

## 4.8 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

The Transportation and Traffic section includes a description of the local transportation network and how it may be affected by the proposed project. The project would not result in a permanent increase in local traffic, but would contribute short-term construction traffic to the local and regional transportation network. This section also discusses the project relationship to potential Halcyon Road/Highway 1 intersection improvements. Much of the traffic data detailed below was obtained from the Halcyon Road Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR) (Morro Group 2007) and associated technical documents.

### 4.8.1 Existing Conditions

Within the project area, Halcyon Road and Highway 1 are the two most travelled roads. They provide local circulation for various communities located along the central coast including Nipomo, Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, Pismo Beach, Shell Beach, Avila Beach, and San Luis Obispo. Highway 1 is a major two-lane north-south coastal highway serving California, which extends from Orange County to the south and Mendocino County to the north. In the federal route classification system, SR-1 is considered a principal arterial and is included in the National Highway System (NHS). In the project area, between Nipomo Street and Valley Road, Highway 1 is also referred to as Cienega Street. In this EIR it will only be referred to as Highway 1.

Halcyon Road is a two-lane north-south County roadway that connects Zenon Way to the south and El Camino Real to the north. Highway 1 intersects with Halcyon Road at two locations. The northerly intersections of Halcyon Road at Highway 1 consist of two offset all-way-stop-controlled T-intersections, east and west of the Arroyo Grande Creek channel. A current proposal would use two roundabouts to replace the two three-way stops that currently exist. The western roundabout would be centered approximately 200 feet west of the current western Halcyon Road and Highway 1 intersection. The center of the eastern roundabout would be located in approximately the same location as the existing eastern intersection. These improvements are intended to improve traffic flow at this location. Construction schedules for the improvements are not known at this time but would most likely not be completed prior to the other project components, with the exception of Alternative 3c and the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) bridge raise.

North of the intersection, Halcyon Road is on relatively level terrain. South of the intersection Halcyon Road is on relatively level terrain until it climbs the face of Nipomo Mesa on a 15 percent grade, gaining about 135 feet of elevation. This section of Halcyon Road has non-standard shoulder widths ranging from approximately zero to four feet in width and is signed to prohibit use by all trucks over seven tons.

Other roads in the project area that may be used to access either the Arroyo Grande Creek or Los Berros Creek channels, include 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, Los Berros Road, Valley Road, River Road, and Century Lane.

#### 4.8.1.1 Halcyon Road/Highway 1 Traffic Volumes and Function

##### Traffic Volumes

Preparation of the Halcyon Road Master EIR included substantial use of the *South County Traffic Model Update* (Omni-Means 2006). That study included detailed traffic counts in the

project area, specifically for the sections of Halcyon Road and Highway 1 adjacent to the Arroyo Grande Creek channel. Roadway operations were quantified utilizing the roadway Average Daily Traffic (ADT) and base level of service (LOS) thresholds. LOS A through F are used to rate roadway and intersection operations. LOS A is described generally as “Free flow, with unlimited freedom to maneuver and select desired speed” and LOS F as “Forced flow, stoppages for long periods. Driver frustration is high at peak traffic periods” (County of San Luis Obispo Resource Management Services 2008). The results are summarized in Table 4.8-1.

According to the *South Traffic Model Update* Highway 1 carries approximately 11,544 ADT west of Halcyon Road (and Arroyo Grande Creek) and 5,186 ADT east of Halcyon Road. According to the *2004 Annual Average Daily Truck Traffic on the California State Highway System* (published on Caltrans website), trucks comprise approximately 11 percent of the average daily traffic through the Highway 1 study segment, which would be approximately 1,200 trucks per day west of Halcyon Road, and 600 trucks per day between Halcyon Road and Valley Road.

Halcyon Road carries an ADT of approximately 8,576 vehicles north of and 10,074 vehicles south of Highway 1.

**Table 4.8-1. Roadway Level of Service (2006)**

Roadway Segment	Configuration	ADT	LOS
<b><i>Halcyon Road Segments</i></b>			
North of Highway 1	Two-Lane Collector	8,576	C
South of Highway 1	Two-Lane Collector	10,074	D
<b><i>Highway 1 Segments</i></b>			
West of Halcyon Road	Two-Lane Arterial	11,544	C
East of Halcyon Road to Valley Road	Two-Lane Arterial	5,186	A

Source: Halcyon Road MEIR (Morro Group 2007)

### Intersection Operations

Intersection operations at Halcyon Road and Highway 1 were also assessed in the Transportation and Traffic section of the Halcyon Road Master EIR. Table 4.8-2 presents intersection traffic operations at that location under 2005 traffic volumes.

**Table 4.8-2. Intersection Level of Service (2005)**

Intersection	Control	Delay (Sec/Veh)	LOS	Delay (Sec/Veh)	LOS
Highway 1/Halcyon Road (west)	3-way stop	39.5	E	104.9	F
Highway 1/Halcyon Road (east)	3-way stop	90.4	F	256.3	F

Source: Halcyon Road EIR (Morro Group 2007)

## 4.8.2 Regulatory Setting

Traffic is regulated at the federal, state, and local levels through regulations, policies, and/or local ordinances. Local policies are commonly adaptations of federal and state guidelines, based on prevailing local conditions or special requirements. Generally traffic regulations are associated with long-term operations and standards such as speed limits and volumes, and road design. Therefore the traffic related regulatory setting for this project is limited.

### 4.8.2.1 State Policies and Regulations

Caltrans began requiring Transportation Management Plans (TMP) in 2000 for all planned activities on the state highway system. A TMP is a program of activities for alleviating or minimizing work-related traffic delays through use of public awareness campaigns, motorist information, demand management, incident management, system management, construction methods and staging, and alternate route planning. The proposed project would not include work on Highway 1, although construction traffic, including haul trucks would access the highway.

### 4.8.2.2 San Luis Obispo County Policies and Regulations

There are no specific construction-traffic policies in the County Code. In cases where large significant construction traffic will result, the County Public Works Department, Development Services Division does require Construction Activities Management Plans. These plans include a maximum number of daily trips allowed, designated contractor parking areas, identification of haul routes, hours of operation, etc.

## 4.8.3 Thresholds of Significance

The determinations of significance of project impacts are based on applicable policies, regulations, goals, and guidelines defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and the County of San Luis Obispo.

### **4.8.3.1 CEQA Guidelines**

The significance of potential transportation and circulation (traffic) impacts are based on thresholds identified within Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*. According to the *Guidelines*, transportation impacts would be considered significant if the proposed project would:

1. Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections);
2. Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways;
3. Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment);
4. Result in inadequate emergency access;
5. Result in inadequate parking capacity; or,
6. Conflict with adopted polities, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts or bicycle racks).

### **4.8.4 Impact Assessment and Methodology**

The proposed project involves various construction and maintenance activities. It would not result in the addition of any permanent new traffic to the circulation system. Therefore, the impact assessment focuses on the number of construction-related daily truck trips that could result from the proposed project. The number of truck trips which could be necessary is based on the volumes of material that may need to be imported to or exported from the project site and are consistent with those used in the air quality analysis.

### **4.8.5 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

This section includes a discussion of potential truck trips generated by each component of the project and determines whether or not they would contribute to short-term impacts to the local circulation system. Truck trip generation is summarized in Table 4.8-3. Trips shown in the table are one way trips. Specific haul routes have not been identified at this time, but the analysis assumes that the vast majority of trips would occur on Halcyon Road, between Highway 1 and Highway 101. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street would most likely provide access to the UPRR bridge raising component of the project and potentially portions of the sediment removal and levee raise components as well. Access to Highway 101 would be from Grand Avenue or the Brisco Road interchanges.

#### **4.8.5.1 Short-term Construction Traffic Impacts**

##### Vegetation and Sediment Management

Vegetation management activities would be most significant during the first year as the majority of the vegetation outside of the riparian buffer area would be removed. Vegetation removal is a relatively slow process and therefore significant truck traffic wouldn't occur on a daily basis during the removal. Subsequent annual maintenance would require less removal. Greenwaste

would be transported to a commercial greenwaste facility, most likely Cold Canyon Landfill. This component of the project would not result in a significant short or long-term truck traffic. Trucks would be required to leave the levee system and access local roads at various locations, including potentially in places where there are not designated ingress or egress points.

Sediment management would include two distinct activities, the initial removal, and subsequent annual maintenance. The initial action would result in the removal of approximately 21,000 cubic yards. The activity would occur in approximately 30 working days. This component of the project may result in an additional 140 truck trips per day on Highway 1 and Halcyon Road. The volume of sediment to be removed during annual maintenance would be considerably less than the initial sediment removal, vary from year to year, and in some years may not be required at all. It is estimated to be less than 2,000 yards annually.

### Alternative 3a and 3c Levee Raise

Both of the levee raise components would involve substantial earthwork and therefore result in additional truck trips. Total fill required to implement this component is approximately 14,350 cubic yards. The biological mitigation required will be intensive and therefore earthwork may progress relatively slowly (compared to mass grading for a subdivision, for example). This component would occur over an approximately 25 day work schedule. This component of the project may result in an additional 115 truck trips per day on Highway 1 and Halcyon Road.

Alternative 3c would require up to 67,000 cubic yards of fill and occur over an approximately 100 day work schedule. This component of the project may result in an additional 134 truck trips per day on Highway 1 and Halcyon Road.

### Secondary Components

The following construction activities would be required if Alternative 3c is implemented.

#### *Union Pacific Railroad Bridge Replacement*

The bridge replacement would require extensive earthwork. Approximately 135,000 cubic yards of cut and fill (total) would be required. It is assumed that earthwork would occur over a 60 day work schedule. This component of the project may result in an additional 225 truck trips per day on Highway 1, Halcyon Road and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street.

#### *Structure Encroachment*

This component would not result in significant truck traffic.

#### *22<sup>nd</sup> Street Bridge Modification*

This activity would require modifications to the bridge structure, but significant earthwork and truck trips would not result.

**Table 4.8-3. Potential One Way Truck Trips  
(by component)**

<b>Project Component</b>	<b>Duration (days)</b>	<b>Earthwork (yds.<sup>3</sup>)</b>	<b>Truck Capacity (yds<sup>3</sup>)</b>	<b>Daily Truck Trips</b>
Sediment Removal	30	21,000	10	140
Alternative 3a	25	14,350	10	115
Alternative 3c	100	67,000	10	134
UPRR Bridge Raise	60	135,000	20	225

**TR Impact 1**      **Construction of the proposed project components would result in short-term increased truck traffic on Halcyon Road and Highway 1, contributing to existing congestion.**

Mitigation Measures

*TR/mm-1*      *Prior to initiation of construction activities, the District shall prepare a Construction Traffic Management Plan. The plan shall identify haul routes, the ingress and egress points from the Arroyo Grande Creek and Los Berros Creek channels, the maximum number of daily trips allowed, and the hours of operation, at minimum. It shall also include a description of safety measures (cones, signage, flagmen, etc.) to be put in place during construction activities.*

Residual Impact

With implementation of these measures, the impact would be *less than significant*. No additional mitigation is required.

**TR Impact 2**      **Construction of the proposed project components would result in short-term increased truck traffic, potentially creating unsafe driving conditions on due to the slower truck speeds and the need to access public roads from undesignated locations.**

Mitigation Measures

*Implement TR/mm-1.*

Residual Impact

With implementation of these measures, the impact would be *less than significant*. No additional mitigation is required.

#### **4.8.6 Cumulative Impacts**

Potential construction-related traffic impacts are location-specific and may temporarily result in impacts on the localized circulation network, but they are not “cumulative” in the sense normally applied in CEQA documents. Therefore, the cumulative impacts related to the construction traffic on Highway 1 and Halcyon Road and mitigation measures that have been previously identified in this section would apply cumulatively as well. The proposed projects contribution to cumulative impacts would be *less than significant*. No additional mitigation measures are required.

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