documents. The Goleta Community Plan, the Coastal Land Use Plan and Coastal Zoning Ordinance are applicable to this Project.

Local Coastal Program

The LCP contains principal land use policies for development within the coastal zone in Santa Barbara County. This program, pursuant to requirements of the California Coastal Act (section 30108.5), contains the relevant portion of a local government's general plan, or local coastal element, which indicates the kinds, location, and intensity of land uses, the applicable resource protection and development policies, and a listing of implementing actions. The County's LCP first came into effect in 1982, and has been updated several times since then.

The County of Santa Barbara's LCP includes the Coastal Land Use Plan, which contains the principal recreational policies for development within Santa Barbara County's coastal zone. Policies relevant to recreation include:

Coastal Land Use Plan (CLUP) Policy 7-1: The County shall take all necessary steps to protect and defend the public's constitutionally guaranteed rights of access to and along the shoreline. At a minimum, County actions shall include: (a) Initiating legal action to acquire easements to beaches and access corridors for which prescriptive rights exist consistent with the availability of staff and funds; [and] (b) Accepting offers of dedication which will increase opportunities for public access and recreation consistent with the County's ability to assume liability and maintenance costs.

CLUP Policy 7-4: The County, or appropriate public agency, shall determine the environmental carrying capacity for all existing and proposed recreational areas sited on or adjacent to dunes, wetlands, streams, tidepools, or any other areas designated as "Habitat Areas" by the land use plan. A management program to control the kinds, intensities and locations of recreational activities so that habitat resources are preserved shall be developed, implemented and enforced. The level of facility development (i.e., parking spaces, camping sites, etc.) shall be correlated with the environmental carrying capacity.

CLUP Policy 7-5: For areas controlled by Federal, State, County, or District agencies, in a zone extending approximately 250 feet inland from the mean high tide line, priority shall be given to coastal dependent and related recreational activities and support facilities. However, camping facilities should be set back from the beach and bluffs and near-shore areas reserved for day use activities. Recreational activities that are not coastal dependent may be located within this 250-foot zone if the less desirable coastal dependent support facilities (parking, restrooms, etc.) are located inland. In no case shall facilities, except for required structures (i.e., lifeguard towers, volleyball nets, etc.), be located directly on the dry sandy beach.

CLUP Policy 7-6: Recreational uses on oceanfront lands, both public and private, that do not require extensive alteration of the natural environment (i.e., tent campgrounds) shall have priority over uses requiring substantial alteration (i.e., recreational vehicle campgrounds).

CLUP Policy 7-7: During the zoning and implementation phase of the LCP, the County shall establish a schedule for acquisition of areas proposed for new or expanded access and/or recreation. The schedule shall designate responsible agencies, time frame, and methods for implementing all access and recreation proposals set forth in this plan.

Santa Barbara County Coastal Zoning Ordinance. Development in the coastal zone is regulated by the Santa Barbara County Coastal Zoning Ordinance. Sections 35-61, *Beach Development* and 35-62,

Recreation and Visitor Serving Uses of the Zoning Ordinance pertain to the proposed Project and include:

Sec. 35-62.1: Recreational uses on oceanfront lands, both public and private, that do not require extensive alteration of the natural environment (i.e., tent campgrounds) shall have priority over uses requiring substantial alteration (i.e., recreational vehicle campgrounds). (Same as CLUP Policy 7-6).

Santa Barbara County Code. Chapter 26, Parks and Recreation, of the Santa Barbara County Code contains rules and regulations pertaining to facility usage, traffic, animals, camping, special use areas, beach use and types of activities permitted in Santa Barbara County parks and recreation areas.

3.9.4 Environmental Impact Analysis

This section discusses the potential recreational impacts associated with the Proposed Project.

3.9.4.1 Thresholds of Significance

CEQA Guidelines

With respect to land use and planning, applicable sections of Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines state that a project would normally have a significant impact to recreation if it would:

- 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;
- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment; or,
- Terminate or interfere with the established recreational uses of an area.

Santa Barbara County Thresholds

The County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual does not contain significance thresholds for recreation. This analysis is consistent with the guidelines contained in the County's Initial Study Checklist and the CEQA Guidelines for determining significance of impacts.

3.9.4.2 1982 Final EIR Impacts

The 1982 Final EIR identified one significant and unavoidable (Class I) impact to land use / recreation associated with the Husky Oil Project:

- **Impact 1982-REC-1.** Intrusion of a non-open space use (i.e., 3 drilling/production island) into an area that is recognized for its scenic, ecological, and recreational values.

Mitigation measures associated with this impact included "consolidation of facilities," "locating unnecessary equipment outside of dunes," and "fencing of access roads." These mitigation measures are no longer applicable, as there are no longer facilities or equipment associated with the Husky Oil Project at the Project Site. However, MM REC-1 discussed below under the Proposed Project would

reduce this impact to less than significant after mitigation (Class II). Residual impacts to recreation related to the presence of the remnant gravel are described in Section 3.9.4.3 below.

3.9.4.3 Impacts of the Proposed Project

This section discusses the impacts to recreation from the Proposed Project. Table 3.9-1 below provides a summary of the recreation impacts resulting from the Proposed Project and alternatives.

Impact REC-1. Impacts to existing neighborhood or regional parks that would require expansion of or result in a substantial physical deterioration of the facilities from implementation of the Proposed Project.

The Proposed Project would leave the Project Site in its current condition, permitting the retention of remnant gravel within the dune area at Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park. As described in Section 3.11.4, *Geological Resources*, the impact of the remnant gravel on dune formation and movement is not considered to be significant. Additionally, the remnant gravel does not physically obstruct public access and the Proposed Project would not increase demand on the use of the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park or nearby recreation facilities. However, when viewed by a recreationist within the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park the presence of the gravel would result in an impact to the recreational experience (see Impact REC-2 below). As described in the 1982 Final EIR, the Project Site is valued for its visual resources and recreational uses and therefore impacts to the recreational experience within the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park would constitute a degradation of the park. However, the Proposed Project includes a monetary contribution (in-lieu fee), described in MM REC-1, to offset the effects of gravel retention on recreation. The in-lieu fee would be used to purchase property for public recreational or open space purposes at a ratio of not less than 3:1, which would optimally be located within the north coastal region of the County, in the vicinity of the Project Site, characterized by similar dune habitat and substantial scenic value, and be suitable for passive recreational or open space uses by the public. Consequently, this impact would be less than significant after mitigation (Class II).

Impact REC-2. Impacts that would terminate or interfere with the established recreational uses from implementation of the Proposed Project.

The Proposed Project would leave the Project Site in its current condition, permitting the retention of the remnant gravel in the dune area of the Ranch Guadalupe Dune County Park. Retention of the remnant gravel would noticeably alter the recreational experience within the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park detracting from a more natural, pristine state described for the existing setting in the 1982 Final EIR. Degradation of recreational experience associated with the visual presence of introduced gravel in the natural dune area, which is recognized for its scenic recreational value, would continue under the Proposed Project. Therefore, Project impacts would be potentially significant. However, the monetary contribution (in-lieu fee) described in MM REC-1 would offset both recreational effects of gravel retention onsite. The in-lieu fee would be used to purchase property for public recreational or open space purposes at a ratio of not less than 3:1, which would optimally be located within the north coastal region of the County, in the vicinity of the Project Site, characterized by similar dune habitat and substantial scenic value, and be suitable for passive recreational or open space uses by the public. Consequently, this impact would be less than significant after mitigation (Class II).

3.9.4.4 Impacts of the No Project Alternative

This section discusses the impacts to recreation from the No Project Alternative. Table 3.9-1 below provides a summary of the recreation impacts resulting from the Proposed Project and alternatives.

Impact ALT1-REC-1. Impacts to existing neighborhood or regional parks that would require expansion of or result in a substantial physical deterioration of the facilities from implementation of the No Project Alternative.

The No Project Alternative would result in the removal and sorting of approximately 293,752 cy of sand that contains remnant gravel from the Project Site. The sorted sand would be returned to the excavated areas. Construction would be anticipated to occur over a period of approximately 5 to 7 months. During construction the remainder of the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park would remain open for public access and recreational use. Given the low level of existing recreational use of the Project Site, construction would not be anticipated to result in substantial alteration of public recreational use to the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park or vicinity recreation areas. Upon completion of gravel removal operations, the recreational use of the area would remain as described in Section 3.9.2.3.

The No Project Alternative would result in minor long-term visual enhancement within the Project Site that would potentially increase the recreational enjoyment of the area; however, no increase in the use of the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park or nearby recreation facilities would be anticipated to occur. Therefore no physical deterioration of the dunes or recreational facilities associated with increased recreational use would occur and no increase in demand would occur that could require an expansion of recreation facilities. Impacts to existing recreational resources would be less than significant as a result of the No Project Alternative (Class III).

Impact ALT1-REC-2. Impacts that would terminate or interfere with the established recreational uses from implementation of the No Project Alternative.

The No Project Alternative would result in the removal and sorting of approximately 293,752 cy of sand that contains remnant gravel from the Project Site. The sorted sand would be returned to the excavated areas. During the approximately 5 to 7 month construction period, access to the Project Site would be prohibited in the vicinity of the gravel excavation operations and along the designated haul routes. The remainder of the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park would remain open for public access and recreational use. Given the low level of existing recreational use of the Project Site and the presence of existing sand excavation operations, construction would not be anticipated to result in significant interference or termination of public recreational use to the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park or vicinity recreation areas (Class III).

Upon completion of construction, the No Project Alternative would result in minor long-term visual enhancement within the Project Site that would potentially increase the recreational enjoyment of the area. However, no increase in public visitation to the Project Site would be anticipated and recreational use of the area would remain as described in Section 3.9.2.3. Therefore no physical deterioration of the dunes or recreational facilities associated with increased recreational use would occur and no increase in demand would occur that could require an expansion of recreation facilities. Impacts to recreational resources would be less than significant (Class III).

3.9.4.5 Impacts of the Partial Gravel Removal Alternative

This section discusses the impacts to recreation from the Partial Gravel Removal Alternative. Table 3.9-1 below provides a summary of the recreation impacts resulting from the Proposed Project and alternatives.

Impact ALT2-REC-1. Impacts to existing neighborhood or regional parks that would require expansion of or result in a substantial physical deterioration of the facilities from implementation of the Partial Gravel Removal Alternative.

The Partial Gravel Removal Alternative would result in temporary site closure in the Road Site and Site D during gravel removal operations. Gravel removal would be anticipated to occur over a period of approximately 3 to 4 months. During gravel removal, the remainder of the Project Site and the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park would remain open for public access and recreational use. Given the low level of existing recreational use of the Project Site, removal operations would not be anticipated to result in substantial alteration of public recreational use to the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park or vicinity recreation areas. Upon completion of gravel removal operations, the recreational use of the area would remain as described in Section 3.9.2.3.

Similar to the No Project Alternative, the Partial Gravel Removal Alternative would result in minor long-term visual enhancement within the Project Site that would potentially increase the recreational enjoyment of the Road Site and Site D; however, no increase in the use of the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park or nearby recreation facilities would be anticipated to occur. Therefore no physical deterioration of the dunes or recreational facilities associated with increased recreational use would occur and no increase in demand would occur that could require an expansion of recreation facilities. Impacts to existing recreational resources would be less than significant as a result of the Partial Gravel Removal Alternative (Class III).

Impact ALT2-REC-2. Impacts that would terminate or interfere with the established recreational uses from implementation of the Partial Gravel Removal Alternative.

The Partial Gravel Removal Alternative would result in the removal of sand that contains remnant gravel from the Road Site and Site D. During the approximately 3- to 4-month construction period, access to the Project Site would be prohibited in the vicinity of the gravel excavation operations and along the designated haul routes. The remainder of the Project Site and the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park would remain open for public access and recreational use. Given the low level of existing recreational use of the Project Site and the presence of existing sand excavation operations, construction would not be anticipated to result in significant interference or termination of public recreational use to the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park or vicinity recreation areas (Class III).

Upon completion of gravel removal, the Partial Gravel Removal Alternative would result in minor long-term visual enhancement within the Project Site that would potentially increase the recreational enjoyment of the area. However, no increase in public visitation to the Project Site would be anticipated and recreational use of the area would remain as described in Section 3.9.2.3. Therefore, impacts to recreational use or access as a result of the Partial Gravel Removal Alternative would be less than significant (Class III).

3.9.4.6 County-Required Mitigation Measures

MM REC-1: Monetary Contribution (In-Lieu Fee)

Shell Exploration and Production, Inc. (Applicant) shall provide an in-lieu fee to the County for the purpose of mitigating the recreational impact of the Proposed Project (18.9 acres footprint) through the purchase of property for public recreational or open space purposes at a ratio of not less than 3:1 (56.7 acres). The mitigation ratio could potentially be greater based on property availability and quality. This property would be designated and preserved for recreational and open space use. The optimal property would be located within the north coastal region of the County, in the vicinity of the Project Site, characterized by similar dune habitat and substantial scenic value, and be suitable for passive recreational or open space uses by the public. In addition to offsetting recreational impacts, this in-lieu fee would result in additional indirect benefits to aesthetics, geological resources, and biological resources.

TIMING: The Applicant shall provide the in-lieu fee to the County to purchase land for public recreational purposes at a ratio of not less than 3:1 prior to issuance of a Coastal Development Permit (13CDH-00000-00042).

Table 3.9-1. Summary of Recreation Impacts

Recreation Impacts	Mitigation Measure	Residual Significance
1982 Final EIR		
Impact 1982-REC-1. Intrusion of a non-open space use (i.e., 3 drilling/production island) into an area that is recognized for its scenic, ecological, and recreational values.	MM REC-1	Significant and Unavoidable (Class I) in the 1982 Final EIR and Less than Significant after Mitigation (Class II) based on existing baseline conditions
Proposed Project		
Impact REC-1. Impacts to existing neighborhood or regional parks that would require expansion of or result in a substantial physical deterioration of the facilities from implementation of the Proposed Project.	MM REC-1	Less than Significant after Mitigation (Class II)
Impact REC-2. Impacts that would terminate or interfere with the established recreational uses from implementation of the Proposed Project.	MM REC-1	Less than Significant after Mitigation (Class II)
No Project Alternative		
Impact ALT1-REC-1. Impacts to existing neighborhood or regional parks that would require expansion of or result in a substantial physical deterioration of the facilities from implementation of the No Project Alternative.	No Mitigation Required	Less than Significant (Class III)
Impact ALT1-REC-2. Impacts that would terminate or interfere with the established recreational uses from implementation of the No Project Alternative.	No Mitigation Required	Less than Significant (Class III)
Partial Gravel Removal Alternative		
Impact ALT2-REC-1. Impacts to existing neighborhood or regional parks that would require expansion of or result in a substantial physical deterioration of the facilities from implementation of the Partial Gravel Removal Alternative.	No Mitigation Required	Less than Significant (Class III)
Impact ALT2-REC-2. Impacts that would terminate or interfere with the established recreational uses from implementation of the Partial Gravel Removal Alternative.	No Mitigation Required	Less than Significant (Class III)

