Moulton Niguel Water
Leading the Way in Service

ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT
27500 La Paz Road, Laguna Niguel
August 17, 2015
8:30 AM
Approximate Meeting Time: 3 Hours

THIS BOARD MEETING WILL INCLUDE TELECONFERENCING AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATION:
12025 CEDAR SHORE ROAD, ELLISON BAY, WISCONSIN

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 13, 2015 ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS
Persons wishing to address the Board of Directors on matters not listed on the Agenda may do so at this time. "Request To Be Heard" forms are available at the entrance to the Board Room. Comments are limited to five minutes unless further time is granted by the Presiding Officer. Submit form to the Recording Secretary prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Those wishing to address the Board of Directors on any item listed on the Agenda should submit a "Request To Be Heard" form to the Recording Secretary before the Presiding Officer announces that agenda item. Your name will be called to speak at that time.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Wireless Network Implementation Project Initial Study

5. Recycled Water Master Plan Agreement Award

6. SWRCB Water Recycling Facilities Planning Grant

7. Mathis Recycled Water Reservoir Re-Coating Contract Award

8. Inspection Services for Mathis Recycled Water Reservoir

9. FY 2014-15 Valve Replacement Construction Contingency Adjustment

INFORMATION ITEMS

10. Water Usage Update

11. Quarterly Capital Improvement Program Report

12. Joint Powers Authority Quarterly Update

13. Future Agenda Items (Any items added under this section are for discussion at future meetings only)

14. Late Items (Appropriate Findings to be Made)

    a. Need to take immediate action; and

    b. Need for action came to District's attention after Agenda Posting. [Requires 2/3 vote (5 members) or unanimous vote if less than 2/3 are present]

ADJOURNMENT

The Board of Directors' Meeting Room is wheelchair accessible. If you require any special disability related accommodations (i.e., access to an amplified sound system, etc.), please contact the Moulton Niguel Water District Secretary's office at (949) 831-2500 at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the scheduled meeting. This agenda can be obtained in alternate format upon written request to the Moulton Niguel Water District Secretary at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

Agenda exhibits and other writings that are disclosable public records distributed to all, or a majority of, the members of the Moulton Niguel Water District Board of Directors in connection with a matter subject to discussion or consideration at an open meeting of the Board of Directors are available for public inspection at the District Office, 27500 La Paz Road, Laguna Niguel, CA ("District Office"). If such writings are distributed to members of the Board less than seventy-two (72) hours prior to the meeting, they will be available in the reception area of the District Office at the same time as they are distributed except that, if such writings are distributed immediately prior to, or during the meeting, they will be available in the Board meeting room and on the District website at www.mnwd.com.

DRAFT
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT

July 13, 2015

A Regular Meeting of the Engineering & Operations Board of Directors of the Moulton Niguel Water District was held at the District offices, 27500 La Paz Road, Laguna Niguel, California, at 8:30 AM on July 13, 2015. There were present and participating:

DIRECTORS

Duane Cave	Director
Scott Colton	Vice President/Chair
Richard Fiore	Director
Donald Froelich	President
Gary Kurtz	Director
Larry Lizotte	Director
Brian Probolsky	Vice President (arrived 8:44 a.m.)

Also present and participating were:

STAFF MEMBERS, LEGAL COUNSEL, AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Joone Lopez	General Manager
Matt Collings	Assistant General Manager
Marc Serna	Director of Engineering & Operations
Gina Hillary	Director of Human Resources
Eva Plajzer	Assistant Director of Engineering
Todd Novacek	Assistant Director of Operations
Pat Giannone	Bowie, Arneson, Wiles & Giannone
Paige Gulck	Board Secretary
Drew Atwater	MNWD
Tim Bonita	MNWD
John Cruz	MNWD
Todd Dmytryshyn	MNWD
Megan Geer	MNWD
Ray McDowell	MNWD
Megan Schneider	MNWD
Rod Woods	MNWD
Ruth Zintzun	MNWD

Doug Zytkewicz MNWD

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Scott Colton at 8:30 a.m.

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 15, 2015 ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

MOTION DULY MADE BY DUANE CAVE AND SECONDED BY DONALD FROELICH, MINUTES OF THE JUNE 15, 2015 ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING WERE APPROVED AS PRESENTED. THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS WITH DIRECTORS DUANE CAVE, SCOTT COLTON, RICHARD FIORE, DONALD FROELICH, GARY KURTZ, AND LARRY LIZOTTE ALL VOTING 'AYE'. BRIAN PROBOLSKY WAS ABSENT.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Condition Assessment of Central Intertie Pipeline

Eva Plajzer provided a background on the condition assessment of the Central Intertie Pipeline. Staff recommends that the Board of Directors approve the Professional Consulting Services Agreement with Pure Technologies U.S. Inc. in the amount of $998,563; and authorize the General Manager to execute the agreement. Major topics discussed were selection of vendor, scope and cost of project.

5. Flores Avenue Water Main Construction Contract Award

Eva Plajzer presented the Flores Avenue Water Main Construction Contract. Staff recommends that the Board of Directors award the construction services contract for the Flores Avenue 8" Water Main Installation Project No. 2014.018 to Ferreira Construction Co., Inc. in the amount of $154,042; authorize the General Manager to execute the contract; and authorize the General Manager or designee to approve change orders up to 10% of the contract value. Discussion ensued regarding the scope of work.

Brian Probolsky arrived at 8:44 a.m.

6. Utility Main Breaker Replacements Construction Contract Award

Eva Plajzer provided details on the Utility Main Breaker Replacements Construction Contract Award. Staff recommends that the Board of Directors award the construction services contract for the Utility Main Breaker Replacements Project No. 2014.005 to

Southern Contracting Company in the amount of $127,000; authorize the General Manager to execute the contract; and authorize the General Manager or designee to approve change orders up to 10% of the contract value.

7. Fiscal Year 2015-16 Meter Maintenance and Replacement Program

Marc Serna presented the Fiscal Year 2015-16 Meter Maintenance and Replacement Program. Doug Zytkewitz displayed the new Aqua Metric meter. Staff recommends the Board of Directors authorize meter and meter related purchases for an amount not-to-exceed $859,000 for FY 2015-16. Discussion ensued regarding technology updates available for water meters.

8. Pump Refurbishment Service Agreements for Fiscal Year 2015-16 and 2016-17

Marc Serna provided details on the Pump Refurbishment Services Agreements for Fiscal Years 2015-16 and 2016-17. Staff recommends the Board of Directors approve the following:

1)Pump Refurbishment Services Agreement with Evans Hydro, Inc. for a not-to-exceed amount of $70,000 for FY 2015-16 and a not-to-exceed amount of $90,000 for FY 2016-17 for a total two-year agreement amount of $160,000.

2)Pump Refurbishment Services Agreement with Weber Water Resources for a not-to-exceed amount of $30,000 for FY 2015-16 and a not-to-exceed amount of $45,000 for FY 2016-17 for a total two-year agreement amount of $75,000.

3)Pump Refurbishment Services Agreement with Pacific Coast Pump and Equipment for a not-to-exceed amount of $30,000 for FY 2015-16 and a not-to-exceed amount of $45,000 for FY 2016-17 for a total two-year agreement amount of $75,000.

Questions regarding the vendors were answered by staff.

9. Spoils Removal Service Agreement for Fiscal Year 2015-16 and 2016-17

Marc Serna provided background on the Spoils Removal Service Agreement for Fiscal Year 2015-16 and 2016-17. Staff recommends that the Board of Directors authorize the General Manager to execute a two year Spoils Removal Service Agreement with KB Miramontes, Inc., in the amount of $95,000 per year, with a total not-to-exceed agreement amount of $190,000. Discussion ensued regarding the spoils removal process.

10. Dump Truck Purchase for Fiscal Year 2015-16

Todd Novacek provided details on the Dump Truck Purchase for Fiscal Year 2015-16. Staff recommends that the Board of Directors approve the purchase of a 2016 Peterbilt Model 365 Dump Truck from Rush Truck Center for the amount of $153,460. This item has been budgeted and discussed with the Board during the budget workshop.

11. Backhoe Purchase for Fiscal Year 2015-16

Todd Novacek provided background on the Backhoe Purchase for Fiscal Year 2015-16. Staff recommends that the Board of Directors approve the purchase of a 2014 Caterpillar 420F2 Backhoe Loader from Quinn Company in the amount of $125,118.43. This item has been budgeted and discussed with the Board during the budget workshop.

12. Cross Connection Inspection Services Agreement for Project Partners, Inc.

Eva Plajzer provided details regarding the Cross-Connection Inspection Services Agreement for Project Partners, Inc. Staff recommends that the Board of Directors award the inspection services agreement to Project Partners, Inc. and authorize the General Manager to execute the agreement for a not-to-exceed fee of $134,000 for Fiscal Year 2015-16.

INFORMATION ITEMS

13. Water Usage Update

Drew Atwater presented the water usage update for the month. The District's usage came in at 22%, exceeding the Governor's 20% target.

14. Quarterly Construction Progress Report

Eva Plajzer presented the Quarterly Construction Progress Report.

15. Quarterly Communications License Program Report

Eva Plajzer presented the Quarterly Communications License Program Report.

Brian Probolsky left at 9:59 a.m.

16. Future Agenda Items (Any items added under this section are for discussion at future meetings only)

None.

17. Late Items (Appropriate Findings to be Made)

Staff has none.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paige Gulck
Board Secretary

Moulton Niguel Water District

STAFF REPORT

TO: **Board of Directors** **MEETING DATE: August 17, 2015**

FROM: **Marc Serna, Director of Engineering and Operations**
Rod Woods, Principal Engineer

SUBJECT: **Wireless Network Implementation Project Initial Study**

DIVISION: **District-wide**

SUMMARY:

Issue: Staff has finalized the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Wireless Network Implementation Project 2006.038.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board of Directors approve the resolution entitled, "Approving the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program for the Wireless Network Implementation Project 2006.038."

Fiscal Impact: Project 2006.038 is currently budgeted in Fund 7, Replacement and Refurbishment with a current project budget of $2,100,000. Costs expended to date for the project are $1,538,454.

BACKGROUND:

In 2006, the Moulton Niguel Water District (District) initiated the wireless network project to convert from digital lines. When completed, this project will give the District increased communication speed, capacity and provide a reliable and independent communication channel between the various District facilities via the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system. This system will also allow for future video surveillance at remote sites, provide wireless hot spots at District facilities, and mobile communication to facilities, as required by the District.

Two previous phases of the projects completed a significant portion of the network. Communication equipment has been installed at 56 sites to date. The installation of poles and equipment at the final 10 sites will complete the implementation of the overall project.

Staff retained Arcon Structural Engineers, Inc. to prepare the design for the poles and Sophia Mitchell and Associates to prepare the mitigated negative declaration in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The initial scope of the final phase of the project included 17 poles at various locations and in February 2012, a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the 17 poles was circulated. Staff received comment letters from the Office of Planning and Research/State Clearinghouse, Caltrans, as well as the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo. Comments mainly focused on pole height and visibility. Staff began to re-evaluate each site to determine if alternatives could be identified to mitigate the concerns received. Staff was able to implement alternate technology solutions at seven sites and remove the need for poles. However, the remaining 10 sites will require poles.

Because of significant changes to the project description and the passage of time since circulating the 2012 NOI, staff updated the environmental documents and recirculated for public review. The updated environmental documents addressed the revised project and also incorporated comments received from local jurisdictions during the 2012 public review period.

DISCUSSION:

In accordance with CEQA guidelines, the NOI to adopt the MND for the Wireless Network Implementation Project 2006.038 was published in the Orange County Register on January 22, 2015, for a thirty (30) day public review period. The MND was also sent to the State Clearinghouse on January 23, 2015, for processing.

The public review period ended February 23, 2015, and comments were received from:

- The State Clearinghouse
- The California Department of Transportation District 12
- The City of Aliso Viejo
- The City of Mission Viejo
- Stephanie Cox, Aliso Viejo Resident
- Hoss Tabrizi, Aliso Viejo Resident
- Katherine Veloz, Aliso Viejo Resident
- Gail Haglund, Aliso Viejo Resident
- Diane Kent, Aliso Viejo Resident

The comments from these entities and response are included in the Final MND provided as an attachment to this staff report. In addition, staff placed calls to all residents to discuss their comments. Only one resident, Ms. Kent, requested additional information, and staff met with Ms. Kent.

The key findings from the MND include:

- No findings of potential significance were found as a result of the proposed project.
- The proposed project would have less than significant impacts or no impacts on the following areas: aesthetics, agriculture resources, air quality, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems.
- Biological resources will have less than significant impacts with these mitigation measures in place:
    - MM-BIO-1 (California Coastal Gnatcatcher) - noise monitoring, possible survey, and possible noise attenuation pending timing of construction
    - MM-BIO-2 (Least Bell's Vireo) - noise monitoring, possible survey, and possible noise attenuation pending timing of construction
    - MM-BIO-3 (Migratory Bird Treaty Act) - nesting bird survey pending timing of construction; possible buffer required.

By adopting the Resolution, the Boardfinds that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment and that the negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration reflects the District's independent judgment and analysis.

Attachments:

1. Resolution approving the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program for the Wireless Network Implementation Project 2006.038.
2. Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Wireless Network Implementation Project

RESOLUTION NO. 15-____

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT APPROVING A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND THE MITIGATION, MONITORING, AND REPORTING PROGRAM AND PROJECT FOR THE WIRELESS NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION (MNWD PROJECT 2006.038)

WHEREAS, in 2012, the Moulton Niguel Water District ("District"), acting as a lead agency pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21067, prepared and circulated a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration ("2012 MND") for the Wireless Network Implementation Project ("Project"), and made the 2012 MND available for public review;

WHEREAS, the Project, as contemplated in 2012, included 17 wireless towers to be placed within the District's service area to provide wireless communication between various District facilities;

WHEREAS, comment letters were received relative to the proposed Project from the State Clearinghouse and Caltrans, as well as the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo;

WHEREAS, the 2012 MND was never adopted by the District's Board of Directors;

WHEREAS, District has since re-evaluated its communication needs, along with new technology, and determined that the number of towers necessary to implement the Project can be reduced to 10 to maintain a similar level of service;

WHEREAS, because of the significant changes to the Project and the passage of time since circulating the 2012 MND, the District revised the Initial Study ("IS") and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration ("MND") and recirculated it for public review;

WHEREAS, the revised IS and Draft MND addressed the revised Project and incorporated comments received from local jurisdictions during the 2012 public review period;

WHEREAS, the Project is more particularly described in the MND prepared for the Project, entitled "Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration Wireless Network Implementation Project" dated July 2015 ("Final MND"), which is on-file at the District's Administrative Office, located at 27500 La Paz Rd, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677, as well as the Engineering Department as specified below, and is available on request;

WHEREAS, the District circulated the draft IS/MND, by way of a Notice of Intent to Adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration ("NOI"), for an extended public review period commencing on January 24, 2015, through and including February 23, 2015, in compliance with

the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and related regulations as set forth in Section 15105 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations ("CEQA Guidelines");

WHEREAS, the draft IS/MND and NOI for the Project were circulated both to the public and affected governmental agencies for review and comment, and all comments have been received and considered;

WHEREAS, the District published the NOI in *The Orange County Register* on January 22, 2015;

WHEREAS, the Final MND is incorporated in this Resolution by this reference;

WHEREAS, the Project, as set forth and described in the Final MND, includes those "Mitigation Measures" necessary to ensure the identified potentially significant environmental effects of the Project remain at less than significant levels ("Mitigation Measures");

WHEREAS, the Final MND includes a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program ("MMRP"), which is set forth in Section 4.0 of the Final MND;

WHEREAS, the District has determined based on the IS, which is incorporated within the Final MND, that the potentially significant impacts resulting from the construction and operation of the Project will be reduced to a level below significance because of the Mitigation Measures that have been incorporated into the Project, and based thereon, the District has prepared the Final MND in accordance with the requirements of the CEQA;

WHEREAS, the District's Board of Directors ("Board") has determined that the Final MND, along with the MMRP, are adequate, complete, and have been prepared in accordance with CEQA, and reflect the District's independent judgment and analysis;

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed and considered all written and oral comments made to the District in connection with the Project and the Final MND by affected governmental agencies and other interested persons and responded, as appropriate, to comments received; and

WHEREAS, the Final MND and all supporting materials, which constitute a record of these proceedings, are kept at the District's operations offices, located at 26161 Gordon Road, Laguna Hills, California 92653, under the care and control of the Engineering Department.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Directors of the Moulton Niguel Water District does hereby **RESOLVE**, **DETERMINE** and **ORDER** as follows:

Section 1. Each of the recitals set forth above is true and correct and incorporated in this Resolution, and shall constitute, as appropriate, findings of the Board.

Section 2. The Final MND for the Project, inclusive of the MMRP contained therein, is adequate and in compliance with CEQA.

Section 3. The Final MND reflects the District's independent judgment and analysis.

Section 4. The Board has considered all comments received in regard to the Project.

Section 5. The Board hereby finds that there is no substantial evidence that the Project, with the incorporated Mitigation Measures and the MMRP, will have a significant impact on the environment, based on the whole of the record before the Board including, but not limited to, the IS/MND and comments received relative to the Project and IS/MND.

Section 6. The Board hereby approves and adopts the Final MND for the Project, inclusive of the MMRP set forth therein.

Section 7. The Board hereby approves the Project.

Section 8. The Board hereby delegates authority to the District's General Manager, or her designee, to take any action reasonably required to cause a Notice of Determination to be filed with the Orange County Clerk and, as appropriate, the State Clearinghouse including, but not limited to, the issuance of payment of those Fish and Game fees that may be required pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 711.4.

Section 9. The Final MND and all supporting materials, which constitute a record of these proceedings, will be kept at the District's operations offices, located at 26161 Gordon Road, Laguna Hills, California 92653, under the care and control of the Engineering Department.

ADOPTED, APPROVED and **SIGNED** this 20th day of August, 2015.

MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT

_____
President
MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT and of the Board of Directors thereof

_____
Secretary
MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT and of the Board of Directors thereof

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____
Legal Counsel
BOWIE, ARNESON, WILES & GIANNONE

SCH No. 2012021008

Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration Wireless Network Implementation Project

July 2015

Prepared for:

Moulton Niguel Water District
27500 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677
Contact: Rodney S. Woods, P.E.
(949) 425-3547

Prepared by:
Sophia Mitchell & Associates

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

This Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as amended (Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq*.) and the *CEQA Guidelines* (California Administrative Code Section 15000 *et seq*.).

CEQA Guidelines Section 15074(b) and (d) state:

> "(b) Prior to approving a project, the decision-making body of the lead agency shall consider the proposed negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration together with any comments received during the public review process. The decision-making body shall adopt the proposed negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration only if it finds on the basis of the whole record before it (including the initial study and any comments received), that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment and that the negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration reflects the lead agency's independent judgment and analysis."
>
> "(d) When adopting a mitigated negative declaration, the lead agency shall also adopt a program for reporting on or monitoring the changes which it has either required in the project or made a condition of approval to mitigate or avoid significant environmental effects."

In accordance with these requirements, the Wireless Network Implementation Project IS/MND is comprised of the following:

- Draft IS/MND, January 2015 (SCH No. 2012021008);
- This Final IS/MND document, May 2015, that incorporates the information required by Section 15074 (included in this document); and
- A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (included in this document).

Format of the Final IS/MND

This document is organized as follows:

Section 1.0 Introduction and Summary

This section describes CEQA requirements and content of this Final IS/MND.

Section 2.0 Corrections and Additions

This section provides a list of those revisions made to the Draft IS/MND text as a result of comments received and/or errors and omissions discovered subsequent to release of the Draft IS/MND for public review.

Section 3.0 Response to Written Comments

This section provides copies of the comment letters received on the Draft IS/MND and individual responses to written comments.

Section 4.0 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

This section provides a program of monitoring or reporting to ensure that the provisions or revisions are complied with during implementation of the project.

2.0 CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS

This section contains revisions to information included in the Draft IS/MND (January 2015) based upon additional or revised information required to prepare a response to a specific comment. Please see copies of the letters and responses in Section 3.0, Response to Written Comments, as applicable.

2.1 REVISED AND SUPPLEMENTAL TEXT

The following table summarizes the changes to the Draft IS/MND. These changes were based upon public comments on the Draft IS/MND as well as additional clean up items due to project refinements.

Pages	IS/MND Section	Summary of Change
10	II.B Project Description	Coordination with Aliso Viejo and Mission Viejo added to the design features for aesthetics. Please see Table 2 of the Final IS/MND.
26, 27, and 33	IV.I.c Aesthetics	Description of visual simulations added to aesthetics analysis.
28-32 and 34-37	IV.I.c Aesthetics	Figures 3 – 11 added, which depict a visual simulation overview map and seven visual simulations.
54	IV.VIII.c Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Summary of radio frequency compliance report added to hazards section.
	Appendices	Radio frequency report added to technical appendices. All technical appendices are included in a CD in the back of Final IS/MND.

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3.0 RESPONSE TO WRITTEN COMMENTS

Section 3.0 contains responses to all comment letters received on the January 2015 Draft IS/MND. A total of six comment letters were received during the comment period, which closed February 23, 2015 (Table 3-1). Three additional letters arrived after the comment period and are also included in this response to comments document.

MNWD met with the City of Aliso Viejo to discuss community concerns and the proposed aesthetic aspects of the project. Additionally, MNWD called all of the individuals who submitted comment letters to discuss the project, answer any questions, and extend an invitation into the District's office to learn more about the project and discuss any additional concerns they may have.

Table 3-1. Comment Letters – Wireless Network Implementation Project

Number	Letter Preparer	Date
1	Office of Planning and Research – State Clearinghouse	2/20/15
2	Caltrans	2/3/15
3	City of Aliso Viejo	2/18/15
4	City of Mission Viejo	2/10/15
5	Stephanie Cox	2/22/15
6	Katherine Veloz	2/22/15
7	Hoss Tabrizi	2/27/15
8	Gail Haglund	4/14/15
9	Diane Kent	4/16/15

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE *of* PLANNING AND RESEARCH
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE AND PLANNING UNIT

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

KEN ALEX
DIRECTOR

February 20, 2015

Rodney S. Woods
Moulton Niguel Water District
27500 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Subject: Wireless Network Implementation Project
SCH#: 2012021008

Dear Rodney S. Woods:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Mitigated Negative Declaration to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on February 19, 2015, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

1-1

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. If you have a question about the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Scott Morgan
Director, State Clearinghouse

1400 10th Street P.O. Box 3044 Sacramento, California 95812-3044
(916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base

SCH#	2012021008
Project Title	Wireless Network Implementation Project
Lead Agency	Moulton Niguel Water District
Type	MND Mitigated Negative Declaration
Description	The project is the completion of the implementation of a wireless network for MNWD's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System (SCADA) to enhance communication/system function. The project includes the construction of 17 poles/towers ranging from 10 to 60 feet within MNWD's service area. This includes two towers in Aliso Viejo, five in Laguna Hills, seven in Laguna Niguel and three in Mission Viejo. Equipment attached to the poles/towers would be a wireless device. The poles/towers and the wireless communication equipment would be painted a neutral color so as to blend with the surrounding visual environment at each pole/tower location. Project construction will occur over a three to four month period.

Lead Agency Contact

Name	Rodney S. Woods		
Agency	Moulton Niguel Water District		
Phone	949 425 3547	*Fax*	
email			
Address	27500 La Paz Road		
City	Laguna Niguel	*State* CA	*Zip* 92677

Project Location

County	Orange		
City	Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Mission Viejo		
Region			
Lat / Long			
Cross Streets	Multiple locations		
Parcel No.	Multiple		
Township	*Range*	*Section*	*Base*

Proximity to:

Highways	SR 73, 133, I-5
Airports	
Railways	SCRRA
Waterways	multiple
Schools	Yes
Land Use	There are 10 sites where poles/towers are proposed. GPD: according to the site, Community Facilities, Open Space, Estate Residential, Freeway Commercial, Public/Institutional, Neighborhood Commercial, Business Park and Park and Recreation
Project Issues	Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Biological Resources; Public Services; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Landuse; Aesthetic/Visual
Reviewing Agencies	Resources Agency; Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 5; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Water Resources; Caltrans, Division of Aeronautics; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, District 12; Air Resources Board; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 9; Native American Heritage Commission; Public Utilities Commission

Date Received 01/21/2015 *Start of Review* 01/21/2015 *End of Review* 02/19/2015

Note: Blanks in data fields result from insufficient information provided by lead agency.

Letter 1
Office of Planning and Research – State Clearinghouse

1-1 This letter from the State Clearinghouse acknowledges that the District complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents pursuant to CEQA. No state agencies submitted any comments for review. No changes to the IS/MND were made in response to this letter.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY EDMUND G. BROWN Jr., Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
District 12
3347 Michelson Drive, Suite 100
Irvine, CA 92612-8894
Tel: (949) 724-2241
Fax: (949) 724-2592

Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!

February 3, 2015

Rodney S. Woods
Moulton Niguel Water District
27500 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, California 92677

File: IGR/CEQA
SCH#: 2012021008
Log #: 2933-B
I-5, SR-73, SR-133

Dear Mr. Woods,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the **Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (NOI/MND) for the Wireless Network Implementation Project.** A previous version of the IS/MND was circulated in 2012. The proposed project has been reduced in scope and will consist of the construction of 10 wireless communication poles/towers ranging from 10 to 60 feet within the Moulton Niguel Water District (MNWD) service area. The towers will be painted a neutral color in order to blend with the surrounding environment at each of the 10 locations, which include 2 towers in Aliso Viejo, 1 in Laguna Hills, 6 in Laguna Niguel, and 1 in Mission Viejo. The nearest State routes to the project sites are I-5, SR-73 and SR-133.

2-1

The Department of Transportation (Department) is a commenting agency on this project and has no comment at this time. However, in the event of any activity in the Department's right-of-way, an encroachment permit will be required.

Please continue to keep us informed of this project and any future developments that could potentially impact State transportation facilities. If you have any questions or need to contact us, please do not hesitate to call Maryam Molavi at (949) 724-2267.

Sincerely,

MAUREEN EL HARAKE
Branch Chief, Regional-Community-Transit Planning
District-12

C: Scott Morgan, Office of Planning and Research

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

Letter 2
Caltrans

2-1 This comment letter from Caltrans provides a summary of the project and indicates that Caltrans has no comments at this time. The project does not propose any work in Caltrans' right-of way. No changes were made to the IS/MND based upon this comment letter.

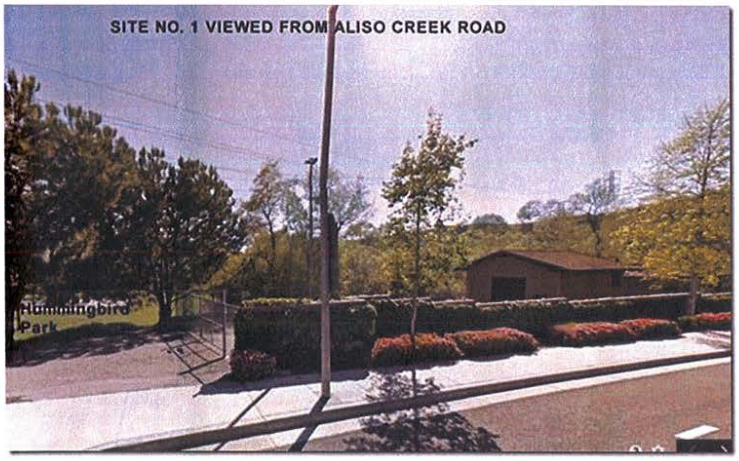
Rod Woods

From: Larry Lawrence <lx4@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2015 10:49 AM
To: Rod Woods
Cc: Albert Armijo
Subject: Proposed Moulton-Niguel WD Poles or Towers at Aliso Creek and Laguna Audobon Lift Stations
Attachments: MNWD Letter.pdf

Categories: RSW Action

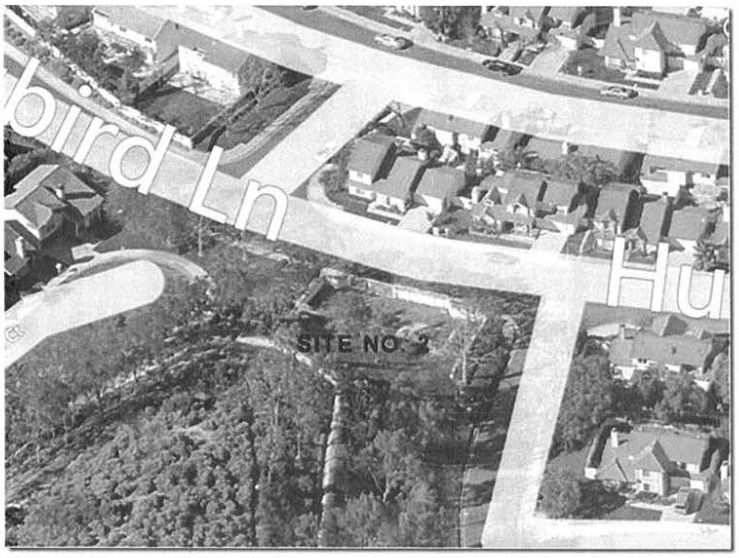
Hello Mr. Woods
:

My name is Larry Lawrence and I am a contract planner for the City of Aliso Viejo. I'm contacting you regarding the two proposed wireless poles or towers at lift stations near Laguna Audubon's single family homes proposed by MNWD described in your Initial Study/MND. The lift stations, shown in the photos below, are on Aliso Creek Road next to Hummingbird Park and on Hummingbird Lane at San Bittern.



3-1

1



The City's letter regarding the IS/MND is attached (hard copy to follow). The City is questioning the visual impacts of the proposed pole/towers. More specifically, the letter states:

3-1 Cont.

"In conclusion regarding the aesthetic impacts of pole/towers on Sites 1 and 2, the City of Aliso Viejo believes that:

- **The "Aesthetics" category should be marked either "Potentially Significant" or "Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated";**
- **View simulations should be prepared for both sites to determine visual impacts of the poles/towers; and**
- **Mitigation measures should be identified for the above two sites to camouflage and screen the new installations such as replacement of the proposed poles/towers with faux 'monotrees' or another camouflaged structure (as is done with cell phone installations) and planting of new fast-growing real trees around the faux trees."**

3-2

The City is also requesting more information on temporary construction noise impacts on nearby residents.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the letter, please contact me at the above address or at 949-661-8175.

3-3

Regards,

Larry Lawrence

2

"Experience It All"

CITY OF ALISO VIEJO

ALISO VIEJO

February 18, 2015

Rodney S. Woods
Moulton Niguel Water District
27500 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677-3489

Subject: **Notice of Intent (NOI), Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Wireless Network Implementation Project**

Dear Mr. Woods:

Thank you for sending the subject NOI and request for comments to the City of Aliso Viejo. This letter contains comments from the City of Aliso Viejo on the Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration.

The project is described in the draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) as follows:

> "The project is the completion of the implementation of a wireless network for MNWD's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System (SCADA) to enhance communication/system function, both on a daily operational basis and during an emergency situation. The project includes the construction of 10 poles/towers ranging from 10 to 60 feet within MNWD's service area. Equipment attached to the poles/towers would be a wireless device. The poles/towers could be for the exclusive use of MNWD and would not include any future cell phone installation...."

3-4

Per the MND, the two towers proposed within the City of Aliso Viejo are as follows (see map below):

Site No.	Pole/Tower Location Name	Address	Height (feet)
City of Aliso Viejo			
1	Aliso Creek Lift Station	21933 Aliso Creek Road	50
2	Audubon Lift Station	25364 Hummingbird Lane	30

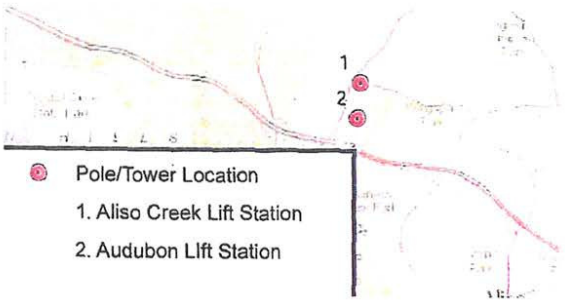
CITY OF ALISO VIEJO
INCORPORATED JULY 1, 2001

12 JOURNEY • SUITE 100
ALISO VIEJO
CALIFORNIA 92656-5335

WWW.CITYOFALISOVIEJO.COM

PHONE
949.425.2500
FAX
949.425.3899

MNWD Notice of Intent for Wireless Network Project
Page 2



3-4
Cont.

The City of Aliso Viejo (the "City") hereby submits the following comments on the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration ("MND") for the Moulton Niguel Water District ("MNWD") Wireless Network Project. The City's comments on the MND are limited to project activities that are within the City's area of expertise (i.e., impacts to resources within the City of Aliso Viejo). Furthermore, the City's comments are specific and are supported by the information provided.

3-4 Cont.

1. **AESTHETICS**

The City strongly disputes the MND's conclusion that there would be a "less-than-significant" aesthetic impact from the proposed poles on Sites 1 and 2 in Aliso Viejo (pp. 25-27). The MND does not provide adequate support for the conclusion that the 50- and 30-foot tall poles or towers would not have a significant visual impact on surrounding viewscapes. In fact, these poles/towers will substantially degrade the existing visual character and quality of the surroundings, as discussed below.

IMPACT ON SCENIC VISTAS

Statement:

"a) [Will the project] have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? Less than Significant Impact."

"The City of Aliso Viejo also identifies several landscape corridors in the Conservation and Open Space Element. Two of the corridors are Aliso Creek Road...and El Toro Road...The site is adjacent to mature vegetation, which will provide visual screening to motorists on El Toro Road. Views of the pole from Aliso Creek Road would be limited due to surrounding mature vegetation, the neutral color proposed for the pole and the setback from the sidewalk and the street (approximately 30 and 35 feet, respectively). Additionally, since this pole is near an intersection, motorists on Aliso Creek Road are likely to be more focused on the intersection and less so on the passing landscape. Therefore, impacts to landscape corridors will be less than significant." (MND p 25)

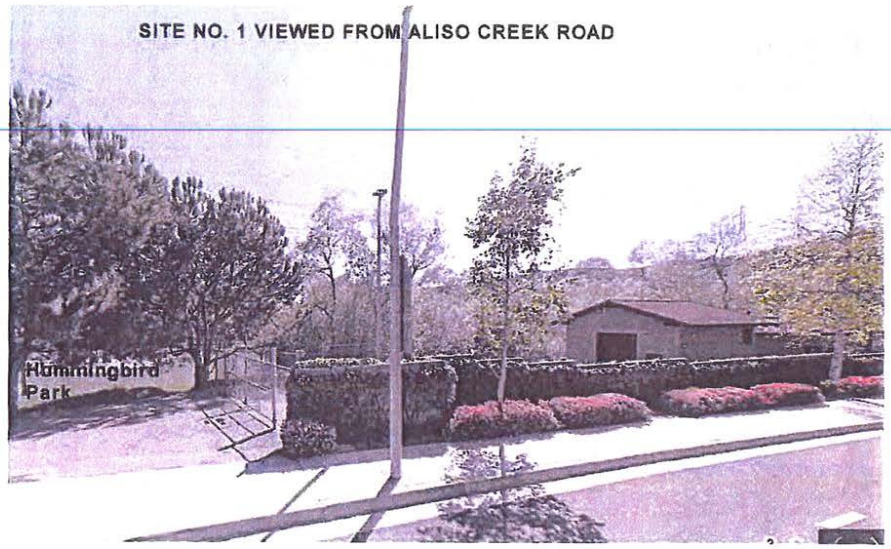
3-5

Comment:

Notwithstanding existing trees near Site No. 1, a new 50-foot tall pole/tower will be highly visible from Aliso Creek Road, Hummingbird Park and homes at the end of Songbird Lane. The nearby mature trees are considerably less than 50 feet tall (see photo) and the proposed tower will extend above them. In addition, cars must slow or stop on Aliso Creek Road near its intersection with El Toro Road. Because of this it is more likely, not less, for motorists to notice the new pole/tower.

Per the Aliso Viejo General Plan's Conservation/Open Space Element, a Landscape Corridor is "A corridor that traverses developed or developing areas and has been designated for special treatment to provide a pleasant driving environment as well as community enhancement." (p. COS-18). This designation requires special attention to visual impacts of new structures on the surrounding viewscape. In addition, existing views from the park and adjacent homes toward the site constitute a scenic vista. Because of these views and the identified sensitivity of the landscape corridor, the City of Aliso Viejo requests visual simulations be prepared showing before and after views of the proposed tower from Aliso Creek Road, Hummingbird Park and homes at the end of Songbird Lane.

#4.



3-5 Cont.

IMPACT ON VISUAL CHARACTER

Statement:

"c) [Would the proposal] substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? Less than Significant Impact.

"...As shown in Table 3 all of the proposed pole/tower sites are in urbanized settings and adjacent to multi-lane public roadways with the exception of site Nos. 2, 9, 11, and 13, which are discussed in more detail, below. For the remaining poles/towers that are proposed adjacent to multi-lane roadways in urbanized settings, the addition of a pole/tower in these locations will not result in a substantial degradation of the visual character or quality of the sites. They will blend in with existing development. (MND p 26)

3-6

Comment:

As previously noted, the proposed 50-foot tall pole/tower at Site No. 1 near Aliso Creek Road will extend substantially above existing trees. Also, aside from the small pump station enclosure, there are no other structures in the vicinity. Thus, such a pole will not blend in with existing development.

Statement:

"Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station) is in a single-family residential neighborhood, adjacent to a residential street and within an existing MNWD facility. A 30-foot pole/tower is proposed at

3-7

this location. There are two-story homes in [the] neighborhood, as well as existing street lights and mature trees. Thus, there are structures of the same height as the proposed pole/tower already in the project vicinity...It is not expected that the 30-foot pole/tower would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings at this location since it would be of a similar height as other development in the area, there is 100 to 150 feet separation to the nearest residences and it is also adjacent to mature landscaping and trees. Impacts would be less than significant."

Comment:

Site No. 2 is within a single-family residential neighborhood (see photo). There is no simulation showing the visual impacts of the proposed installation on the existing homes and residential streets, so it is difficult to determine if a 30-foot pole/tower with an antenna would blend visually with the existing neighborhood.

3-7 Cont.

In conclusion regarding the aesthetic impacts of pole/towers on Sites 1 and 2, the City of Aliso Viejo believes that:

- **The "Aesthetics" category should be marked either "Potentially Significant" or "Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated";**

3-8

- **View simulations should be prepared for both sites to determine visual impacts of the poles/towers; and**
- **Mitigation measures should be identified for the above two sites to camouflage and screen the new installations such as replacement of the proposed poles/towers with faux 'monotrees' or another camouflaged structure (as is done with cell phone installations) and planting of new fast-growing real trees around the faux trees.**

3-8 Cont.

2. **NOISE**

Statement:

"d) [Would the project result in] A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? Less Than Significant Impact.

...For those poles/towers proposed in residential areas, there may be a temporary increase in ambient noise levels. However, this increase would not be characterized as substantial as it will occur during construction timeframes that are allowed under the applicable city codes. Additionally, the distance to nearby sensitive receptors includes intervening roadways, landscaping and topography that will further attenuate noise levels. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant." (MND p 54).

3-9

Comment:

Site No. 2 is within a noise-sensitive single-family residential neighborhood with no intervening topography. Further, intervening roadways are narrow local streets and intervening landscaping would provide little or no noise attenuation. Adding construction noise of this kind could be a significant temporary impact because noise levels could exceed the City's established thresholds. The MND does not provide any evidence of current ambient noise levels at this site nor the anticipated noise levels that would result from project construction. Without the information, the public cannot effectively evaluate whether this noise impact would be significant or not. The fact that the construction period would be short is not determinative for CEQA purposes.

3. **FUTURE CELL PHONE INSTALLATIONS.**

The project is described as a wireless network for the use of MNWD. Although the MND indicates the pole/towers would not be used for cell phone antennas there is no guarantee, other than this project description, of such permanent exclusion. If this situation changes and the addition of cell-phone antennas are proposed in the future, the City's Zoning Code will require City discretionary approval of any such facilities.

3-10

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines section 15073(e), as a commenting public agency the City looks forward to receiving responses to the preceding comments and notice from MNWD of any public hearing to be held for the Wireless Network Project for which the MND was prepared.

3-11

If you have any questions on any of the above comments, please contact our consulting planner Larry Lawrence at Lx4@sbcglobal.net or 949-661-8175.

3-11 Cont.

Sincerely,

Albert Armijo
Director of Planning Services

c: City Council
City Manager
City Attorney
Public Works Director/City Engineer

Letter 3
City of Aliso Viejo

3-1 This comment provides introductory remarks to a subsequent comment letter from the City of Aliso Viejo. Responses to those comments are provided below.

3-2 This comment addresses the visual impact analysis in the Draft IS/MND. Visual impacts were determined to be less than significant. Visual simulations were prepared for the project and are included as Figures 4 through 11 in the Final IS/MND. The visual simulations reconfirm that the construction of a tower and Site Nos. 1 and 2 in the City of Aliso Viejo would not result in a significant visual impact. Additionally, a design feature has been added to the Final IS/MND stating that "The poles in Aliso Viejo shall be painted in a color that blends with the surrounding landscaping." The District will work with City staff to select a suitable color.

3-3 This comment requests additional information regarding construction noise impacts on nearby residents. Please see response to comment 3-9.

3-4 This comment provides an overview of the project and notes that there are two proposed pole/tower locations in Aliso Viejo. This comment also provides an introduction to the subsequent environmental-related comments. No changes to the IS/MND were made in response to this comment.

3-5 This comment addresses the visibility of the proposed pole/tower at Site No. 1 (Aliso Creek Lift Station). As noted in response 3-2, visual simulations were prepared for the two pole/tower locations in the City of Aliso Viejo. Specifically, views of Site No. 1 from the intersection of El Toro Road/Aliso Creek Road, Sandpiper Lane, Hummingbird Lane, and Songbird Lane/Woodswallow Lane were prepared. Please see Figures 4 through 7 of the Final IS/MND. As shown, Site No. 1 is in an urbanized setting, adjacent to multi-lane Aliso Creek Road and the existing water facility. As shown in Figures 4 and 5, the proposed tower is visible but appears to be an extension of existing surrounding power lines, light poles, and electrical antennae. Figure 6 depicts the tower from the existing park. From this view, the tower is noticeable between existing mature vegetation but it does not obstruct any views. Figure 7 depicts the tower as seen in the distance between two residences. From this vantage, the pole is partially obstructed by existing mature vegetation and appears associated with the existing power lines. The conclusions identified in the Draft IS/MND are still correct. The project will have a less than significant visual impact.

3-6 This comment addresses changes in visual character associated with Site No. 1 (Aliso Creek Lift Station). Please see response 3-5, above.

3-7 This comment addresses the visibility of the proposed pole/tower at Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station). Visual simulations were prepared for Site No. 2 and are included in the Final IS/MND as Figures 8 through 11. These views all represent different vantage points from Hummingbird Lane. Figure 8 depicts the very top of the tower at Site No. 2. The tower would be obscured behind existing mature vegetation. In Figure 9, the tower is not visible behind existing mature vegetation. In Figure 10, only the top of the tower would be visible, but it is partially obscured

by vegetation. In Figure 11, the tower would be obscured behind existing mature vegetation. The conclusions identified in the Draft IS/MND are still correct. The project will have a less than significant visual impact.

3-8 Visual simulations were prepared for the project to depict views from Site Nos. 1 and 2 in the City of Aliso Viejo. The simulations reconfirm the District's conclusions that the project will have a less than significant visual impact. As a project design feature, the District will coordinate with the City regarding paint color for the two proposed poles/towers.

3-9 This comment addresses construction noise at Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station). Ambient noise measurements were taken at this site and were included in Table 13 in the Draft IS/MND and are as follows:

Site Number	Description	Noise Levels (dBA)					
		Leq	Lmax	Lmin	L10	L50	L90
2	Audubon Lift Station	47.3	61.1	39.9	46.8	45.1	43.6

Due to the short duration of construction, the limitation on construction identified in established municipal codes and the distance to nearby sensitive receptors, the projected noise levels will comply with the applicable noise standards at all property lines. Impacts are determined to be less than significant.

3-10 The poles/towers will be for the exclusive use of MNWD Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System (SCADA) equipment. There are no plans to use the poles/towers for cell phone antennas. As noted in this comment, if cell phone antennas would be proposed at a future time on the poles/towers in Aliso Viejo, a discretionary approval from the City would be required. No changes to the IS/MND were made in response to this comment.

3-11 This comment provides closing remarks. MNWD will provide notice to the City of the upcoming public hearing for the project.

Rod Woods

From: Larry Longenecker <llongenecker@cityofmissionviejo.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2015 9:37 AM
To: Rod Woods
Subject: RE: MNWD Wireless Network Implementation Project

Categories: RSW Action

Hello Rod –

Thank you for inviting local jurisdictions to comment on the draft MND related to you Wireless Network Implementation Project. The City of Mission Viejo is concerned about the appearance of the tower proposed at the North Aliso Lift Station, being 50 feet tall and located approximately 50 feet back from the Los Alisos Blvd. right-of-way. We prefer you process a Planned Development Permit application to be considered by our Planning and Transportation Commission; however, we understand that this MNWD communication system project is exempt from local regulations through Government Code Section 53091. Therefore the City of Mission Viejo provides the following comments regarding your Wireless Network project: 4-1

1) Height. All proposed tower heights are in 10-feet increments. We ask that you limit the height of the North Aliso Lift Station tower to only what is necessary to maintain adequate communication, without rounding up to the nearest 10. As an example, perhaps a 44-foot-tall tower is adequate instead of a 50-foot-tall tower. 4-2
2) Color. The MND (Table 2) indicates the towers are to be painted a "neutral in tone to as to blend with the existing visual environment" but that "MNWD will consider color changes" if requested by the cities. When constructing the North Aliso Lift Station tower, please contact City of Mission Viejo staff (contact information below) to discuss and choose the most appropriate color. "Neutral in tone" covers several different colors, and we believe a dark green color may be most appropriate with the pole located adjacent to some mature trees. 4-3
3) Landscape. We recommend additional landscape to help screen and soften the visual impact of the tower, particularly south and west of the proposed tower location. Mission Viejo staff would be happy to work with MNWD staff regarding specific plant types and locations. We believe landscape can be added without compromising the communication effectiveness of the tower. 4-4

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on your communication project. Please contact us with any questions or comments.

Sincerely-

Larry

MISSION VIEJO

LARRY LONGENECKER, AICP
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
City of Mission Viejo | Community Development Department
200 Civic Center | Mission Viejo, CA 92691
P. 949 - 470 - 3024 | F. 949 - 951 - 6176

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Letter 4
City of Mission Viejo

4-1 This comment provides introductory remarks and notes the City's preference for the project to be processed under a Planned Development Permit. However, as noted in this letter, the project is exempt from local regulations through Government Code Section 53091.

4-2 This comment addresses the proposed height of the towers. MNWD has considered the heights of all the towers, and proposed heights are what is needed for the for the SCADA system to work effectively.

4-3 This comment addresses the proposed colors for the towers. Per this comment, MNWD staff will coordinate with City staff regarding the color for Site No. 10 (North Aliso Lift Station). This requirement is included in the project design feature table (Table 1) of the IS/MND.

4-4 This comment requests enhanced landscaping at Site No. 10 (North Aliso Lift Station). There is insufficient room within the property boundary to accommodate additional landscaping at this site.

Rod Woods

From: Stephanie Cox <coxcontractserv@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2015 4:36 PM
To: Rod Woods; wphillips@cityofalisoviejo.com
Subject: Re: Moulton Niguel tower site 1-2

Categories: RSW Action

To whom it may concern -- I'm the AVCA delegate for Laguna Audubon 1, and live directly behind the sub station for the proposed tower at little Hummingbird Park. To say myself and my neighbors are deeply concerned about having these towers in our neighborhood is an understatement. Not just for aesthetics, but for the concern about the RF these towers will be giving off. There is NO conclusive evidence about the health risks of RF. That said, is it really wise to put one of these towers at a children's park, and another in the center of our neighborhood at the bus stop? 5-1 5-2

We feel there's plenty of other areas in Aliso Viejo where these towers can be hidden from view and neighboring homes. 5-3

Stephanie Cox
7 Trumpeter Lane, AV
949 355 4499

Cox Contracting Service, Inc
General Contracting / Engineering
office: 949 595 0410 / fax: 949 595 0959
lic: 838087

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Letter 5
Stephanie Cox

5-1 This comment provides introductory remarks and notes the commenter's concern regarding the proposed towers in the Audubon community.

5-2 This comment raises concerns regarding aesthetics and radio frequency. With regard to aesthetics, visual simulations were prepared for the two locations proposed within the City of Aliso Viejo. Please see the revised discussion of aesthetic impacts in the IS/MND (Section I.c). Visual impacts were determined to be less than significant.

Additionally, a radio frequency compliance report was prepared for Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station). Please see the revised discussion of impacts resulting from hazards and hazardous materials in the IS/MND (Section VIII.c). The complete radio frequency report is included as Appendix F of the Final IS/MND. Hazards impacts were determined to be less than significant.

5-3 This comment suggests finding another location for the proposed towers. MNWD has explored a variety of locations for the proposed towers; however, the individual towers must be located at the identified locations in order to connect into the necessary components of MNWD's water and wastewater systems to provide the communication backbone to MNWD's service network.

Rod Woods

From: Katherine <kathyveloz@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2015 1:01 PM
To: Rod Woods; lx4@sbcglobal.net; wphillips@cityofalisoviejo.com
Subject: Moulton Niguel tower site 1-2

Categories: RSW Action

I am a resident in Laguna Audubon I and deeply concerned and very upset there would be any consideration of constructing a 30 foot wireless tower in a residential neighborhood and feet away from a children's School bus stop. You say it will not degrade visual character for residents, did you take into consideration the homes that will be facing tower 2 with no vegetation namely 41-35 Hummingbird lane and Phoebe Ct. not to mention the Monument and bench at this location. Tower 2 will be very visible at the bench and is it realistically 150 feet away from an area to relax and enjoy the scenery. The mere fact the City of Aliso Viejo would allow a 50 foot wireless tower at the entrance to the City and in front of a children's playground, and next to a School bus stop is absolutely disgraceful. 6-1

Katherine Veloz
5 Willet Lane
Aliso Viejo

Sent from my iPad

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Letter 6
Katherine Veloz

6-1 This comment letter expresses concern about the visual impacts of the towers and their placement proximate to a park and bus stop. Visual simulations were prepared for the two locations proposed within the City of Aliso Viejo. Please see the revised discussion of aesthetic impacts in the IS/MND (Section I.c). Visual impacts were determined to be less than significant.

A radio frequency compliance report was prepared for Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station). Please see the revised discussion of impacts resulting from hazards and hazardous materials in the IS/MND (Section VIII.c). Hazards impacts were determined to be less than significant.

Rod Woods

From: hoss tabrizi <hoss.tabrizi@smsciences.com>
Sent: Friday, February 27, 2015 7:54 AM
To: Rod Woods; 1x4@sbcglobal.net
Subject: Concern

Mr. Woods, Mr. Laurence:

As a 23-year resident on Hummingbird Lane, I am deeply concerned with the proposed effort to install "wireless towers or poles" at two of our parks in a very small neighborhood. Could you please provide me with the following information:

1. Exactly where will the poles be installed (precise location to within 5') 7-1
2. Dimension of poles 7-2
3. Application / use for the poles (short and long-term) 7-3
4. Noise impact of the poles 7-4
5. Magnetic field impact of the poles 7-5
6. Other known or potential risks associated with the poles 7-6
7. Known or potential impact of the poles on home valuation 7-7

Regards,

Hoss Tabrizi
Managing Director
Strategic Marketing Sciences
Direct: 949.230.6533
Fax: 949.271.5018

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Letter 7
Hoss Tabrizi

7-1 Appendix A includes the project plans which provide specific information on each of the proposed pole locations. The individual towers must be located at the identified locations in order to connect into the necessary components of MNWD's water and wastewater systems to provide the communication backbone to MNWD's service network.

7-2 The project includes the construction of ten poles/towers within MNWD's service area ranging from 10 to 60 feet in height. Detailed information on each pole height is provided below:

Site No.	Pole/Tower Location Name	Height (feet)
City of Aliso Viejo		
1	Aliso Creek Lift Station	50
2	Audubon Lift Station	30
City of Laguna Hills		
3	La Paz Underground	40
City of Laguna Niguel		
4	Crown Point Pump Station	40
5	AWMA2	50
6	Golden Lantern Reservoir	10
7	Little Niguel Pump Station	40
8	Rancho Reservoir	60
9	Upper Salada Lift Station	40
City of Mission Viejo		
10	North Aliso Lift Station	50

Pole/tower diameters would range from approximately 6 to 12 inches and poles/towers would be secured in a three-foot diameter cement footing (except for the Golden Lantern Reservoir site (Site No. 6), which would be a traditional four foot squared by 12 inches deep spread footing). Poles would be used exclusively for MNWD's SCADA system and equipment and would not be used for cell phone antennas.

7-3 The poles would be for the exclusive use of MNWD's SCADA equipment and would not include any future cell phone installations.

7-4 A noise analysis was presented in the Draft IS/MND. Construction noise impacts were determined to be less than significant. Construction activities, including delivery of material and equipment, shall occur in a manner consistent with the noise ordinance for the respective City where the pole/tower construction will occur. Noise requirements for each City are as follows:

- Aliso Viejo - Construction shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday.

- Laguna Hills - Construction shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday.
- Laguna Niguel - Construction, repair or maintenance of utility facilities shall occur between 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM, Monday through Saturday.
- Mission Viejo - Construction (including delivery of materials and equipment) shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM, Monday through Saturday.

No operational noise impacts are anticipated.

7-5 A radio frequency compliance report was prepared for Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station). Please see the revised discussion of impacts resulting from hazards and hazardous materials in the IS/MND (Section VIII.c). The complete radio frequency report is included as Appendix F of the Final IS/MND. Hazards impacts were determined to be less than significant.

7-6 There are no known potential risks associated with the poles.

7-7 Home/property values are not considered an environmental topic and are not required to be addressed under CEQA.

Rod Woods

From: Gail Haglund <gailhaglund@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2015 9:32 AM
To: Rod Woods
Subject: Hummingbird Lane Tower

Good morning Rod,

I am emailing you to voice my concern about the proposed wireless towers for Hummingbird Lane, Aliso Viejo. I have lived on Hummingbird Lane for 25 years and have had to endure the comings and goings-on at both pump stations. Also, the consistent noise. 8-1

I do NOT want the MNWD to erect the 30 foot pole/tower at the Hummingbird Lane location or, the 50' pole/tower at the Hummingbird Park location. I am continously within close distance of either one and do not want the location to become even more aesthetically unpleasing then they already are. Or, produce even more noise to our pleasant environment.

I realize that you are looking into view simulations however, I know for certain that any item placed that high in this small neighborhood will NOT go unnoticed. I am extremely concerned that eventually, the towers WILL be used for cell phone coverage. 8-2

Are you aware that the main school bus stop is within 50 feet of the Hummingbird Lane pump location? All school age children between 5 and 14 and their parents, that live and play in this neighborhood, are within close range of that pump at all times of the day. If you don't know this already, our Hummingbird Lane Park is very popular with the residents not only in our neighborhood but, also in Aliso Viejo. More families that wouldbe impacted by this plan. 8-3

If you intend to place a pole/tower that could be potentially harmful in some way or another to the residents of Laguna Audubon 1, whether it be visual or otherwise, I would like you to reconsider and immediately STOP this process. Please take into account our property values. This would send them spiraling downward. 8-4

As you reconsider going forward with this plan, be honest with yourself when you answer this question, "Would you approve of this being erected in your neighborhood? " I'm sure your answer would be NO! Do not let this happen in ours. 8-5

Gail Echternach Haglund
31 Hummingbird Lane
Aliso Viejo, Ca. 92656

Happy Connecting. Sent from my Sprint Samsung Galaxy S® 5

1

Letter 8
Gail Haglund

8-1 This comment expresses concern about noise and activity at the existing pump stations. The current noise associated with the pumping stations is an existing condition.

A noise analysis was presented in the Draft IS/MND. Construction noise impacts were determined to be less than significant. Construction activities, including delivery of material and equipment, shall occur in a manner consistent with the noise ordinance for the respective City where the pole/tower construction will occur. Noise requirements for each City are as follows:

- Aliso Viejo - Construction shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday.
- Laguna Hills - Construction shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday.
- Laguna Niguel - Construction, repair or maintenance of utility facilities shall occur between 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM, Monday through Saturday.
- Mission Viejo - Construction (including delivery of materials and equipment) shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM, Monday through Saturday.

No operational noise impacts are anticipated.

8-2 This comment states the commenter's opposition to the proposed pole at Hummingbird Lane and expresses concerns regarding noise and visual impacts. As noted in response 8-1 noise impacts were determined to be less than significant.

Visual simulations were prepared for the two locations proposed within the City of Aliso Viejo, including the site at Hummingbird Lane. Please see the revised discussion of aesthetic impacts in the IS/MND (Section I.c). Visual impacts were determined to be less than significant.

8-3 The IS/MND addressed the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. As noted in the IS/MND, all environmental impacts will be less than significant or can be reduced to below a level of significance with the incorporation of mitigation measures.

8-4 As noted in response 8-3, the IS/MND did not identify any significant environmental impact for the project. Furthermore, home/property values are not considered an environmental topic and are not required to be addressed under CEQA.

8-5 This comment provides closing remarks and does not raise any environmental issues.

Rod Woods

From: The Kents <kentsx4@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2015 1:39 PM
To: Rod Woods; lx4@sbcglobal.net
Subject: Laguna Audubon I Wireless Tower

Dear Mr. Woods and Mr. Lawrence:
My home and family is directly in front of the proposed wireless towers you are planning to put in the Hummingbird Lane pump station. I am concerned how this proposed tower will negatively affect my family's health and my property value. We would be looking at a 30 foot pole outside our front windows and yard. I have lived at this address for 20 years and would like to continue to do so. I want to be assured that this tower will not affect our health or the future sale of our house. Please provide me with information regarding these concerns.
Thank you,
Diane Kent
kentsx4@yahoo.com

9-1

1

Letter 9
Diane Kent

9-1 This comment letter expresses concern about the visual and health impacts of the tower at Site No. 2 and affect on property values. Visual simulations were prepared for the two locations proposed within the City of Aliso Viejo. Please see the revised discussion of aesthetic impacts in the IS/MND (Section I.c). Visual impacts were determined to be less than significant.

A radio frequency compliance report was prepared for Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station). Please see the revised discussion of impacts resulting from hazards and hazardous materials in the IS/MND (Section VIII.c). Hazards impacts were determined to be less than significant.

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4.0 MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

The following mitigation measures, as shown on the following table, shall be applicable to the proposed project.

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Action	Timing	Responsibility
Biological Resources				
Potential impact to California coastal gnatcatcher	The following measure would apply to all project sites near Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub habitats, including: • Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station) • Site No. 5 (AWMA2) • Site No. 7 (Little Niguel Pump Station) • Site No. 9 (Upper Salada Lift Station) **MM BIO-1 California Coastal Gnatcatcher** If construction activities are proposed between March 1 and August 15, a USFWS protocol survey for California gnatcatcher shall be performed by a USFWS-permitted biologist. For the survey area, a total of six surveys at least seven days apart are required if conducted between March 1 and August 15, or a total of nine surveys 14 days apart, if conducted between July 1 and March 14. If surveys are negative, no further action is required. If surveys are positive, the following restriction would apply. If the applicant does not wish to perform USFWS protocol surveys, species presence can be assumed and the following requirement followed. A) No construction activities shall result in noise levels exceeding 60 A-weighted decibels (dB(A)) hourly average or raise the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average within occupied California gnatcatcher habitat (as determined by a USFWS-permitted biologist based on USFWS protocol surveys; or in any Diegan coastal sage scrub habitat if gnatcatcher presence is assumed). An analysis showing consistency with this requirement must be completed by a qualified acoustician (possessing current noise engineer license or registration with monitoring noise level experience with Endangered Species Act-listed animal species) at least two weeks prior to commencement of construction activities. OR	If MNWD proposes construction between March 1 and August 15, conduct USFWS protocol survey for California coastal gnatcatcher. If MNWD does not want to complete the survey, noise level monitoring will be required. If sound levels remain below 60 dB(A) hourly, construction activities can take place. If sound levels are higher than 60 dB(A), implement noise attenuation measures.	If construction activities are proposed between March 1 and August 15, survey shall be done per the time requirements of the USFWS protocol. Noise attenuation devices shall be in place prior to construction.	MNWD, Project Biologist, Noise Consultant, Project Contractor

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Action	Timing	Responsibility
	B) At least two weeks prior to the commencement of construction activities, under the direction of a qualified acoustician, noise attenuation measures (e.g., berms, walls) shall be implemented to ensure that noise levels will not exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average at the edge of occupied California gnatcatcher habitat (as determined by a USFWS-permitted biologist based on USFWS protocol surveys; or in any Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub habitat if protocol surveys are not performed and gnatcatcher presence is assumed) or raise noise levels above ambient if levels already exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average. Concurrent with the commencement of construction activities and the construction of necessary noise attenuation facilities, noise monitoring shall be conducted at the edge of California gnatcatcher occupied/presumed occupied habitat to ensure that noise levels do not exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average or raise the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. If the noise attenuation techniques are determined to be inadequate by the qualified acoustician or biologist, then construction activities shall cease until such time that adequate noise attenuation is achieved or until the end of breeding season (August 16). Construction noise monitoring shall continue to be monitored at least twice weekly on varying days, or more frequently depending on the construction activity, to verify that noise levels at the edge of occupied/ presumed occupied habitat are maintained below 60 dB(A) hourly average or to the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. If not, other measures shall be implemented in consultation with the biologist as necessary, to reduce noise levels to below 60 dB(A) hourly average or to the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, limitations on the placement of construction equipment and the simultaneous use of equipment.			

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Action	Timing	Responsibility
Potential Impact to least Bell's vireo	The following mitigation measure is applicable to Site No. 1 (Aliso Creek Lift Station): **MM-BIO-2 Least Bell's Vireo** If construction activities are proposed between April 10 and July 31, a USFWS protocol survey for least Bell's vireo shall be performed by a qualified biologist. Protocol surveys require a total of eight surveys at least ten days apart between the period of April 10 to July 31. If surveys are negative, no further action is required. If surveys are positive, the following restriction would apply. Note that if the applicant does not wish to perform USFWS protocol surveys, species presence can be assumed and the following requirement followed. A) No construction activities shall result in noise levels exceeding 60 dB(A) hourly average or raise the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average within occupied least Bell's vireo habitat (as determined by a qualified biologist based on USFWS protocol surveys; or in any riparian forest habitat if least Bell's vireo presence is assumed). An analysis showing consistency with this requirement must be completed by a qualified acoustician (possessing current noise engineer license or registration with monitoring noise level experience with Endangered Species Act-listed animal species) at least two weeks prior to commencement of construction activities. OR B) At least two weeks prior to the commencement of construction activities, under the direction of a qualified acoustician, noise attenuation measures (e.g., berms, walls) shall be implemented to ensure that construction noise levels will not exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average at the edge of occupied least Bell's	If MNWD proposes construction between April 10 and July 31, conduct USFWS protocol survey for least Bell's vireo. If MNWD does not want to complete the survey, noise level monitoring will be required to ensure sound levels remain below 60 dB(A) hourly, so that construction activities can take place. If sound levels are higher than 60 dB(A), implement noise attenuation measures.	If construction activities are proposed between April 10 and July 31, survey shall be done per the time requirements of the USFWS protocol. Noise attenuation devices shall be in place prior to construction.	MNWD, Project Biologist, Noise Consultant, Project Contractor

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Action	Timing	Responsibility
	vireo habitat (as determined by a USFWS-permitted biologist based on USFWS protocol surveys; or in any riparian forest habitat if least Bell's vireo presence is assumed) or raise levels above ambient if levels already exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average. Concurrent with the commencement of construction activities and the construction of necessary noise attenuation facilities, noise monitoring shall be conducted at the edge of least Bell's vireo occupied/presumed occupied habitat to ensure that noise levels do not exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average or raise levels above ambient if levels already exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average. If the noise attenuation techniques are determined to be inadequate by the qualified acoustician or biologist, then construction activities shall cease until such time that adequate noise attenuation is achieved or until the end of breeding season (August 1). Construction noise monitoring shall continue to be monitored at least twice weekly on varying days, or more frequently depending on the construction activity, to verify that noise levels at the edge of occupied/presumed occupied habitat are maintained below 60 dB(A) hourly average or to the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. If not, other measures shall be implemented in consultation with the biologist as necessary, to reduce noise levels to below 60 dB(A) hourly average or to the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, limitations on the placement of construction equipment and the simultaneous use of equipment.			

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Action	Timing	Responsibility
Potential impact to species covered under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act	The following mitigation measure applies to all proposed construction sites: **MM-BIO-3 Migratory Bird Treaty Act** No direct impacts to nesting birds are permitted. If construction is proposed within 300 feet of trees or ornamental vegetation during the breeding season (January 1 through September 30), a pre-construction survey must be performed by a qualified biologist to determine if any birds are nesting within or immediately adjacent to the impact area. The survey must be conducted no more than three days prior to commencing project activities. If surveys show that nesting birds are present, a no-work buffer would be placed around the nest. The buffer size would be determined by a qualified biologist and would vary based on site conditions and type of work to be conducted. The no-work buffer would be maintained until the end of the breeding season or until surveys by a qualified biologist confirm that fledglings are no longer dependent on nest. If no nesting birds are detected during pre-construction surveys, no restrictions would be necessary and construction may proceed as planned.	For construction between January 1 and September 30, a nesting bird survey shall be performed. If nesting birds are found, a buffer shall be maintained between the work area and the nesting birds.	Three days prior to construction.	MNWD, Project Biologist, Contractor

SCH No. 2012021008

Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

Wireless Network Implementation Project

January 2015

Prepared for:

Moulton Niguel Water District
27500 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Contact: Rodney S. Woods, P.E.
(949) 425-3547

Prepared by:

Sophia Mitchell & Associates

#4.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF APPENDICES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

ACRONYMS

APN	Assessor Parcel Number
ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plans
dB(A)	A-weighted decibels
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CBC	California Building Code
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CO	Carbon Monoxide
C&D	Construction and Demolition
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
IS	Initial Study
LUST	Leaking Underground Storage Tanks
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MNWD	Moulton Niguel Water District
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MUTCD	Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices
ND	Negative Declaration
NO_x	Oxides of Nitrogen
NO_2	Nitrogen Dioxide
O_3	Ozone
PCS	Personal communication service
PoE	Power over Ethernet
$PM_{2.5}$	Particulate Matter–2.5 microns
PM_{10}	Particulate Matter–10 microns
RF	Radio-frequency
ROG	Reactive Organic Gas
SCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SCADA	Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SLIC	Spills, Leaks, Investigations and Clean Up
SOCWA	Southern Orange County Water Authority
SO_2	Sulfur Dioxide
US EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound
WATCH	Work Area Traffic Control Handbook

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

In 2012, the Moulton Niguel Water District (MNWD) prepared and circulated a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Wireless Network Implementation Project. The NOI was circulated for a 30-day review (February 6 to March 7, 2012). Comment letters were received from the Office of Planning and Research/State Clearinghouse, Caltrans, as well as the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo. This MND was never adopted by the MNWD Board of Directors.

The project that was identified in 2012 included 17 wireless poles/towers to be placed within the MNWD service area to provide wireless communication between various MNWD facilities. Since the circulation of the 2012 Draft MND, MNWD has evaluated communication needs and new technology and determined that the number of towers can be reduced to ten to maintain a similar level of service.

Because of significant changes to the project description and the passage of time since the circulation of the 2012 Draft MND, MNWD has updated the Initial Study (IS) and Draft MND and is recirculating it for public review. The following IS addresses the revised project and also incorporates comments received from local jurisdictions during the 2012 public review period.

B. PURPOSE

This document is an IS for preliminary evaluation of environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the Moulton Niguel Water District's Wireless Network Implementation Project. For the purposes of this document, this proposed development as described in Section II, Project Description, will be called the "proposed project."

C. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT REQUIREMENTS

As defined by Section 15063 of the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, an IS is prepared to provide the Lead Agency with information to use in deciding to prepare either an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or a Negative Declaration (ND) as the most appropriate environmental documentation for the proposed discretionary action. MNWD is designated the Lead Agency, in accordance with Section 15050 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Lead Agency is the public agency with the principal responsibility for approving a project that may have significant effects upon the environment.

Through this IS, MNWD has determined that although the project could have a significant effect on the environment, mitigation has been included to bring all potential impacts to less than significant levels. This determination was made based upon technical analysis, factual data, and other supporting documentation. Therefore, a MND is being proposed. The IS/MND will be circulated for a period of 30 days for public and agency review. Comments received on the document will be considered by MNWD before it acts on the proposed project.

This IS has been prepared in conformance with CEQA of 1970, as amended (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.) and Section 15070 of the State Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA of 1970, as amended (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000, et seq.).

C. INTENDED USES OF INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

This IS, along with the attached MND, is an informational document intended to inform MNWD decision-makers, other responsible or interested agencies, and the public of potential environmental effects of the proposed project. The environmental review process has been established to enable public agencies to evaluate environmental consequences and to examine and implement methods of eliminating or reducing any potentially adverse impacts.

D. CONTENTS OF DOCUMENT

This IS/MND is organized to facilitate a basic understanding of the existing setting and environmental implications of the proposed project as follows:

I. INTRODUCTION identifies MNWD contact persons involved in the process, scope of environmental review, environmental procedures, and incorporation by reference documents.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION describes the proposed project. A description of proposed discretionary approvals and permits required for project implementation is also included.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM presents the results of the environmental evaluation for the proposed project and those issue areas that would have a significant impact, potentially significant impact, a less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated, or no impact.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS evaluates each response provided in the environmental checklist form. Each response checked is discussed and supported with sufficient data and analysis. As appropriate, each response discussion describes and identifies specific impacts anticipated with project implementation. In this section, mitigation measures are also recommended, as appropriate, to reduce adverse impacts to levels of "less than significant" where possible.

V. MANDATORY FINDINGS presents Mandatory Findings of Significance in accordance with Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines.

VI. PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED identifies those persons consulted and involved in preparation of this Initial Study.

VII. REFERENCES lists bibliographical materials used in preparation of this document.

VII. MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

E. SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

For evaluation of environmental impacts, each question from the Environmental Checklist Form is stated and responses are provided according to the analysis undertaken as part of the IS. All responses take into account the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site,

cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts. Project impacts and effects will be evaluated and quantified, when appropriate. To each question, there are four possible responses, including:

1. **No Impact:** A "No Impact" response is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to the proposed project.

2. **Less Than Significant Impact:** Development associated with project implementation will have the potential to impact the environment. These impacts, however, will be less than the levels of thresholds that are considered significant and no additional analysis is required.

3. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated:** This applies where incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The Lead Agency must describe the mitigation measures and explain how the measures reduce the effect to a less than significant level.

4. **Potentially Significant Impact:** Future implementation will have impacts that are considered significant and additional analysis and possibly an EIR are required to identify mitigation measures that could reduce these impacts to less than significant levels.

F. PERMITS AND ENTITLEMENTS FOR PROJECT APPROVAL

Agency	Discretionary Action
Moulton Niguel Water District	Project Approval
City of Laguna Niguel	Encroachment Permit will be needed for the Little Niguel Pump Station. An Encroachment Permit may be needed for the Upper Salada Lift Station pole/tower site.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

Ten wireless communication poles/towers are proposed to be located within the MNWD service area, including two within the City of Aliso Viejo, one in the City of Laguna Hills, six in the City of Laguna Niguel, and one in the City of Mission Viejo (**Figure 1** and **Figures 2a and 2b**). All poles/towers would be located in urbanized areas, adjacent to existing MNWD facilities, such as pump stations, lift stations or reservoirs.

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is the completion of the implementation of a wireless network for MNWD's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System (SCADA) to enhance communication/system function, both on a daily operational basis and during an emergency situation. The poles would be for the exclusive use of MNWD and would not include any future cell phone installations.

The project will serve as an integral part of MNWD's water and wastewater distribution system, facilitating critical communications between MNWD's pipelines, pump stations/lift stations, reservoirs, and pressure/flow control facilities that will allow water and wastewater to be distributed and collected throughout the District and meet the demands of MNWD's customers and community. The individual towers must be located at the identified locations, in order to connect into the necessary components of MNWD's water and wastewater systems to provide the necessary communication backbone to MNWD's service network.

The ten locations and required pole/tower heights are presented in **Table 1.** Site locations from a regional perspective are presented in **Figure 1**. Specific locations for each pole/tower are presented in the project plans, included in **Appendix A. Figures 2a and 2b** depict the general environmental setting at each pole/tower location.

Table 1. Proposed Pole/Tower Locations and Heights

Site No. [(1)]	Pole/Tower Location Name	Address	Height (feet)
City of Aliso Viejo			
1	Aliso Creek Lift Station	21933 Aliso Creek Road	50
2	Audubon Lift Station	25364 Hummingbird Lane	30
City of Laguna Hills			
3	La Paz Underground	25322 ½ Cabot Road	40
City of Laguna Niguel			
4	Crown Point Pump Station	29043 Crown Valley Parkway	40
5	AWMA2	29201 La Paz Road	50
6	Golden Lantern Reservoir	32274 Old Ranch Road	10
7	Little Niguel Pump Station	30315 Niguel Road	40
8	Rancho Reservoir	29828 Golden Lantern	60
9	Upper Salada Lift Station	31447 Niguel Road	40
City of Mission Viejo			
10	North Aliso Lift Station	23492 Los Alisos Boulevard	50

Note: [(1)] See Figures 1, 2a and 2b for a location of each pole/tower sites

Figure 1. Regional Setting of Proposed Pole/Tower Locations

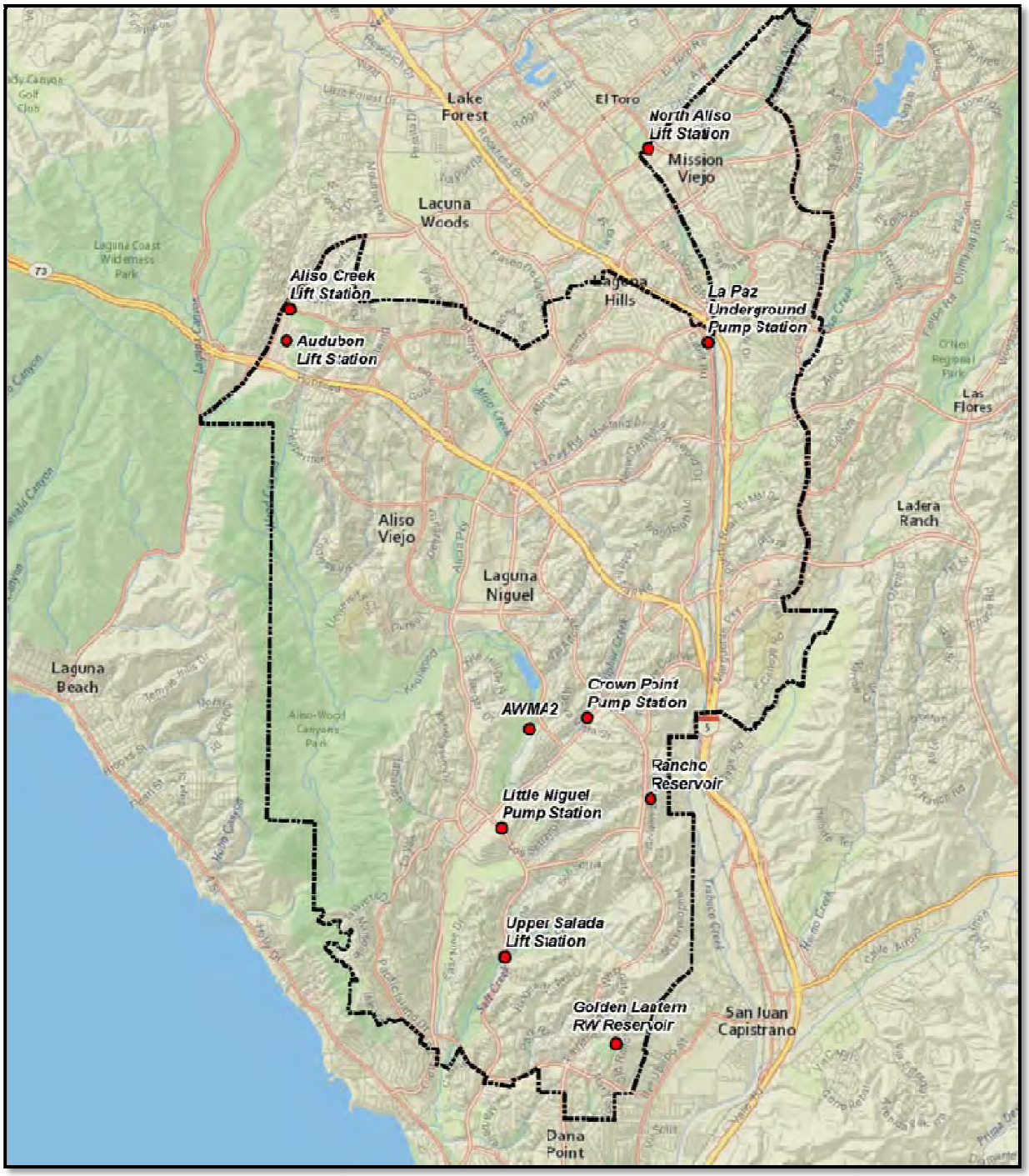


Figure 2a. Existing Conditions at Proposed Pole/Tower Sites Nos. 1-6

Site No. 1, Aliso Creek Lift Station

Site No. 2, Audubon Lift Station

Site No. 3, La Paz Underground

Site No. 4, Crown Point Pump Station

Site No. 5, AWMA2 Treatment Facility

Site No. 6, Golden Lantern Reservoir

Figure 2b. Existing Conditions at Proposed Pole/Tower Sites Nos. 7-10

Site No. 7, Little Niguel Pump Station

Site No. 8, Rancho Reservoir

Site No. 9, Upper Salada Lift Station

Site No. 10, North Aliso Lift Station

The communication system supported by the project is necessary to allow water to flow efficiently from stored locations within the District into the District's water pipelines and, as needed, pump stations, to ensure reliable and economical delivery to MNWD's customers.

Benefits of the SCADA system for MNWD include:

- Remote system monitoring;
- Improved system efficiency and performance;
- Cost savings related to operational, labor, and equipment replacement;
- Improved bandwidth so MNWD can transmit more data from facilities, including video for enhanced security;
- In-house communication system for emergency situations;
- Strengthened implementation of MNWD's emergency response plan;
- Improved ability for MNWD to communicate with facilities during emergencies and removes dependence on third-party vendors;
- Improved ability for MNWD to verify the condition of facilities and the return of facilities to service faster in an emergency situation;
- Improved ability for MNWD to restore and maintain service to Mission Hospital and other community-critical facilities in an emergency situation; and
- Hardening of MNWD facilities against terrorists and other threats as mandated by the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA).

The project includes the construction of ten poles/towers ranging from 10 to 60 feet in height within MNWD's service area. Pole/tower heights were determined by line-of-sight requirements for the overall SCADA network. Pole/tower diameters would range from approximately 6 to 12 inches and would be secured in a three-foot diameter cement footing (except for the Golden Lantern Reservoir site (Site No. 6), which would be a traditional four foot squared by 12 inches deep spread footing). Poles would be used exclusively for MNWD's SCADA system and equipment and would not be used for cell phone antennas.

Equipment attached to the poles/towers would be a wireless device, such as the SkyPilot Gateway or SkyPilot Extender. Specifications for the SkyPilot devices are included in **Appendix B**. The SkyPilot devices are thimble-shaped and are approximately 25 inches high and 12 inches across at the base. These would be mounted on top of the pole/tower. Additionally, on the proposed pole/tower at the Rancho Reservoir site (Site No. 8), two dish-style antennas (two-feet in diameter) will be placed on the pole. If additional MNWD equipment is added to the poles/towers at a future time, additional environmental review would be conducted, as necessary. The poles/towers and the wireless communication equipment would be a neutral color so as to blend with the surrounding visual environment at each pole/tower location. Wires will be run inside the monopole from the SkyPilot radio transmitters to an existing telephone box. Depending on the site, this telephone box may be a below ground box or an above ground box inside a pump station building. Very short lengths of two parallel buried one-inch conduits will be installed between the base of the pole and telephone boxes. The La Paz Underground Pump station (Site No. 3) will require installation of about 200 feet

of two parallel buried one-inch conduits between the monopole and the closest telephone box. The Golden Lantern Reservoir site (Site No. 6) will require installation of approximately 700 feet of two parallel buried two-inch conduits.

The power input for the SCADA system is Power over Ethernet (PoE). The computer network will provide power to the radio transmitters. MNWD will run two Ethernet cables inside the poles/ towers. One cable is used to supply power and one cable will transmit data.

Project Construction

Project construction is expected to occur over a two to three-month period. The poles/towers would be constructed one at a time and each would take about two to four days to complete. After one pole is complete, construction would proceed to the next pole/tower location. Equipment used during construction includes: a drill rig to drill the footing for the pole/tower and a crane to place the pole/tower into position. The final footprint of the completed pole/tower would be an approximate three-foot diameter cement footing. No cabinets or associated equipment would be constructed at the pole/tower sites. Further, no new landscaping or lighting is proposed at the pole/tower locations.

Construction staging would be confined to areas that are paved, disturbed or have ornamental vegetation. Construction hours would be consistent with the respective noise ordinance/city code for the cities where the poles/towers would be located.

Permits from Local Agencies

Pursuant to Government Code Section 53091, subdivisions (d) and (e), MNWD is not required to comply with local city building or zoning ordinances, including requirements for building permits and/or inspections, relative to its location or construction of facilities for the production, generation, storage, treatment, or transmission of water. In this case, the purpose of the project is to provide advanced communication systems that are integral to the District's efficient and economical transmission and storage of water throughout the District, and thus such facilities are exempt from compliance.

The poles would be for the exclusive use of MNWD and would not include any future cell phone installations.

The City of Laguna Niguel has waived the requirement for an Encroachment Permit during geotechnical exploration at the Little Niguel Pump Station pole/tower site. However, it will require an Encroachment Permit during pole/tower installation. The Upper Salada Lift Station (Site No. 9) site may require an Encroachment Permit depending upon contractors' installation methods, which cannot be determined at this time. Due to their location, none of the other proposed pole/tower sites would require an Encroachment Permit.

Project Design Features

The project incorporates several design features as part of the project which will minimize potential impacts. **Table 2** summarizes these features, which would be made conditions of project approval.

Table 2. Design Considerations and Generally-Applicable Regulatory Requirements for the Project

Aesthetics
• Poles/towers and associated wireless communication equipment, including any antennae, brackets and cables, shall be neutral in tone so as to blend with the existing visual environment at each pole/tower location. If requested by the jurisdictional cities, MNWD will consider color changes to the poles. • The poles in Aliso Viejo shall be painted in a color that blends with the surrounding landscaping. • The color selection for the North Aliso Lift Station (Site No. 10) shall be coordinated with the staff of the Planning Department at the City of Mission Viejo. • For proposed pole/tower locations adjacent to mature trees, no trees shall be removed during project staging or construction. • No new lighting shall be constructed at the pole/tower locations.
Air Quality
• The project shall adhere to South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Rules 401 (Visible Emissions), 403 (Fugitive Dust Control), and 431.2 (Low Sulfur Fuel) during construction-related activities. • All construction equipment shall be properly fitted with mufflers. • Any rented diesel construction equipment shall be Tier II equipment.
Biological Resources
All construction, including staging, shall occur within developed or disturbed areas and avoid sensitive habitats.
Cultural Resources
The project shall adhere to all appropriate regulatory requirements concerning Native American or other human remains including CEQA Section 10564.5, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, as appropriate.
Geology/Soils
Site preparation and construction shall occur in accordance with the recommendation identified in the *Geotechnical Engineering Investigation, Towers for Wireless Network Report* by Hushmand Associates (February 2012) and shall include: **Site Preparation and Grading** Prior to construction, the sites should be cleared of all above-ground obstacles and structures. Existing utility and irrigation lines shall be protected in-place, rerouted, or removed if they interfere with the proposed construction. The resulting cavities from removal of utility lines should be properly backfilled and compacted under the supervision of the project Geotechnical Engineer. Vegetation, debris, and organic matter should not be incorporated into structural fill. Excavations performed, if any, should be backfilled with clean "granular" soils placed in loose lifts not more than 8 inches in thickness, moisture-conditioned to approximately the optimum moisture content, and compacted to at least 95 percent of the maximum dry density per American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standard designation D1557 (Modified Proctor Test). Backfill soils should not contain rocks greater than 6 inches in diameter, with no more than 15 percent greater than 3 inches in diameter. **Construction Observation and Field Testing** Drilled caisson excavations shall be performed safely. Workmen shall be protected at all times in accordance with the applicable requirements of the California Construction and General Industry Safety Orders, the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 and the Construction Safety Act. Due to the nature of onsite soils, severe caving is not anticipated and thus steel casing is not recommended at this time. However, this condition should be verified in the field by the consulting Geotechnical Engineer

or Geologist. Because of unexpected conditions that may arise, the contractor shall be equipped to case the holes. Placing reinforcement and pouring concrete immediately after drilling the holes may minimize difficulties related to caving.

Construction of drilled caissons shall be performed in accordance with the recommendations presented in the addendum *Geotechnical Engineering Investigation, Towers for Wireless Network Report* by Hushmand Associates (February 2012). Continuous quality and construction control by the consulting Geotechnical Engineer or Geologist during installation is critical for future performance of the drilled caissons. The consulting Geotechnical Engineer or Geologist shall perform the following duties:

- Review drilling equipment and method proposed by the contractor prior to the commencement of drilling activities.
- Verify plumbness of the drill rig prior to drilling.
- Inspect the integrity of the shaft walls and that the shaft bottom is clean.
- Verify the diameter and depth of the shaft.
- Verify that steel reinforcement and concrete are placed immediately after completion of drilling.
- Verify that drilled caisson excavations are not left opened overnight.
- Inspect that any loose soils (and water, if any) at the bottom of the drilled holes are removed prior to pouring concrete.
- Keep a detailed record of concrete placed in each drilled caisson and closely monitor the condition of each drilled hole during construction.

The purpose of the continuous inspection by the consulting Geotechnical Engineer or Geologist is to observe the subsurface conditions encountered during construction, to evaluate the applicability of the recommendations presented in this report, and to recommend appropriate changes in design or construction procedures, if conditions differ from those described in the *Geotechnical Engineering Investigation, Towers for Wireless Network Report* by Hushmand Associates (February 2012).

Hazards/Hazardous Materials

Compliance with Federal, State, and the applicable Municipal Code regulations for the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo, which regulate and control hazardous materials handled onsite during project construction, is required.

No fueling of construction equipment shall occur on site.

Land Use

The project will comply with all applicable land use plans, policies or regulations with jurisdiction over the project.

Noise

Construction activities, including delivery of material and equipment, shall occur in a manner consistent with the noise ordinance for the respective City where the pole/tower construction will occur. Noise requirements for each city are as follows:

- **Aliso Viejo** - Construction shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday.
- **Laguna Hills** - Construction shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday.
- **Laguna Niguel** - Construction, repair or maintenance of utility facilities shall occur between 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM, Monday through Saturday.
- **Mission Viejo** - Construction (including delivery of materials and equipment) shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM, Monday through Saturday.

Transportation and Traffic
Traffic control requirements identified in the encroachment permit will be implemented. In general, traffic control will be performed per guidelines in the Work Area Traffic Control Handbook (WATCH) and the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
Utilities and Service Systems
Any construction debris that is generated shall be recycled and disposed of in a manner that is consistent with the Construction and Demolition Ordinance where the construction activity takes place.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

A. BACKGROUND

1. **Project Title:** Wireless Network Implementation Project

2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:** Moulton Niguel Water District**,** 27500 La Paz Road**,** Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:**
   Mr. Rodney S. Woods, P.E.
   (949) 425-3547 or rwoods@mnwd.com

4. **Project Location:** Ten wireless communication poles/towers are proposed to be located within the MNWD service area, including two within the City of Aliso Viejo (Site Nos. 1 and 2), one in the City of Laguna Hills (Site No. 3), six in the City of Laguna Niguel (Site Nos. 4 – 9), and one in the City of Mission Viejo (Site No. 10). The proposed poles/towers are primarily located in urbanized areas, adjacent to existing MNWD facilities, such as pump stations, lift stations or reservoirs.

5. **Project Sponsor's Name and Address:** Moulton Niguel Water District, 27500 La Paz Road, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

6. **General Plan and Zoning Designations:**

Site No.	Tower Location Name/ Assessor Parcel Number	General Plan Designation	Zoning Designation
1	Aliso Creek Lift Station APN: 623-163-35	CF – Community Facilities	CF – Community Facilities
2	Audubon Lift Station APN: 623-151-59	CF – Community Facilities	CF – Community Facilities
3	La Paz Underground APN: See Note 2	Freeway Commercial	FC – Freeway Commercial
4	Crown Point Pump Station APN: 654-373-05	Public/Institutional	PI – Public/Institutional District
5	AWMA2 APN: 654-381-09	Public/Institutional	PI – Public/Institutional District
6	Golden Lantern Reservoir APN: 673-441-01	Open Space and Parks and Recreation	OS – Open Space District and PR-Park & Recreation District
7	Little Niguel Pump Station APN: 653-151-08	No Designation (Adjacent to Community Commercial)	No Designation (Adjacent to CC – Community Commercial District and RS-3 – Single Family District 3)
8	Rancho Reservoir APN: 637-461-26	Public/Institutional District	PI – Public/Institutional District
9	Upper Salada Lift Station APN: 651-221-02	Neighborhood Commercial	CN – Neighborhood Commercial District

Site No.	Tower Location Name/ Assessor Parcel Number	General Plan Designation	Zoning Designation
10	North Aliso Lift Station APN: 809-311-06	Business Park	BP- Business Park

Sources: Aliso Viejo General Plan – Land Use Element Figure LU-1; Aliso Viejo Official Zoning Map; Laguna Hills General Plan Land Use Map Figure LU-6; Laguna Hills Zoning District Map; Laguna Niguel Official General Plan Map Figure LU-3; City of Laguna Niguel Official Zoning Code Map; and Mission Viejo Community View GIS Application (Land Use and Zoning Layers).

Notes:
1. All poles/towers will be installed within District-owned sites with the exception of the following: Site 2 will be installed on property owned by SOCWA; Site 3 will be installed within existing easement; Site 6 will be installed within an easement executed with Laguna Niguel Community Association; and Site 7 will be installed within public right-of-way.
2. The La Paz Underground Pump Station is located inside of the right-of-way. Since the pump station is within right-of-way, MNWD does not own a parcel of land for the pump station. Therefore, there is no APN associated with the pump station. The radio tower will be constructed on private property owned by Mouldy, LLC. The APN for the radio tower location is 620-031-23. MNWD has secured an easement for this construction.

7. Description of Project: Please see Section II for project description.

8. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

Site No.[(1)]	Tower Location Name/Address	Surrounding Land Use and Setting
1	Aliso Creek Lift Station 21933 Aliso Creek Road Aliso Viejo, CA	Located on an existing sewer lift station. The site is along a large parkway in a primarily residential area.
2	Audubon Lift Station 25364 Hummingbird Lane Aliso Viejo, CA	Located within an existing lift station in the Laguna Audubon residential community/single family residential (Nellie Gail Ranch).
3	La Paz Underground 25322-1/2 Cabot Road Laguna Hills, CA	Rear of parking lot in a commercial and office setting.
4	Crown Point Pump Station 29043 Crown Valley Parkway Laguna Niguel, CA	Located at the site of an existing pump station, between a public roadway and an urbanized park.
5	AWMA2 29201 La Paz Road Laguna Niguel, CA	On site at the South Orange County Wastewater Authority (SOCWA) wastewater treatment plant. Vicinity includes natural open space and residential.
6	Golden Lantern Reservoir 32274 Old Ranch Road Laguna Niguel, CA	Located in a developed park area in a private residential community.
7	Little Niguel Pump Station 30315 Niguel Road Laguna Niguel, CA	Located at the site of an existing pump station, adjacent to a roadway with native vegetation in the surrounding area.
8	Rancho Reservoir 29828 Golden Lantern Laguna Niguel, CA	Located at the site of above-ground reservoirs.

Site No.[(1)]	Tower Location Name/Address	Surrounding Land Use and Setting
9	Upper Salada Lift Station 31447 Niguel Road Laguna Niguel, CA	Located at the site of existing lift station, between a roadway, commercial development, and the Salt Creek Corridor Regional Park.
10	North Aliso Lift Station 23492 Los Alisos Boulevard Mission Viejo, CA	Located at the site of an existing lift station, near neighborhood commercial, school district offices, and a school bus parking area.

Note: (1) See **Figure 1** for a location of each pole/tower site. A site photo for each location is included in **Figures 2a and 2b.**

9. Other public agencies whose approval will be required:

- City of Laguna Niguel (Encroachment Permit(s) related to Little Niguel Pump Station (Site No. 7) and possibly Upper Salada Lift Station (Site No. 9))

B. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Mitigated to Below a Level of Significance," as indicated by the checklist on the following pages. All impacts identified for the project will be mitigated to below a level of significance.

☒ Aesthetics	☐ Agricultural Resources	☐ Air Quality
☒ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☐ Geology/Soils
☐ Greenhouse Gas	☐ Hazards/Hazardous Materials	☐ Hydrology/Water Quality
☐ Land Use/Planning	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Noise
☐ Population/Housing	☐ Public Services	☐ Recreation
☐ Transportation/Traffic	☐ Utilities/ Services Systems	
☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance		

C. DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ 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.

Eva Plajzer, P.E.
Assistant Director of Engineering

7-29-2015
Date

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS. Would the proposal:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			**X**	
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				**X**
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?			**X**	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				**X**
II. AGRICULTURAL 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 Department 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 Legacy Assessment Project and the carbon measurement methodology provided in 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?				**X**
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				**X**
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				**X**
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				**X**
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?				**X**
III. 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?			**X**	
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			**X**	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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)?			X	
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?			X	
IV. 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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?		X		
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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
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?				X
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?			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				X
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?				X
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?				X
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?			X	
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	
VI. 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:			X	
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.			X	
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				X
iv) Landslides?				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X
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?			X	
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?			X	
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				X
VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	
VIII. 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?			X	
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			X	
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?			X	
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles or a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
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?				X
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			X	
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?				X
IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?				X
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)?				X
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?				X
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?				X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?			X	
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			X	
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood hazard Boundary of Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				X
h) Place within 100-year flood hazard area structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows?				X
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?				X
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X
X. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
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?			X	
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X
XI. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
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?				X
XII. 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?			X	
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?				**X**
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?				**X**
XIII. 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)?				**X**
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				**X**
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				**X**
XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES. 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:				
a) Fire protection?			**X**	
b) Police protection?			**X**	
c) Schools?				**X**
d) Parks?				**X**
e) Other public facilities?				**X**
XV. 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?				**X**
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?				**X**
XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. Would the project:				
a) 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)?			**X**	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			X	
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?				X
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?			X	
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?			X	
XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				X
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?				X
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?				X
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources or are new or expanded entitlements needed?				X
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?				X
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?			X	
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII. 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?		**X**		
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.)			**X**	
c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			**X**	

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

This section provides an evaluation of the impact categories and questions contained in the Environmental Checklist.

I. AESTHETICS

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? Less than Significant Impact

Scenic corridors and vistas are identified in the General Plans for local communities. In the City of Aliso Viejo there are two viewscape corridors identified in the Conservation and Open Space Element (Figure COS-1). The first is Wood Canyon Drive between Aliso Creek Road and Oak Grove Drive. The second is County Highway 18 between State Route (SR) 133 and the SR-73/Toll Road. The proposed poles/towers in Aliso Viejo are not located within or near these viewscape corridors; therefore, the project would not have a potential to impact these viewscape corridors.

The City of Aliso Viejo also identifies several landscape corridors in the Conservation and Open Space Element. Two of the corridors are Aliso Creek Road (between Alicia Parkway and El Toro) and El Toro Road (between SR-73 and the City limits). Per the Conservation and Open Space Element (page COS-18), landscape corridors are a corridor that traverse developed or developing areas and have been designed for special treatment to provide a pleasant driving environment as well as community enhancement. The pole at the Aliso Creek Lift Station (Site No. 1) is proposed on Aliso Creek Road, just east of El Toro Road. The 50-foot pole will be set back approximately 30 feet from the sidewalk and approximately 35 feet from the closest vehicle travel lane. The site is adjacent to mature vegetation, which will provide visual screening to motorists on El Toro Road. Views of the pole from Aliso Creek Road would to be limited due to surrounding mature vegetation, the neutral color proposed for the pole and the setback from the sidewalk and street (approximately 30 and 35 feet, respectively). Additionally, since this pole is near an intersection, motorists on Aliso Creek Road are likely to be more focused on the intersection and less so on the passing landscape. Therefore, impacts to landscape corridors will be less than significant.

Per the Open Space Element of the City of Laguna Niguel General Plan (page 7) there are no viewscape corridors identified in Laguna Niguel. The Open Space Element does identify landscape corridors, which are meant to have special landscape treatment to provide a pleasant driving experience. Roadways which are identified as landscape corridors include: Alicia Parkway, Camino del Avion, Crown Valley Parkway, La Paz Road, Moulton Parkway, Niguel Road (between Crown Valley and Camino del Avion), Pacific Island Drive and Golden Lantern Road. Within the City of Laguna Niguel, the project proposes poles/towers on some of the roads identified as landscape corridors, including Crown Valley Parkway (Site No. 4), La Paz Road (Site No. 5), Niguel Road (Site Nos. 7 and 9) and Golden Lantern Road (Site No. 8). The project will not remove any landscaping, and the poles/towers would be placed adjacent to existing MNWD facilities and appear as an extension of the existing facilities. Therefore, no substantial change on a scenic vista would occur in Laguna Niguel. Impacts would be less than significant.

The Conservation Element of the Laguna Hills General Plan identifies five scenic vistas in the City. None of the scenic vista points are located near the La Paz Underground pole/tower site that is proposed in Laguna Hills. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

There are no viewscape corridors or scenic vistas identified in the Conservation and Open Space Element of the Mission Viejo General Plan. Therefore, the pole/tower proposed in Mission Viejo does not have the potential to impact a scenic vista.

In summary, impacts for this issue area would be less than significant.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway? No Impact

The proposed poles/towers would be constructed in paved, developed or disturbed areas. They are not proposed in a location that will require the removal of trees, historic buildings or cause damage to rock outcroppings. All locations are proposed in urbanized areas, adjacent to existing MNWD facilities, within MNWD easement areas, or City right-of-way.

According to the Caltrans California Scenic Highway Mapping System, there is only one segment of Officially Designated State Scenic Highway in Orange County. It is the segment of SR-91 between SR-55 to east of the Anaheim city limits. This is located in northeastern Orange County and is not near the project area. Four additional segments of highway are eligible for State Scenic Highway status, but are not officially designated. These include all of Highway 1 and Highway 74 within Orange County, as well as a small segment of SR-57 and a small segment of SR-91. The project does not propose poles/towers adjacent to these eligible highways, nor would it damage any scenic resources within a State Scenic Highway. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? Less than Significant Impact

Table 3 summarizes the existing visual setting for each of the proposed pole/tower locations. As shown in Table 3 all of the proposed pole/tower sites are in urbanized settings and adjacent to multi-lane public roadways with the exception of Site Nos. 2, 5, 6 and 8, which are discussed in more detail, below. For the remaining poles/towers that are proposed adjacent to multi-lane roadways in urbanized settings, the addition of a pole/tower in these locations will not result in a substantial degradation of the visual character or quality of the sites. They will blend in with existing development.

Eight visual simulations were prepared for Sites No. 1 and 2. **Figure 3** presents an overview of the simulation locations.

Views to Site No. 1 (Aliso Creek Lift Station) are provided from the northwest, east, southeast, and southwest (**Figures 4 through 7**) in the simulations as follows:

- View 1 – From trail at the intersection of El Toro Road and Aliso Creek Road looking southeast at Site No. 1.
- View 2 – From the back of the development off Sandpiper Lane looking west at Site No. 1.
- View 3 – From Hummingbird Lane looking northwest at Site No. 1.
- View 4 – From the end of Songbird Lane/Woodswallow Lane looking northeast at Site No. 1.

Table 3. Pole/Tower Location Visual Setting Summary

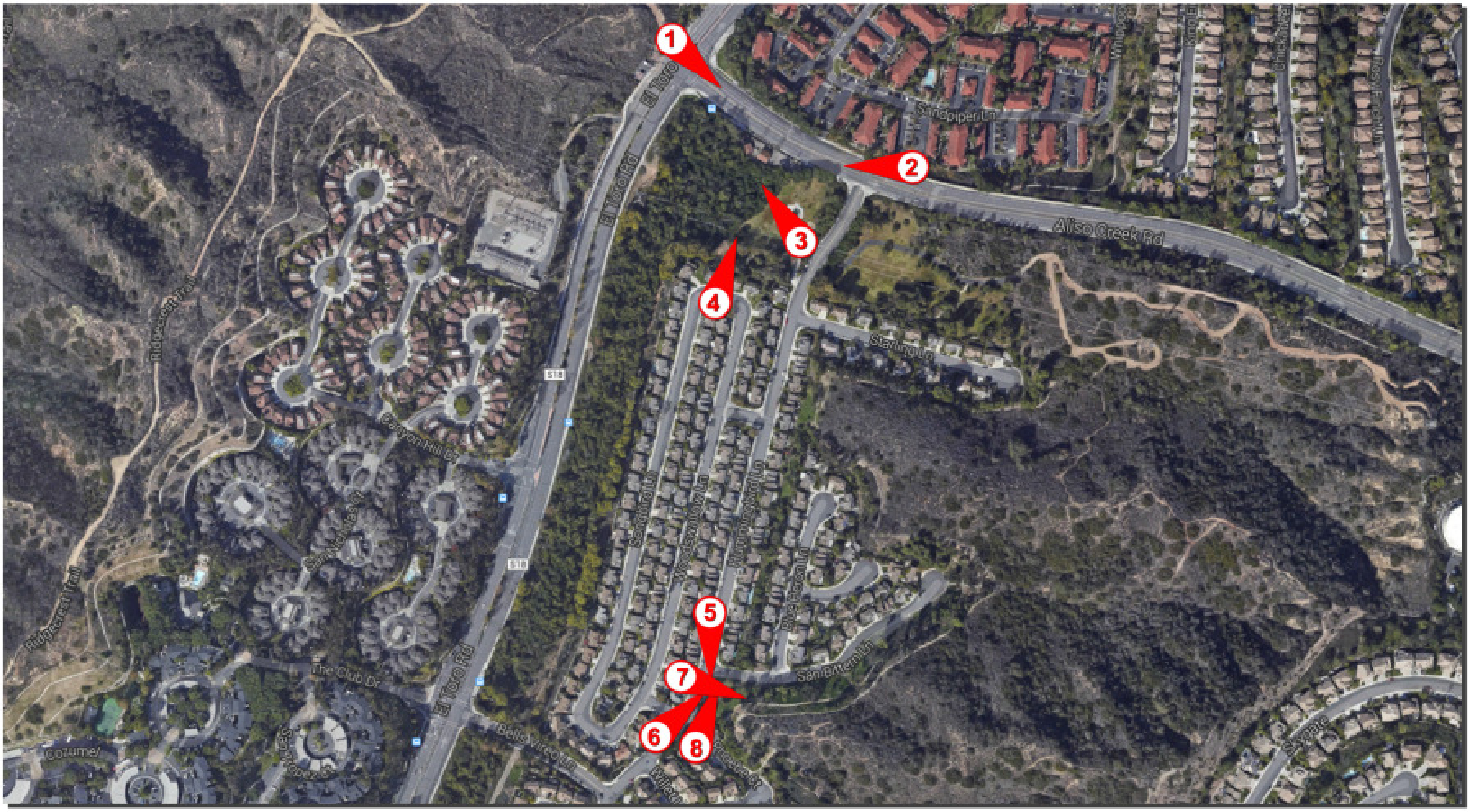
Site No. (1) Pole/Tower Location Name	Proposed Pole/Tower Height (feet)	Visual Setting
1 Aliso Creek Lift Station	50	Urbanized area. Located adjacent to multi-lane roadway and existing water facility. Behind the facility is natural open space. Multi-family residential located across the street.
2 Audubon Lift Station	30	Urbanized area in single-family residential neighborhood with two-story houses and street lights. Located on an existing MNWD facility.
3 La Paz Underground	40	Urbanized area. In back of parking lot of commercial complex. Not visible from roadway due to setback.
4 Crown Point Pump Station	40	Urbanized area. Located adjacent to multi-lane roadway in a primarily single-family residential area.
5 AWMA2	50	Urbanized area. Onsite at SOCWA wastewater treatment facility. Location has utility-related components. Adjacent areas include residential and natural open space.
6 Golden Lantern Reservoir	10	Urbanized area. In private residential community near a community overlook/park area. Adjacent to eucalyptus trees that are over 40 feet in height
7 Little Niguel Pump Station	40	Urbanized area. Located adjacent to multi-lane roadway in an area with natural open space.
8 Rancho Reservoir	60	Urbanized area. Located at site of existing reservoirs that are 30 feet in height. Visually screened from adjacent roadway due to topographic changes and mature vegetation.
9 Upper Salada Lift Station	40	Urbanized area. Located adjacent to multi-lane roadway and neighborhood commercial use with building heights up to 35 feet.
10 North Aliso Lift Station	50	Urbanized area. Located adjacent to multi-lane roadway near commercial/office. Across the street from a sports park.

Note: (1) See **Figures 1, 2a and 2b** for a location of each pole/tower site.

As shown, Site No. 1 is in an urbanized setting, adjacent to multi-lane Aliso Creek Road and the existing water facility. As shown in Figures 4 and 5, the proposed tower is visible but appears to be an extension of existing surrounding power lines, light poles, and electrical antennae. Figure 6 depicts the tower from the existing park. From this view, the tower is noticeable between existing mature vegetation but it does not obstruct any views. Figure 7 depicts the tower as seen in the distance between two residences. From this vantage, the pole is partially obstructed by existing mature vegetation and appears associated with the existing power lines.

-93-

Figure 3. Visual Simulation Overview Map



#4.

Figure 4. Simulation View 1 (El Toro Road/Aliso Creek Road)

Former View

Proposed View

Figure 5. Simulation View 2 (Sandpiper Lane)

Former View

Proposed View

Figure 6. Simulation View 3 (Hummingbird Lane)

Former View

Proposed View

Figure 7. Simulation View 4 (Songbird Lane/Woodswallow Lane)

Former View

Proposed View

Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station) is in a single-family residential neighborhood, adjacent to a residential street and within an existing MNWD facility. A 30-foot pole/tower is proposed at this location. There are two-story homes in neighborhood, as well as existing street lights and mature trees. Thus, there are structures of the same height as the proposed pole/tower already in the project vicinity.

The proposed pole/tower would be set back from the street as far as possible, in the southeast corner of the MNWD facility. Pole diameter would range from 6 to 12 inches and would be neutral in tone.

The residence to the north is approximately 150 feet away and there is intervening landscaping and a street (San Bittern Lane) serving as separation. The residence to the south is approximately 125 feet away from the pole/tower site and there is intervening landscaping, trees as well as the Phoebe Court cul-de-sac. The residence to west is approximately 100 feet away and with intervening landscaping as well as Hummingbird Lane. There are no residences to the east, as that area contains landscaping and then transitions to undeveloped open space areas.

Visual simulations for Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station) were prepared and provide the following views (**Figures 8, 9, 10 and 11**):

- View 5 - From Hummingbird Lane looking south at Site No. 2.
- View 6 - From Hummingbird Lane looking northeast at Site No. 2.
- View 7 – From Hummingbird Lane looking east at Site No. 2.
- View 8 – From Phoebe Court looking north at Site No. 2.

As shown, Figure 8 depicts the very top of the tower at Site No. 2. The majority of the tower would be obscured behind existing mature vegetation. In Figure 9, the tower is not visible behind existing mature vegetation. In Figure 10, only the top of the tower would be visible, but it is partially obscured by vegetation. In Figure 11, the tower is not visible behind existing mature vegetation.

Furthermore, to minimize the visual impact of the towers at Sites No. 1 and 2, MNWD would implement a design measure paint them in a color that blends with the surrounding landscaping. The color selection will be coordinated with the Aliso Viejo Planning Department.

In summary, the visual simulations verify that the 30-foot pole/tower would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings at this location since it would be of a similar height as other development in the area, there is 100 to 150 feet separation to the nearest residences and it is also adjacent to mature landscaping and trees. Impacts would be less than significant.

Figure 8. Simulation View 5 (Hummingbird Lane)

Former View

Proposed View

Figure 9. Simulation View 6 (Hummingbird Lane)

Former View

Proposed View

Figure 10. Simulation View 7 (Hummingbird Lane)

Former View

Proposed View

Figure 11. Simulation View 8 (Phoebe Court)

Former View

Proposed View

Site No. 5 (AWMA2) is located at a wastewater treatment facility that is developed with treatment equipment, holding ponds and other utility equipment. A 50-foot pole/tower is proposed at this location. Visually, the proposed pole/tower will fit in with the other equipment and facilities at the wastewater treatment plant. For those residences at higher elevations that can see down into the wastewater treatment facility, the pole/tower will blend in with existing development. Therefore, the construction at this location would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Impacts would be less than significant.

Site No. 6 (Golden Lantern Reservoir) is located in an overlook area in a gated community of single-family homes. The pole/tower proposed in this location is 10 feet high. The pole/tower will be neutral in tone and adjacent to eucalyptus trees that are 40 feet in height. Therefore, the proposed/pole tower at Site No. 6 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Impacts would be less than significant.

Site No. 8 (Rancho Reservoir) is located in a set-back and gated area where there are existing 30-foot high reservoirs. A 60-foot pole/tower is proposed at this location. Due to the distance and elevation that it would be setback from the Golden Lantern Road, as well as the presence of screening vegetation, the construction of the pole/tower would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Impacts would be less than significant.

During the 2012 review of the Draft IS/MND for this project, some local jurisdictions raised concerns regarding the pole design and how it would fit in with the visual settings at the proposed locations. Due to specific siting and height requirements on where the poles/towers must be located, there is not flexibility in the locations; however, if requested by the jurisdictional cities, MNWD staff will consider color changes to the poles. This requirement is included as a design feature for the project (Table 2).

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? No Impact

The proposed poles/towers would not result in a new source of lighting, as no lighting is proposed for the poles/towers. Additionally, the proposed poles/towers and associated wireless devices would be neutral and non-reflective in tone. Therefore, they would not create a new source of glare. In summary, the project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime view in the area. No impacts are identified.

II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES

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? No Impact

The proposed poles/towers are located in urbanized areas in the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo. None of the poles/towers are proposed in areas that are identified as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance per the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Therefore, no impact is identified.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? No Impact

None of the ten pole/tower locations are proposed in areas that contain Williamson Act contract lands or support agricultural uses. Further, none of the proposed poles/towers are located in areas that have existing zoning for agricultural use. Existing zoning at the proposed pole/tower locations include: Community Facility, Freeway Commercial, Public/Institutional, Open Space/Park and Recreation, Neighborhood Commercial and Business Park. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))? No Impact

The proposed poles/towers are located in urbanized areas in the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo. None of the poles/towers are proposed in areas that would conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland or timber production land. Existing zoning at the proposed pole/tower locations include: Community Facility, Freeway Commercial, Public/Institutional, Open Space/Park and Recreation, Neighborhood Commercial and Business Park. Therefore, no impact is identified.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? No Impact

The ten poles/towers would be located within developed urban areas that do not contain forest land. Therefore, the project will not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impact is identified for this issue area.

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? No Impact

The poles/towers would be constructed in areas that are developed, paved or disturbed and would not be constructed in areas that would be considered farmland or forest, or adjacent to existing forest or farmland. Therefore, the project will not result in changes to the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impact is identified for this issue area.

III. AIR QUALITY

A CalEEMod air model run was prepared for the project and included as **Appendix C.**

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? Less Than Significant Impact

The project area is located in the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB); the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) has jurisdiction over the basin. SCAQMD has developed a series of Air Quality Management Plans (AQMP) to meet State and Federal ambient air quality standards. AQMPs are updated regularly in order to more effectively reduce emissions, accommodate growth,

and to minimize any negative fiscal impacts of air pollution control on the economy.
Criteria for consistency with the AQMP are guided by the SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook. There are two criteria:

- Consistency Criterion No. 1: The proposed project will not result in the increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations or delay the timely attainment of air quality standards of the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP.

The violations that Consistency Criterion No. 1 refers to are the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS). As further detailed in Section III(b) below, the project would not exceed the CAAQS for localized criteria pollutants during project construction or operation. Therefore, the project is considered to be compliant with Consistency Criterion No. 1.

- Consistency Criterion No. 2: The proposed project will not exceed the assumption in the AQMP in 2010 or increments based on the years of project build-out phase.

The AQMP growth assumptions are generated by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). SCAG derives its assumptions, in part, from General Plans of cities located in the SCAG region. Therefore, if a project does not exceed growth projections in the General Plan, then it is considered consistent with the growth assumptions in the AQMP. The project is the construction of ten poles/towers with wireless devices and would not increase population growth beyond that identified in the General Plans. Therefore, the project is considered to be compliant with Consistency Criterion No. 2.

In summary, implementation of the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans and a less than significant impact is identified.

b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation? <u>Less Than Significant Impact</u>

Table 4 shows the state and federal attainment status for criteria pollutants in the SCAB. As shown in **Table 4**, SCAB is in attainment of federal and state standards for carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), and lead, and federal standards for particulate matter-10 microns (PM_{10}). The SCAB is in non-attainment for federal and state standards ozone (O_3) and particulate matter-2.5 microns ($PM_{2.5}$), and state standards for particulate matter-10 microns (PM_{10}).

The SCAQMD has construction screening thresholds for criteria pollutants, as shown in **Table 5**. Any project with daily construction emissions that exceed any of the following thresholds would require additional air modeling to determine significance. If project construction emissions are below these screening thresholds, impacts would be considered less than significant.

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Table 4. Attainment Status of Criteria Pollutants in South Coast Air Basin

Pollutant	State	Federal
Ozone (O_3)	Nonattainment	Nonattainment (8-hour)
Particulate Matter–10 microns (PM_{10})	Nonattainment	Attainment
Particulate Matter–2.5 microns ($PM_{2.5}$)	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Attainment	Attainment[1]/Unclassified
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	Attainment	Attainment
Lead	Attainment	Unclassified/attainment (Los Angeles – Nonattainment)

Source: California Air Resources Board: http://www.arb.ca.gov/desig/adm/adm.htm. June 2013.
Note: [1] The USEPA granted the request to redesignate the SCAB from nonattainment to attainment for the CO NAAQS on May 11, 2007 (Federal Register Volume 71, No. 91), which became effective as of June 11, 2007

Table 5. SCAQMD Construction Screening Thresholds for Criteria Pollutants

Pollutant	Construction Threshold (pounds per day)
CO	550
SO_2	150
Reactive Organic Gas/Volatile Organic Compounds (ROG/VOCs)	75
NO_2	100
PM_{10}	150
$PM_{2.5}$	55

Table 6 summarizes the construction emissions for the project. This analysis assumes that for preparing the tower footings the following equipment would be used concurrently: a drill rig, a cement/mortar mixer, a plate compactor, and another piece of general industrial equipment. For the tower placement, the analysis assumed the use of the following equipment concurrently: one aerial lift, one crane and one other piece of general industrial equipment. All equipment was assumed to be used up to four hours per day with the exception of the aerial lift and the general industrial equipment, which was assumed to be used eight hours per day.

Table 6. CalEEMod Construction Emissions

Pollutant	SCAQMD Threshold (lbs/day)	Project Emissions (lbs/day)	Significant Impact?
CO	550	6.05	No
SO_2	150	0.01	No
ROG/VOC	75	0.94	No
NO_x	100	11.48	No
PM_{10}	150	0.67(1)	No
$PM_{2.5}$	55	0.46(1)	No

Note: (1) Total includes dust and exhaust emissions.

As shown in **Table 6**, construction emissions would be well below SCAQMD screening thresholds; therefore, a less than significant impact is identified.

This project consists of the construction of wireless communication poles/towers. Operational emissions are limited to equipment repair or replacement, if there is a failure. Operational-related emissions are shown in **Table 7**. As shown, operational emissions would be well below SCAQMD screening thresholds; therefore, a less than significant impact is identified.

Table 7. CalEEMod Operation Emissions

Pollutant	SCAQMD Threshold (lbs/day)	Project Emissions (lbs/day)	Significant Impact?
CO	550	18.68	No
SO_2	150	0.04	No
ROG/VOC	75	2.61	No
NO_x	100	4.66	No
PM_{10}	150	2.64[(1)]	No
$PM_{2.5}$	55	0.76[(1)]	No

Note: [(1)] Total includes dust and exhaust emissions.

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)? Less Than Significant Impact

The SCAB is in non-attainment for federal and state standards for $PM_{2.5}$ and ozone, and state standards for PM_{10}. As illustrated in Section III(b), air quality emissions for the proposed project have been shown to be less than significant on an individual basis. Furthermore, the proposed project is consistent with the AQMP, which identifies the plan to lead the air basin to compliance with all federal and state ambient air quality standards. Because the proposed project is consistent with the AQMP and project emission have been shown to be less than significant, it is concluded that the project's incremental contribution to criteria pollutant emissions would not be cumulatively considerable, and the increase would be less than significant.

d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? Less Than Significant Impact

Air emissions for the project are associated with the construction and operational phase. Based upon the analysis in III(b), the project will not exceed emissions screening thresholds established by SCAQMD; therefore, the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations and impacts would be less than significant.

e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people? Less Than Significant Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers with wireless devices. The project would not be characterized as constructing uses that would generate odor affecting a substantial number

of people. No odor emissions would occur during project operation. Minor emissions from construction equipment would occur, and some of those could have odors associated with them. Sensitive receptors within 150 feet of proposed work areas include residential within 100 feet of Site No. 2. All construction equipment is required to be properly fitted with mufflers and as a project design feature all rented diesel equipment must be Tier II or better. This type of equipment produces less odor because fewer emissions are produced by Tier II equipment. Finally, any odorous emissions would be short term, would dissipate quickly, and are not expected to result in objectionable odors to nearby sensitive receptors. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant. Any odorous emissions would dissipate and are not expected to result in objectionable odors to nearby sensitive receptors. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

A Biological Technical Report was prepared for the project by Rocks Biological Consulting (2014) and is included in **Appendix D**.

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 Wildlife (CDFW) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)? Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated

Table 8 summarizes the biological conditions for each proposed pole/tower location. This data was collected during site visits by Rocks Biological Consulting in November 2011 and reconfirmed during November 2014 field visits.

As shown in **Table 8**, none of the sites have sensitive habitats within the proposed construction footprint. All construction will occur in paved, developed, disturbed or ornamental areas. Therefore, the project will not have a direct impact to sensitive habitats.

Some sensitive habitats may be located within 100 feet of the proposed work areas, including Diegan coastal sage scrub, coyote brush scrub, riparian forest, disturbed southern willow scrub, and coast live oak trees. While the construction will not directly impact these habitats, some of these sensitive habitats may provide habitat for sensitive species. This includes the potential for California gnatcatcher (federally-listed threatened species) in Diegan coastal sage scrub and coyote brush scrub and least Bell's vireo (federally endangered species) in riparian areas. If construction activities are proposed during the nesting season and these species are present in adjacent habitat, the project has the potential to impact these species. The nesting season for the gnatcatcher is March 1 to August 15 and the nesting season for the least Bell's vireo is April 10 to July 31. If construction is proposed during this time, there is a potential for a significant impact. However, implementation of mitigation measures MM BIO-1 for the gnatcatcher and MM BIO-2 for the least Bell's vireo will reduce these potential impacts to below a level of significance.

Table 8. Biological Resource Summary

Site No. Pole/Tower Name	Sensitive Habitat in Construction Footprint?	Sensitive Habitat within 100 Feet?	Potential for Sensitive Species within 100 Feet?	Potential for Raptors/Nesting Birds within 300 Feet?
1 Aliso Creek Lift Station	**No**	**Yes**. Riparian forest immediately outside fenced area.	**Yes.** Low to moderate potential for endangered least Bells' vireo in adjacent riparian forest.	**Yes**. Riparian forest adjacent to project site. Also, street trees and ornamental vegetation present.
2 Audubon Lift Station	**No**	**Yes.** Diegan coastal sage scrub upslope within 100 feet.	Low potential for coastal California gnatcatcher in Diegan coastal sage scrub.	**Yes.** Ornamental trees, (carrotwood and sycamore).
3 La Paz Underground	**No**	**No.** Site is surrounded by development and ornamental plantings.	**No**	**Yes.** Street trees (sycamore) and ornamental vegetation.
4 Crown Point Pump Station	**No**	**Yes.** While much of surrounding area is developed, there is a small area of disturbed southern willow scrub.	**No**	**Yes.** Street trees and ornamental vegetation and southern willow scrub.
5 AWMA2	**No**	**Yes.** Coyote brush scrub.	**Yes**. Low potential for coastal California gnatcatcher in coyote brush scrub and Diegan coastal sage scrub.	**Yes.** Street trees and ornamental trees (sycamore, eucalyptus).
6 Golden Lantern Reservoir	**No**	**Yes**. Coast live oak trees and non-native grassland.	**No**	**Yes.** Coast live oak and several ornamental plantings.
7 Little Niguel Pump Station	**No**	**Yes.** Diegan coastal sage scrub.	**Yes**. Low potential for coastal California gnatcatcher in Diegan coastal sage scrub.	**Yes.** Diegan coastal sage scrub and ornamental plantings (pine trees).
8 Rancho Reservoir	**No**	**No.** Site is fenced reservoir area adjacent to ornamental plantings.	**No**	**Yes.** Ornamental pepper trees and eucalyptus trees.
9 Upper Salada Lift Station	**No**	**Yes.** Diegan coastal sage scrub occurs near the proposed pole/tower site.	**Yes**. Low potential for coastal California gnatcatcher in Diegan coastal sage scrub.	**Yes.** Diegan coastal sage scrub and ornamental acacia trees.
10 North Aliso Lift Station	**No**	**No.** Site is developed (commercial businesses and school bus parking).	**No**	**Yes.** Ornamental pine trees.

Additionally, all sites are near ornamental vegetation or street tress that can support nesting birds that are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and/or the California Fish and Game Code (§3503) under which it is unlawful to "take, possess, or needlessly destroy" avian nests or eggs. If construction is proposed during the nesting season (January 1 through September 30), there is a potential for an impact to nesting migratory birds. However, implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-3 will reduce this impact to below a level of significance.

MM-BIO-1 **California Coastal Gnatcatcher.** The following measure would apply to all project sites near Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub habitats, including Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station), Site No. 5 (AWMA2), Site No. 7 (Little Niguel Pump Station) and Site No. 9 (Upper Salada Lift Station):

If construction activities are proposed between March 1 and August 15, a USFWS protocol survey for California gnatcatcher shall be performed by a USFWS-permitted biologist. For the survey area, a total of six surveys at least seven days apart are required if conducted between March 1 and August 15, or a total of nine surveys 14 days apart, if conducted between July 1 and March 14. If surveys are negative, no further action is required. If surveys are positive, the following restriction would apply. If the applicant does not wish to perform USFWS protocol surveys, species presence can be assumed and the following requirement followed.

No construction activities shall result in noise levels exceeding 60 A-weighted decibels (dB(A)) hourly average or raise the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average within occupied California gnatcatcher habitat (as determined by a USFWS-permitted biologist based on USFWS protocol surveys; or in any Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub habitat if gnatcatcher presence is assumed). An analysis showing consistency with this requirement must be completed by a qualified acoustician (possessing current noise engineer license or registration with monitoring noise level experience with Endangered Species Act-listed animal species) at least two weeks prior to commencement of construction activities.

OR

At least two weeks prior to the commencement of construction activities, under the direction of a qualified acoustician, noise attenuation measures (e.g., berms, walls) shall be implemented to ensure that noise levels will not exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average at the edge of occupied California gnatcatcher habitat (as determined by a USFWS-permitted biologist based on USFWS protocol surveys; or in any Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub habitat if protocol surveys are not performed and gnatcatcher presence is assumed) or raise noise levels above ambient if levels already exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average. Concurrent with the commencement of construction activities and the construction of necessary noise attenuation facilities, noise monitoring shall be conducted at the edge of California gnatcatcher occupied/presumed occupied habitat to ensure that noise levels do not exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average or raise the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. If the noise attenuation techniques are determined to be inadequate by the qualified acoustician or biologist, then construction activities shall cease until such time that adequate noise attenuation is achieved or until the end of breeding season (August

16). Construction noise monitoring shall continue to be monitored at least twice weekly on varying days, or more frequently depending on the construction activity, to verify that noise levels at the edge of occupied/presumed occupied habitat are maintained below 60 dB(A) hourly average or to the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. If not, other measures shall be implemented in consultation with the biologist as necessary, to reduce noise levels to below 60 dB(A) hourly average or to the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, limitations on the placement of construction equipment and the simultaneous use of equipment.

MM-BIO-2 **Least Bell's Vireo.** The following mitigation measure is applicable to Site No. 1 (Aliso Creek Lift Station):

- If construction activities are proposed between April 10 and July 31, a USFWS protocol survey for least Bell's vireo shall be performed by a qualified biologist. Protocol surveys require a total of eight surveys at least ten days apart between the period of April 10 to July 31. If surveys are negative, no further action is required. If surveys are positive, the following restriction would apply. If the applicant does not wish to perform USFWS protocol surveys, species presence can be assumed and the following requirement followed.

No construction activities shall result in noise levels exceeding 60 dB(A) hourly average or raise the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average within occupied least Bell's vireo habitat (as determined by a qualified biologist based on USFWS protocol surveys; or in any riparian forest habitat if least Bell's vireo presence is assumed). An analysis showing consistency with this requirement must be completed by a qualified acoustician (possessing current noise engineer license or registration with monitoring noise level experience with Endangered Species Act-listed animal species) at least two weeks prior to commencement of construction activities.

OR

At least two weeks prior to the commencement of construction activities, under the direction of a qualified acoustician, noise attenuation measures (e.g., berms, walls) shall be implemented to ensure that construction noise levels will not exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average at the edge of occupied least Bell's vireo habitat (as determined by a USFWS-permitted biologist based on USFWS protocol surveys; or in any riparian forest habitat if least Bell's vireo presence is assumed) or raise levels above ambient if levels already exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average. Concurrent with the commencement of construction activities and the construction of necessary noise attenuation facilities, noise monitoring shall be conducted at the edge of least Bell's vireo occupied/presumed occupied habitat to ensure that noise levels do not exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average or raise levels above ambient if levels already exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average. If the noise attenuation techniques are determined to be inadequate by the qualified acoustician or biologist, then construction activities shall cease until such time that adequate noise attenuation is achieved or

until the end of breeding season (August 1). Construction noise monitoring shall continue to be monitored at least twice weekly on varying days, or more frequently depending on the construction activity, to verify that noise levels at the edge of occupied/presumed occupied habitat are maintained below 60 dB(A) hourly average or to the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. If not, other measures shall be implemented in consultation with the biologist as necessary, to reduce noise levels to below 60 dB(A) hourly average or to the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, limitations on the placement of construction equipment and the simultaneous use of equipment.

MM-BIO-3 **Migratory Bird Treaty Act.** The following mitigation measure applies to all proposed construction sites:

- No direct impacts to nesting birds are permitted. If construction is proposed within 300 feet of trees or ornamental vegetation during the breeding season (January 1 through September 30), a pre-construction survey must be performed by a qualified biologist to determine if any birds are nesting within or immediately adjacent to the impact area. The survey must be conducted no more than three days prior to commencing project activities. If surveys show that nesting birds are present, a no-work buffer would be placed around the nest. The buffer size would be determined by a qualified biologist and would vary based on site conditions and type of work to be conducted. The no-work buffer would be maintained until the end of the breeding season or until surveys by a qualified biologist confirm that fledglings are no longer dependent on nest. If no nesting birds are detected during pre-construction surveys, no restrictions would be necessary and construction may proceed as planned.

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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? No Impact

The poles/towers are not proposed in areas that support riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities identified in local or regional plans, policies, or by CDFW or USFWS. The poles/towers are proposed in areas that are paved, developed, disturbed or support ornamental vegetation. No impact to riparian habitats or other sensitive natural communities will occur. Site No. 1 (Aliso Creek Lift Station) is adjacent to riparian habitat, however, the proposed work area is separated from the riparian habitat by existing fencing and the fencing will remain in place during project construction. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

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? No Impact

The project areas proposed for tower/pole construction do not contain any natural waterways, only flood channels and retention basins. The project area does not contain any marshes, vernal pools, or coastline. No impacts are identified for this issue area.

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? Less than Significant Impact

The biological technical report (Appendix D) prepared for the project did not identify any impacts related to wildlife movement or wildlife corridors. The poles/towers would not be located in areas that serve as wildlife corridors. None of the project sites are in wildlife corridors, and the ones that are near corridors are on the periphery of such areas and near existing roadways and development. Pole heights would not be significantly higher than existing nearby poles or street tree plantings, so they are not anticipated to interfere with avian flight. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? No Impact

The proposed poles/towers would be located in areas that are developed, disturbed or contain ornamental vegetation. No trees would be removed as part of the project. Some of the project sites fall within areas that are covered by the Orange County-Central Coastal Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP); however, MNWD is not a participating agency. No conflicts with any local biological resource protection regulations or NCCP/HCPs are expected, since the project does impact wildlife corridors and potential indirect impacts to native biological resources will be mitigated to below a level of significance. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

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? No Impact

Some of the project sites fall within areas that are covered by the Orange County-Central Coastal NCCP/HCP; however, MNWD is not a participating agency. No conflicts with any local biological resource protection regulations or NCCP/HCPs are expected, since the project does not impact wildlife corridors and potential indirect impacts to native biological resources will be mitigated to below a level of significance. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5? No Impact

The ten poles/towers would be located in urbanized areas in the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo. Construction of the poles/towers will not result in the removal of any structures or historical resources. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? Less Than Significant Impact

The County of Orange General Plan includes a cultural resources sensitivity map (Figure VI-10) as part of the Resources Element. Southern Orange County includes areas of sensitivity for cultural resources, with the proposed pole/tower locations falling in the following districts: Coastal Area,

Rancho Trabuco, Aliso Creek, Coastal Hills, and the Foothill Area. City-level General Plans further detail the sensitivity of archaeological resources.

The proposed poles/towers are located in urbanized areas, primarily in areas where sub-surface utilities are already located, such as next to roadways with underground utilities, next to existing MNWD facilities that include subsurface components, or along roadways that already have street lights and traffic signals. Proposed pole/tower heights vary from 10 to 60 feet, which will require drilling from 10 to 25 feet below the surface to place the poles. Since the poles/towers are proposed in areas that are already urbanized and have experienced subsurface construction work, impacts to archaeological resources are expected to be less than significant.

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? Less Than Significant Impact

The County of Orange General Plan includes a paleontology sensitivity map (Figure VI-9) as part of the Resources Element. Southern Orange County is an area of sensitivity for paleontological resources, with the proposed pole/tower locations falling in the following districts: San Joaquin Hills, Laguna Hill-Dana Point, El Toro, and Plano Trabuco. City-level General Plans further detail the sensitivity of paleontological resources.

The proposed poles/towers are located in urbanized areas, primarily in areas where sub-surface utilities are already located, such as next to roadways with underground utilities, next to existing MNWD facilities that include subsurface components, or along roadways that already have street lights and traffic signals. Proposed pole/tower heights vary from 10 to 60 feet, which will require drilling from 10 to 25 feet below the surface to place the poles. Since the poles/towers are proposed in areas that are already urbanized and have experienced subsurface construction work, impacts to paleontological resources are expected to be less than significant.

d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? Less Than Significant Impact

Cemeteries, isolated Native American remains, or other human remains are not expected to occur within the areas proposed for pole/tower construction. The poles/towers are proposed in areas that are developed and urbanized; therefore, impacts would be less than significant. Further, inadvertent discoveries of Native American or human remains are required to be handled in accordance with State laws.

If Native American or other human remains are inadvertently discovered during project actions, excavation or disturbance will cease immediately until the remains and the vicinity have been evaluated in accordance with CEQA Section 10564.5, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, as appropriate. Further, if human remains are encountered during project grading, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the Orange County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin. Pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98(b), remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and disposition has been made. If the Orange County Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission shall be contacted within a reasonable timeframe. Subsequently, the Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the “most likely descendant.” The most likely descendant shall then make

recommendations, and engage in consultations concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98.

Adherence to these regulatory requirements is also noted in the design considerations and generally-applicable regulatory requirements for the project (**Table 2**). Impacts would be less than significant.

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

A Geotechnical Engineering Investigation was prepared for the project by Hushmand Associates (2012). The complete report is included in **Appendix E**. The report identifies recommendations related to project construction. These recommendations are included as design features for the project and are detailed in **Table 2** (Section II, Project Description) of this document.

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. Less than Significant Impact

Based upon review of the United States Geologic Survey (USGS) Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning mapping database, the project area is not located within an area identified to contain earthquake faults. The nearest faults to the project area include the Elsinore Fault to the east and the Newport-Inglewood Fault to the west. The project area is approximately ten miles from the Elsinore Fault and three miles from the Newport-Inglewood Fault. Therefore, no rupture of a known earthquake fault is anticipated. While the project is not located directly along a fault line, the southern California region is seismically active as a whole with faults capable of producing seismic shaking at the proposed pole/tower locations. Impacts would be less than significant.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? Less Than Significant Impact

The pole/tower locations are located in seismically-active Orange County and are considered likely to be subjected to strong ground motion from regional seismic activity. As identified in Section VI.a.i, the nearest identified named fault is located approximately ten miles from the project area. Given that the project site is not within any identified Fault-Rupture Hazard Zone and the distance to the above mentioned trace fault, it can be concluded the site would not be affected by ground shaking any more than any other area in seismically-active southern California. Impacts would be less than significant.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? No Impact

Liquefaction involves the substantial loss of shear strength in saturated soil, usually taking place within a soil medium exhibiting a uniform, fine grained characteristic, loose consistency and low confining pressure when subjected to impact by seismic or dynamic loading. Liquefaction is also associated with lateral spreading, excessive settlement, and failure of shallow bearing foundations.

According to Figure IX-12 of the Safety Element of the County of Orange General Plan, liquefaction in Orange County is associated with areas of granular sandy soil with high water content. This generally corresponds to low lying areas, often associated with river beds and coastal fill areas. The pole/tower locations are not proposed in potential liquefaction areas, as depicted in the County of Orange General Plan.

Additionally, the General Plans for the respective cities where the poles/towers are proposed were reviewed. Per the Safety Policy Map (Figure S-1) of the Safety Element of the Aliso Viejo General Plan, the proposed pole/tower locations in Aliso Viejo are located outside of potential liquefaction areas. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

iv) Landslides? No Impact

Landslide hazard zones are identified in the Safety Element of the local General Plans. Per the Safety Policy Map (S-1) of the Safety Element of the Aliso Viejo General Plan, the pole/tower locations proposed in Aliso Viejo are not located in areas that are identified as landslide hazards. No impact is identified.

Figure S-1 of the Safety Element of the Laguna Hills General Plan identifies landslide hazard areas. The pole/tower locations proposed in Laguna Hills are not located in areas that are identified as landslide hazards. No impact is identified.

The Seismic/Public Safety Element of the Laguna Niguel General Plan identifies potential landslide areas (Figure SA-2). The pole/tower locations proposed in Laguna Niguel are not located in areas that are identified as landslide hazards. No impact is identified.

The Public Safety Element (Figure PS-1) of the Mission Viejo General Plan identifies areas susceptible to earthquake-induced landslides. The pole/tower locations proposed in Mission Viejo are not located in areas that are identified as landslide hazards. No impact is identified.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers for wireless communication devises. The final project footprint would be a three-foot by three-foot cement footing to hold the pole/tower. The only soil handling would be the removal of soil via a drilling rig to place the pole/tower. No grading or other activities which would result in substantial erosion or loss of topsoil are proposed. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

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? Less than Significant Impact

The MNWD project area is located along the southern flank of the San Joaquin Hills and the northwestern part of the Saddleback Valley. The project area is underlain by Tertiary-age sedimentary rocks that were deposited in shallow to moderately deep marine environments. Borings were taken at each of the proposed pole/tower locations. Soil types encountered during the borings included a mix of silty sand, silty clay, sandy silt and lean clay, depending on the location and depth. Soil caving and instability is not anticipated based upon the type of soils (Hushmand 2011);

however, a project design feature (**Table 2**) is included which will require a consulting Geotechnical Engineer or Geologist be on site during drilling excavation to observe if drill hole casings may be required. The project would not result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse. Impacts would be less than significant.

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? Less Than Significant Impact

Expansive soils are those that have a high shrink/swell characteristic, which is often associated with clay or silty soils. Soil types encountered during the borings included a mix of silty sand, silty clay, sandy silt and lean clay, depending on the location and depth. Thus, there are some soils present that may exhibit expansive characteristics. Soil caving and instability is not anticipated based upon the type of soils (Hushmand 2011); however, a project design feature (**Table 2**) is included which will require a consulting Geotechnical Engineer or Geologist be on site during drilling excavation to observe if drill hole casings may be required. The project would not create a substantial risk to life or property. Impacts would be less than significant.

e) Have soils capable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? No Impact

The project does not propose any septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? Less Than Significant Impact

Global climate change, including the emission of greenhouse gases (GHG), is an emerging environmental concern being raised on statewide, national, and global levels. Regional, state, and federal agencies are developing strategies to control pollutant emissions that contribute to global warming, including the recently-adopted California Assembly Bill 32, which requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop regulations and market mechanisms to ultimately reduce California's greenhouse gas emissions.

Greenhouse gas emissions for the project would be associated with emissions from short-term construction and operational activities (fossil-fuel consumption). Daily construction emissions related to pole/tower placement would emit some greenhouse gas emissions. CO_2 emissions from construction and operation of the proposed project were determined using the air quality modeling software CalEEMod version 2013.2.2. Construction of the project would emit approximately 1,369 pounds of CO_2-equivalent emissions per day for a two- to three-month construction period. Operational emissions are modeled at 3,633 pounds per day of CO_2-equivalent emissions.

From a GHG perspective, the wireless communication system that would be put into place with these poles/towers may reduce the need for certain vehicular trips to the facilities, as information about the facilities can be collected remotely. This could result in a corresponding decrease in GHG emissions associated with vehicular trips. Therefore, an offset of GHG emissions from vehicular trips is anticipated and impacts are less than significant.

b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? Less Than Significant Impact

The proposed project is consistent with the AQMP as identified in III(a), which identifies the plan to lead the air basin to compliance with all Federal and State ambient air quality standards. Because the proposed project is consistent with the AQMP and project emissions have been shown to be less than significant, it is concluded that the project's incremental contribution to criteria pollutant emissions, including CO_2, would not be cumulatively considerable with regards to GHG emissions.

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials? Less Than Significant Impact

Hazardous materials include solids, liquids, or gaseous materials that, because of their quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, could pose a threat to human health or the environment. Hazards include the risks associated with potential explosions, fires, or release of hazardous substances in the event of an accident or natural disaster, which may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or serious illness, or pose substantial harm to human health or the environment.

Construction equipment used at the project site would contain lubricants and various other liquids needed for operation. In addition, workers would commute to the project site via private vehicles, and would operate construction vehicles/equipment on both public and private streets. Materials hazardous to humans would be present during project construction of the poles/towers. These materials include diesel fuel, gasoline, equipment fluids, concrete, cleaning solutions and solvents, lubricant oils, and adhesives. The potential exists for direct impacts to human health from accidental spills of small amounts of hazardous materials from construction equipment during construction of the poles/towers; however, the proposed project would be required to comply with Federal, State, and the applicable Municipal Code regulations for the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo, which regulate and control those materials handled onsite. Additionally, no fueling of construction equipment shall occur onsite. Compliance with these restrictions and laws, as well as adherence to project design features for hazards and air quality (Table 2) ensure that potentially significant impacts would not occur. Therefore, a less than significant impact is identified.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment? No Impact

The project is the construction of ten poles/towers to support wireless communication devices. The poles/towers would not be characterized as a use that would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? Less than Significant Impact

The project is the construction of ten poles/towers to support wireless communication devices. The following schools are located within one-quarter mile of proposed pole/tower locations. There are

no schools in Aliso Viejo or Laguna Hills that are within one-quarter mile of proposed pole/tower locations.

Laguna Niguel

- Crown Valley Elementary School, 29292 Crown Valley Parkway in Laguna Niguel, is located within ¼ mile of proposed pole/tower Site No. 4 (Crown Point Pump Station).

Mission Viejo

- Mission Viejo High School, 25025 Chrisanta Drive in Mission Viejo, is located within ¼ mile of proposed pole/tower Site No. 3 (La Paz Underground). Interstate 5 is located between the high school and the proposed pole/tower location.
- The joint Silverado and Mira Monte High School campus, 25632 Peter A Hartman Way in Mission Viejo, is located within ¼ mile of proposed pole/tower Site No. 10 (North Aliso Lift Station).

The proposed poles/towers would not be characterized as a use that would emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. With regard to radio-frequency (RF) emission from the future wireless facilities, according to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Office of Engineering Technology:

> "Measurements made near typical cellular and personal communication service (PCS) installations, especially those with tower-mounted antennas, have shown that ground-level power densities are thousands of times less than the FCC's limits for safe exposure. This makes it extremely unlikely that a member of the general public could be exposed to RF levels in excess of FCC guidelines due solely to cellular or PCS base station antennas located on towers or monopoles."

These safety limits were adopted by the FCC based on the recommendation of expert organizations and endorsed by agencies of the federal government responsible for health and safety. Furthermore, an RF Site Compliance Report was prepared for Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station) (**Appendix F**) to determine whether the proposed tower would be in compliance with FCC rules and regulations for human exposure to RF emissions. As presented in Appendix F, the report concludes that MNWD would be compliant with all FCC rules and regulations. Therefore, there is no reason to believe that such towers could constitute a potential health hazard to nearby residents or students. Impacts would be less than significant.

The construction and the operations of the project would not subject sensitive receptors to hazardous materials or substances. A less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

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? Less Than Significant Impact

A review of the California Department of Toxic Substance Control EnviroStor Geotracker Database was conducted. This database contains information on the following types of sites: Federal Superfund, State Response, Voluntary Cleanup, School Cleanup, Evaluations, School Investigations,

Military Evaluations, Tiered Permits, Corrective Action, Hazardous Waste Permits, Monitoring Well, Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST) and Spills, Leaks, Investigations and Clean Up (SLIC). **Table 9** summarizes the sites that were within ¼ mile of any proposed pole/tower location.

Table 9. Geotracker Sites Within ¼ Mile of Proposed Poles/Towers

Site Name/ Address	Issue	Status	Distance to Proposed Pole/Tower
Chevron 25172 Cabot	LUST Cleanup Site	Cleanup Complete	950 feet north of Site No. 3
Mobil 26996 La Paz	LUST Cleanup Site	Cleanup Complete	975 feet north of Site No. 3
Tosco-76 25912 La Paz	LUST Cleanup Site	Eligible for Closure	950 feet northwest of Site No. 3
La Paz Stopple T Pipeline Release Las Paz Road Along Railroad Right of Way	Cleanup Program Site	Cleanup Complete	1,000 feet northeast of Site No. 3
Texaco 28922 Golden Lantern	LUST Cleanup Site	Cleanup Complete	1,320 feet southwest of Site No. 4
Monarch Laguna/Regis Home 32502 Crown Valley Pkwy.	LUST Cleanup Site	Cleanup Complete	600 feet south of Site No. 7
Rancho Reservoir Pump Station 29828 Golden Lantern	LUST Cleanup Site	Cleanup Complete	At Site No. 8
Texaco 25561 Jeronimo Road	LUST Cleanup Site	Cleanup Complete	500 feet east of Site No. 10
Mobil 25502 Jeronimo Road	LUST Cleanup Site	Cleanup Complete	300 feet east of Site No. 10
Mobil 25502 Jeronimo Road	LUST Cleanup Site	Open - Remediation	300 feet east of Site No. 10
Mission Viejo Company 23602 Via Fabricante	LUST Cleanup Site	Cleanup Complete	900 feet south of Site No. 10
Texaco 25562 Jeronimo Road	LUST Cleanup Site	Cleanup Complete	700 feet southeast of Site No. 10
Saddleback Valley USD 25631 Peter A. Hartman Drive	LUST Cleanup Site	Cleanup Complete	600 feet southeast of Site No. 10
Silverado Continuation High School 25632 Peter A. Hartman Way	School Investigation	No Action Required	940 feet southeast of Site No. 10

Note: LUST – Leaking Underground Storage Tank

Based upon the Geotracker review, Site No. 8 (Rancho Reservoir) is identified as a former LUST cleanup site. A diesel leak affecting on-site soils occurred in 1993. Following cleanup via excavation of the contaminated soils, the case was closed in 1994. Due to the nature of the incident and the fact that all impacted soils have been removed from the site, no impacts are anticipated to occur to the proposed pole/tower installation at this site.

LUST sites, a cleanup program site and one school investigation are located within ¼ mile of the proposed pole/tower locations. Four sites are in the vicinity of Site No. 3 (La Paz Underground), one

site is southwest of Site No. 4 (Crown Point Pump Station), one site is in the vicinity of Site No. 7 (Little Niguel Pump Station), and seven sites are near Site No. 10 (North Aliso Lift Station). With the exception of one tank, all of these sites have completed their cleanup or are eligible for closure.

For the site at Tosco-76, northwest of Site No. 3 (La Paz Underground), cleanup was conducted in 2002 and the site is eligible for closure as of 2013 following completion of appropriate review and public notification which is still ongoing. The Tosco-76 site is not anticipated to cause an issue for the construction of Site No. 3, since it is located over 500 feet from the site and is in the final phases of confirmation prior to case closure.

The Mobil site case on Jeronimo Road is open. Remediation activities took place in 2009, but groundwater well monitoring is still taking place. This site is located 300 feet from the proposed pole/tower location at Site No. 10 (North Aliso Lift Station). Due to the distance between this site and the nature of ongoing remediation activities, impacts would be less than significant.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles or a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? No Impact

The nearest airport to any of the proposed poles/towers is John Wayne Airport, which is located approximately eight miles to the northwest of proposed site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station). None of the proposed pole/tower locations are within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. Further, the project does not propose habitable structures for living or working; rather, the project is the construction of ten poles/towers for wireless communication devices. Therefore, there is no potential for a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. No impact is identified for this issue 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? No Impact

None of the proposed poles/towers are located in the vicinity of a private airstrip. Further, the project does not propose habitable structures for living or working; rather, the project is the construction of ten poles/towers for wireless communication devices. Therefore, there is no potential for a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. No impact is identified for this issue area.

g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? Less than Significant Impact

Evacuation routes are identified in each of the General Plans for the cities where the poles/towers would be placed. Several of the roadways adjacent to proposed construction areas are identified as evacuation or emergency routes, including Aliso Creek Road and Los Alisos Boulevard. Temporary lane closures could be required on a small portion of these roads for project construction and pole/tower placement. Any such closures would be limited to a single lane and would not result in complete closure of the roadway for vehicle traffic in either direction. Thus traffic flow, including the movement of emergency vehicles, would still be permitted. One of the design features for the project (Table 2) would implement traffic control requirements identified in encroachment permits from the various cities and traffic control will be performed per guidelines in the Work Area Traffic Control Handbook (WATCH) and the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and will

ensure adequate emergency access is maintained. Impacts are considered less than significant for this issue area.

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? No Impact

The proposed poles/towers would be located in urbanized areas and do not include construction that would expose people or structures to wildland fire. Additionally, the poles/towers would be constructed of fire-resistant material. No impacts are identified due fire risks involving to wildland fires.

IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements? No Impact

The project does not propose waste discharges that require waste discharge requirement permits, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, or water quality certification from the San Diego Regional Quality Control Board. A NPDES permit is not required because total ground disturbance for construction of the ten poles/towers will be less than one acre. Additionally, the project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. No impact is identified for this issue area.

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)? No Impact

The project would not rely on groundwater supplies nor would it interfere with groundwater recharge. The project is the construction of ten poles/towers with wireless devices. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

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? No Impact

The project is the construction of ten poles/towers for wireless communication devices. They would be located in currently paved, developed or disturbed areas. At the end of construction, there would be an approximate three-foot diameter cement footing for the pole or tower. Thus, the project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the proposed pole/tower sites or areas, 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. No impact is identified for this issue area.

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? No Impact

The project is the construction of ten poles/towers for wireless communication devices. They would be located in currently paved, developed or disturbed areas. At the end of construction, there would

be an approximate three-foot diameter cement footing for the pole or tower. Thus, the project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the proposed pole/tower sites or areas, 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. No impact is identified for this issue area.

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? Less than Significant Impact

The project is the construction of ten poles/towers for wireless communication devices. They would be located in currently paved, developed or disturbed areas and will have a final footprint of a three-foot diameter cement footing. Thus the project will not create or contribute runoff which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide a substantial additional source of polluted runoff. The project does not create a use that would increase runoff, since it is proposed in already paved areas. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality? Less Than Significant Impact

The project would not substantially degrade water quality. Best management practices would be implemented during project construction to minimize potential water quality impacts. The project is the construction of ten poles/towers for wireless communication devices. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary of Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map? No Impact

The project does not propose the construction of housing. The project is the construction of ten poles/towers for wireless communication equipment. Therefore, the project would not place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazards Boundary of a Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map. No impact is identified for this issue area.

h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows? No Impact

Per the Safety Policy Map (Figure S-1 of the Safety Element) of the Aliso Viejo General Plan, the proposed pole/tower locations in Aliso Viejo are located outside of 100-year flood zones (2004).

In the City of Laguna Hills, all proposed poles/towers are located outside of areas mapped as 100-year flood zones, as shown on the Flood Hazard Map (Figure S-3 of the Safety Element) of the Laguna Hills General Plan (2009).

For the poles/towers proposed in Laguna Niguel, none are located in areas mapped as 100-year flood zones, as shown on the Flood Plain Map (Figure SA-3 of the Seismic/Public Safety Element) of the Laguna Niguel General Plan (1992).

Similarly, per the Flood Hazard Zones Map (Figure PS-3 of the Public Safety Element) of the Mission Viejo General Plan (2009), the proposed poles/towers located in Mission Viejo are located out of 100-year flood zones. Therefore, since all poles/towers would be located outside of 100-year flood hazard areas, there is not a potential for them to impede or redirect flood flows. No impact is identified for this issue area.

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? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers to support wireless communication devices. The project does not propose people or structures that would cause a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding. All poles/towers would be outside of mapped 100-year flood hazard areas. No impact is identified for this issue area.

j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow? No Impact

The locations for the ten proposed poles/towers are not near a coastline, lake, or mountainous area that would be subject to seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. No impacts are identified for this issue area.

X. LAND USE AND PLANNING

a) Physically divide an established community? No Impact

The project does not propose any uses that divide an established community. The proposed project is the construction of ten poles/towers with wireless devices. Such equipment is not of a size that would have the potential to physically divide an established community. No impact is identified.

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? Less than Significant Impact

The General Plan and Zoning designations of the various pole/tower sites are presented in **Table 10**. The proposed project will comply with all applicable land use plans, policies or regulations with jurisdiction over the project. Thus, the proposed poles/towers would not conflict with any adopted plans for the four cities where the poles/towers are proposed. The facilities are proposed in areas where utilities are an allowable use and would be placed adjacent to existing MNWD facilities, such as reservoirs, pump stations and lift stations. Additionally, the poles/towers would be for the exclusive use of MNWD's SCADA equipment and would not be used for any cell towers. Therefore, impacts would be considered less than significant.

c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan? No Impact

Some of the project sites fall within areas that are covered by the Orange County-Central Coastal NCCP/HCP; however, MNWD is not a participating agency. No conflicts with any local biological resource protection regulations or NCCP/HCPs are expected, since the project does not impact wildlife corridors and potential indirect impacts to native biological resources will be mitigated to below a level of significance. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

Table 10. General Plan and Zoning Designations of Proposed Pole/Tower Locations

Site No.	Pole/Tower Location Name	General Plan Designation	Zoning Designation
1	Aliso Creek Lift Station Aliso Viejo, CA	CF – Community Facilities	CF – Community Facilities
2	Audubon Lift Station Aliso Viejo, CA	CF – Community Facilities	CF – Community Facilities
3	La Paz Underground Laguna Hills, CA	Freeway Commercial	FC – Freeway Commercial
4	Crown Point Pump Station Laguna Niguel, CA	Public/Institutional	PI – Public/Institutional District
5	AWMA2 Laguna Niguel, CA	Public/Institutional	PI – Public/Institutional District
6	Golden Lantern Reservoir Laguna Niguel, CA	Open Space and Parks and Recreation	OS – Open Space District and PR-Park & Recreation District
7	Little Niguel Pump Station Laguna Niguel, CA	No Designation (Adjacent to Community Commercial)	No Designation (Adjacent to CC – Community Commercial District and RS-3 – Single Family District 3)
8	Rancho Reservoir Laguna Niguel, CA	Public/Institutional District	PI – Public/Institutional District
9	Upper Salada Lift Station Laguna Niguel, CA	Neighborhood Commercial	CN – Neighborhood Commercial District
10	North Aliso Lift Station Mission Viejo, CA	Business Park	BP- Business Park

Sources: Aliso Viejo General Plan – Land Use Element Figure LU-1; Aliso Viejo Official Zoning Map; Laguna Hills General Plan Land Use Map Figure LU-6; Laguna Hills Zoning District Map; Laguna Niguel Official General Plan Map Figure LU-3; City of Laguna Niguel Official Zoning Code Map; and Mission Viejo Community View GIS Application (Land Use and Zoning Layers).

XI. MINERAL RESOURCES

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state? No Impact

The proposed pole/tower locations are in predominately urbanized areas and are not proposed in areas that contain any identified mineral resources. Construction of the poles/towers would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state, as no such resources are identified in the project area. No impact is identified for this issue area.

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? No Impact

Construction of the proposed wireless network infrastructure would not 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 as no such resources are identified in the specific locations where the poles/towers are proposed. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

XII. NOISE

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? Less Than Significant Impact

Construction noise represents a short-term impact on ambient noise levels. The US EPA has compiled data regarding the noise generating characteristics of specific types of construction equipment. Noise levels generated by heavy construction equipment at a distance of 50 feet can range from 60 dBA for a small tractor up to 100 dBA for rock breakers. These noise levels diminish rapidly with distance from the construction site at a rate of approximately 6 dBA per doubling of distance. For example, a noise level of 75 dBA measured at 50 feet from the noise source to the receptor would be reduced to 69 dBA at 100 feet from the source to the receptor, and reduced to 63 dBA at 200 feet from the source.

Construction activities would be required to comply with the requirements of the respective jurisdiction where the poles/towers are proposed to be placed. Requirements, by jurisdiction, are shown in **Table 11**. Adherence to these requirements is also identified as a project design feature (**Table 2**) and would be included as part of the conditions for project approval.

Table 11. Construction Noise Requirements by Jurisdiction

City	Noise Requirements
Aliso Viejo	Construction shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday.
Laguna Hills	Construction shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday.
Laguna Niguel	Construction, repair or maintenance of utility facilities shall occur between 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM, Monday through Saturday.
Mission Viejo	Construction (including delivery of materials and equipment) shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM, Monday through Saturday.

Source: City of Aliso Viejo Municipal Code Section 8.12.070, City of Laguna Hills Municipal Code Chapter 5-24, City of Laguna Niguel Municipal Code Section 6-6-7, and Mission Viejo Municipal Code Section 6.35.060.

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers for wireless communication devices. Construction of each tower will require a contractor to drill the holes using a truck mounted auger drill and construct concrete footings necessary to support each tower. After the footing holes are drilled the contractor will fill them with the necessary reinforcement and concrete such that the poles can then be lifted and set with a crane. The type of construction equipment required for the project would be limited to one drilling rig and one crane. Typical sound levels for the equipment construction equipment are as follows:

- Drilling Rig – approximately 76 dBA at 50 feet
- Crane – approximately 70 dBA at 50 feet

Construction at each site will take two to four days. Equipment would be used intermittently, as needed for construction. It is not expected that all equipment would run continuously or simultaneously.

The Municipal Code for each City exempts construction activities from noise standards, provided the activities do not take place between the hours of 8:00 PM and 7:00 AM on weekdays, 8:00 PM and 8:00 AM on Saturday, or at any time on Sunday or a federal holiday. Furthermore, as stated above, noise levels diminish at a rate of approximately 6 dBA per doubling of distance. **Table 12** describes the setting of each pole/tower site and distance to the nearest sensitive receptors. The distances identified below provide additional noise attenuation. Based on the increased distances identified in Table 3, noise levels are anticipated to be 6-20 decibels lower at the nearest residential uses.

Table 12. Site Location and Setting

Site Number	Location	Description
1	Aliso Creek Lift Station	Separated from single family residential by landscaped slopes to the south over 300 feet. Separated 100 feet from multi-family residential by multi-lane Aliso Creek Road to the north.
2	Audubon Lift Station	Single family located on three sides located 100 feet from tower.
3	La Paz Underground	Commercial/office setting parking lot. No sensitive noise receptors.
4	Crown Point Pump Station	Separated from multi-family residential to the west approximately 100 feet with a landscaped area.
5	AWMA2	At wastewater treatment plant. Residential located to the east over 500 feet from tower.
6	Golden Lantern Reservoir	This is in a park within a residential area. Tower location is slightly over 200 feet from the nearest residential use.
7	Little Niguel Pump Station	Residential to southwest. Tower location is slightly over 350 feet from the nearest residential use.
8	Rancho Reservoir	Single family residential to the north approximately 250 feet from the tower location and multi-family residential to the south 200 feet.
9	Upper Salada Lift Station	Near commercial development. Significant separation from residential.
10	North Aliso Lift Station	Near commercial, office, etc. no sensitive receptors.

As stated above, adherence to City requirements is included as part of the conditions for project approval; therefore, construction activities will be limited to occur within the construction noise requirement windows for each City.

Due to the short duration of construction, the limitation on construction identified in established municipal codes and the distance to nearby sensitive receptors, the projected noise levels will comply with the applicable noise standards at all property lines. Impacts are determined to be less than significant.

b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? Less than Significant Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers associated with a wireless network system. Construction activities include drilling and placement of the poles/towers. These activities would not be characterized as generating excessive groundborne vibrations or groundborne noise levels. Therefore, impacts are determined to be less than significant.

c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? No Impact

Existing ambient noise measurements were taken at or near each of the proposed pole/tower locations in November 2014 in the middle of the day using a sound level meter and microphone mounted on a tripod five feet above the ground. According to the noise memorandum prepared for the project (**Appendix ~~F~~G**), the average ambient hourly noise levels were found to be between 40-50 dBA in more remote areas with less traffic-related sources and between 60-70 dBA in areas near heavily traveled roadways (LdN Consulting 2014). The results of the noise level measurements are presented in **Table 13**.

Table 13. Existing Noise Levels

Site Number	Description	Noise Levels (dBA)					
		Leq	Lmax	Lmin	L10	L50	L90
1	Aliso Creek Lift Station	71.1	83.9	46.1	74.0	67.5	56.2
2	Audubon Lift Station	47.3	61.1	39.9	46.8	45.1	43.6
3	La Paz Underground	65.6	69.1	61.1	66.8	65.6	63.9
4	Crown Point Pump Station	67.8	76.5	48.3	72.1	64.8	52.4
5	AWMA2	50.9	60.6	46.4	53.1	49.6	47.0
6	Golden Lantern Reservoir	39.2	44.8	34.6	41.7	38.5	36.3
7	Little Niguel Pump Station	69.1	78.0	43.9	73.6	65.7	51.5
8	Rancho Reservoir	42.2	47.3	39.5	44.5	41.5	40.4
9	Upper Salada Lift Station	68.1	76.9	51.0	73.2	62.7	52.2
10	North Aliso Lift Station	64.1	72.4	52.4	68.0	61.8	53.6

Source: Ldn Consulting 2014.

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers associated with a wireless network system. Once in place, there would not be any operational noise associated with these poles/towers. Therefore, no Impact is identified for this issue area.

d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? Less Than Significant Impact

As identified above, any increases in the ambient noise condition due to construction of the proposed poles/towers would be temporary in nature and would not be characterized as substantial. The majority of the proposed pole/tower locations are adjacent to busy multi-lane roadways, which have a high ambient noise condition, as illustrated in Table 13. For those poles/towers proposed in residential areas, there may be a temporary increase in ambient noise

levels. However, this increase would not be characterized as substantial as it will occur during construction timeframes that are allowed under the applicable city codes. Additionally, the distance to nearby sensitive receptors includes intervening roadways, landscaping and topography that will further attenuate noise levels. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant.

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? No Impact

The nearest airport to any of the towers is John Wayne Airport, which is located approximately eight miles to the northwest of Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station). The project area is not within two miles of an airport to be included in an airport land use plan. Therefore, no impact is identified.

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? No Impact

None of the proposed poles/towers are located within the vicinity of a private airstrip. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING

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)? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten wireless communication poles/towers, which would be constructed adjacent to existing MNWD facilities. The poles/towers would be located in developed areas. The project does not propose residential development or new roadways that would create population growth in the area. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of a wireless network of ten poles/towers with attached wireless devices. The towers would be constructed on MNWD property, within MNWD easement areas or in adjacent City right-of-way. No residential structures would be removed. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of a wireless network of ten poles/towers with attached wireless devices. The towers would be constructed on MNWD property or in adjacent City right-of-way. Therefore, the construction would not result in the displacement of any people, nor would it necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

a) Fire protection? Less Than Significant Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers to enhance wireless communication at MNWD facilities. The project does not propose a use that would result in an increased demand for fire protection. MNWD would coordinate with the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo to ensure that adequate access for emergency responders, including the fire department, would be maintained at all times. Additionally, prior to construction MNWD would implement traffic control requirements identified in the encroachment permits from Laguna Niguel and traffic control will be performed per guidelines in WATCH and MUTCD manuals. Adequate emergency access will be maintained during project construction. Therefore, impacts related to fire protection would be less than significant.

b) Police protection? Less Than Significant Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers to enhance wireless communication at MNWD facilities. The project does not propose a use that would result in an increased demand for police protection. MNWD would coordinate with the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo to ensure that adequate access for emergency responders, including police/sheriff, would be maintained at all times. Additionally, prior to construction MNWD would implement traffic control requirements identified in the encroachment permit from Laguna Niguel and traffic control will be performed per guidelines in WATCH and MUTCD manuals. Adequate emergency access will be maintained during project construction. Therefore, impacts related to police protection would be less than significant.

c) Schools? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of a wireless network system consisting of ten poles/towers with wireless devices. According to online address verification services and school district boundary maps, the project area falls within the Saddleback Valley Unified School District and the Capistrano Unified School District. The project does not propose a use that would generate students. Therefore, no impact related to schools is identified for the project.

d) Parks? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers for wireless devices. The project does not propose a use that would generate additional residents that would result in an increased demand for parks. All poles/towers would be located adjacent to existing MNWD facilities, within MNWD easements or in City right-of-way. No impact to park or recreation facilities would occur. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

e) Other public facilities? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of a wireless network of ten poles/towers with attached wireless devices. The towers would be constructed on MNWD property, within MNWD easements, or in City right-of-way. The project does not propose a use that would impact other public facilities that are not already considered in this analysis. Therefore, no impact related to other public facilities is identified for the project.

XV. 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? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of a wireless network of ten poles/towers with attached wireless devices. The towers would be constructed on MNWD property, within MNWD easements, or in adjacent City right-of-way. The project does not propose a use that would generate additional residents that would result in increased use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities, such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

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? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of a wireless network of ten poles/towers with attached wireless devices. The towers would be constructed on MNWD property, within MNWD easements, or in adjacent City right-of-way. The project does not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

a) 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)? Less Than Significant Impact

The project proposes the construction of a wireless network of ten poles/towers with attached wireless devices. Some of the poles/towers would be constructed adjacent to roadways, thus the project has the potential to require temporary lane closures during the placement of some of the poles/towers. Lane closures at each of the pole/tower sites, if needed, would be limited to one or two days, and only during construction hours. Any such closures would be limited to a single lane and would not result in complete closure of the roadway to allow continued vehicle traffic in either direction. Additionally, prior to construction MNWD would implement traffic control requirements identified in encroachment permit requirements from the City of Laguna Niguel and traffic control will be performed per guidelines in WATCH and MUTCD manuals. The traffic control approach will ensure that adequate traffic flow is maintained during project construction. Therefore, impacts will be less than significant.

Construction related traffic would be minimal and would include a drilling rig and crane. Some worker truck trips would also occur, to provide worker access to and from the job site. It is expected that less than ten worker trips per day would occur. Given the large volumes of traffic that move along many of the roadways where the poles/towers are proposed, the contribution of these short term construction trips would be minor. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant. Once the poles/towers are placed, operational trips would be limited to trips for repair or replacement of

equipment, if there is a failure. Again, these occasional repair visits are not expected to contribute a significant amount of traffic to the local roadway network. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways? Less Than Significant Impact

The project proposes the construction of a wireless network of ten poles/towers with attached wireless devices. The project would generate minimal traffic during construction. Two pieces of equipment would be used (drilling rig and crane) and up to ten worker trips per day would occur at each site. These trips would be short term and vary in location depending which tower is under construction. Additionally, MNWD will implement traffic control requirements identified in the encroachment permits from the City of Laguna Niguel and traffic control will be performed per guidelines in WATCH and MUTCD manuals. The encroachment permits could include limits on construction hours to ensure that travel lanes are maintained during peak hour traffic. From an operational perspective, trips would be limited to the occasional visit to repair or replace equipment, in the event of a failure. In summary, the amount of traffic generated by the project during construction and operation would be minimal and would not exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways. Impacts would be less than significant.

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? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers for wireless devices. Poles/towers will range from 10 to 60 feet in height. None of the devices are located in areas that could impact air traffic patterns. The closest airport to any of the poles is the John Wayne airport, which is approximately eight miles away. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers for wireless devices. The poles/towers would be located in safe areas, outside travel lanes or any other areas that could pose a hazard to motorists. Additionally, MNWD will implement traffic control requirements identified in any encroachment permits from the City of Laguna Niguel and traffic control will be performed per guidelines in WATCH and MUTCD manuals. Traffic control will reduce traffic impacts to area residents. Therefore, no impacts are identified.

e) Result in inadequate emergency access? Less Than Significant Impact

Construction and placement of the poles/towers may require temporary lane closures. As mentioned previously, a traffic control requirements will be implemented to ensure that adequate emergency access is maintained during project construction. Impacts are considered less than significant.

f) Result in inadequate parking capacity? Less Than Significant Impact

The majority of the proposed pole/tower locations are proposed adjacent to multi-lane roads and parkways that do not permit on-street parking. Site No. 2 (Audubon Lift Station) is proposed in a residential area that allows on-street parking. There will be adequate space for equipment and materials staging at this site and on-street staging will not be required. Workers coming to the project site will park on the street during work hours; however, no removal of parking due to construction storage is anticipated. Due to the large amount of on-street parking, as well as the fact that worker vehicles would be limited in number, impacts are less than significant.

g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)? Less than Significant Impact

Several of the proposed pole/tower locations are adjacent to roadways that have dedicated bicycle lanes. These include Crown Valley Parkway (Site No. 4), Niguel Road (Sites Nos. 7 and 9) and Los Alisos Boulevard (Site No. 10).

The project includes implementation of traffic control requirements identified in encroachment permits from the City of Laguna Niguel. Additionally, traffic control will be performed per guidelines in WATCH and MUTCD manuals to ensure that adequate vehicle travel, bicycle travel, and emergency access are maintained during project construction. Thus bicycle safety and movement along these roadways would be addressed and alternative routing or signage identified. Impacts would be less than significant.

Orange County Transportation Authority has several bus routes that pass along streets within the project area. These include Routes 85, 89, 90, 187, 212, 216 and 490. None of these routes have stops immediately in front of areas where construction is proposed. Therefore in the event that temporary lane closures are needed for construction and pole/tower placement, impacts to public transportation is not expected. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers with wireless devices. These project components would not result in an increase or exceedance of wastewater treatment requirements of San Diego Regional Water Control Board. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects. No Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers with wireless devices. These project components would not result in the need to construct new water or wastewater treatment facilities. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

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? No Impact

The proposed poles/towers are to be constructed in an urban area which contains existing stormwater drainage facilities. The project would not require the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed? No Impact

The project proposes the construction of ten poles/towers with wireless devices. The project does not result in an increased demand on water supply. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

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? No Impact

The project is the construction of poles/towers with wireless devices. The project does not propose an increase in population which would impact the wastewater treatment provider. No impact is identified for this issue area.

f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs? Less than Significant Impact

The project is the construction of poles/towers with wireless devices. The project will not require the demolition of existing structures, nor is it expected to create solid waste that would need to be disposed in local landfills. Soil material that is displaced due to the drilling rig and pole placement would be taken to an appropriate location. A less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste? No Impact

The cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo all have Construction and Demolition (C&D) Ordinances that require various levels of recycling and diversion for waste generated during new construction, additions, or demolition projects. The project is the construction of poles/towers with wireless devices. The project will not require the demolition of existing structures, nor is it expected to create solid waste that would need to be disposed in local landfills. In the event that waste material is generated, all waste would be handled in a manner that complies with federal, state, and local statues related to solid waste, including the C&D Ordinances of the respective cities.

V. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following are Mandatory Findings of Significance in accordance with Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines.

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? Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated

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 were considered in the response to each question in Sections IV and V of this form. In addition to project specific impacts, this evaluation considered the project's potential for significant cumulative effects. Resources that could potentially impacted by the project are related to biological resources (potential for impacts to least Bell's vireo, California coastal gnatcatcher and MBTA-protected species). However, mitigation has been included that reduces these effects to a level below significance (MM BIO-1, BIO-2 and BIO-3). This mitigation includes preconstruction surveys for sensitive bird species if work is proposed during the breeding season, as well as supplemental mitigation such as noise attenuation if sensitive species are identified. Impacts to cultural resources were determined to be less than significant. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that, after mitigation, significant effects associated with this project would result. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

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.) Less Than Significant Impact

No concurrent construction activities are proposed by MNWD at the facilities where the proposed poles/towers will be located. Any activity at the facilities is expected to be routine maintenance. Additionally, due the short duration of project construction (two to three months for the 10 poles/towers) and the fact that all impacts are mitigated to below a level of significance, the project would not contribute significantly to a cumulative impact for any of the environmental issue areas analyzed in this document. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? Less Than Significant Impact

In the evaluation of environmental impacts in this IS, the potential for adverse direct or indirect impacts to human beings were considered in the response to certain questions in

Sections I. Aesthetics, III. Air Quality, VI. Geology and Soils, VIII. Hazards and Hazardous Materials, IX. Hydrology and Water Quality, XII. Noise, XIII. Population and Housing, and XVI. Transportation and Traffic. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that there are adverse effects on human beings associated with this project or that potential impacts would be mitigated to below a level of significance. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

VI. PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED

This section identifies those persons who prepared or contributed to preparation of this document. This section is prepared in accordance with Section 15129 of the CEQA Guidelines.

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VIII. REFERENCES

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IX. MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Moulton Niguel Water District

The following Mitigated Negative Declaration is being circulated for public review in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act Section 21091 and 21092 of the Public Resources Code.

Public Review Period: January 23, 2015 to February 23, 2015

Project Name: Wireless Network Implementation Project

Project Applicant: Moulton Niguel Water District, 27500 La Paz Road, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Project Location: Ten wireless communication poles/towers are proposed to be located within the MNWD service area, including two within the City of Aliso Viejo, one in the City of Laguna Hills, seven in the City of Laguna Niguel, and three in the City of Mission Viejo. Towers are primarily located in urbanized areas, adjacent to existing MNWD facilities, such as pump stations, lift stations or reservoirs.

Project Description: The project is the completion of the implementation of a wireless network for MNWD's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System (SCADA) to enhance communication/system function, both on a daily operational basis and during an emergency situation. The project includes the construction of ten poles/towers ranging from 10 to 60 feet within MNWD's service area. Equipment attached to the poles/towers would be a wireless device (e.g., SkyPilot Gateway or SkyPilot Extender). Additionally, on the proposed pole/tower at the Rancho Reservoir site (Site No. 8), two dish-style antennas (two-feet in diameter) will be placed on the pole. The ten locations and required pole heights are presented below.

Proposed Pole/Tower Locations and Height

Site No.	Pole/Tower Location Name	Address	Height (feet)
City of Aliso Viejo			
1	Aliso Creek Lift Station	21933 Aliso Creek Road	50
2	Audubon Lift Station	25364 Hummingbird Lane	30
City of Laguna Hills			
3	La Paz Underground	25322 1/2 Cabot Road	40
City of Laguna Niguel			
4	Crown Point Pump Station	29043 Crown Valley Parkway	40
5	AWMA2	29201 La Paz Road	50
6	Golden Lantern Reservoir	32274 Old Ranch Road	10
7	Little Niguel Pump Station	30315 Niguel Road	40
8	Rancho Reservoir	29828 Golden Lantern	60
9	Upper Salada Lift Station	31447 Niguel Road	40
City of Mission Viejo			
10	North Aliso Lift Station	23492 Los Alisos Boulevard	50

Project construction is expected to occur over a three to four month period. The poles/towers would be constructed one at a time and would take about two to four days to complete. After one pole is complete, construction would proceed to the next pole/tower location. Equipment used

during construction includes: a drill rig to drill the footing for the pole/tower; a concrete truck to deliver and place the concrete; and a crane to place the pole into position. Additional worker vehicles (up to five) are assumed at each pole/tower construction site. The final footprint of the completed pole would be an approximate three-foot diameter cement footing. No new landscaping or lighting is proposed at the pole/tower locations.

Construction staging would be confined to areas that are paved or disturbed. All staging and construction would occur on land owned by MNWD, within MNWD easements or within City right-of-way. Construction hours would be consistent with the respective noise ordinance/city code for the cities where the poles/towers would be located.

X. FINDINGS

This is to advise that the Moulton Niguel Water District acting as the lead agency, has conducted an Initial Study to determine if the project may have a significant effect on the environmental and is proposing this Mitigated Negative Declaration based upon the following findings:

☐ The Initial Study shows that there is no substantial evidence that the project may have a significant effect on the environment and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ The Initial Study identifies potentially significant effects but:

(1) Proposals made or agreed to by the applicant before this proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration was released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur.

(2) There is no substantial evidence before the agency that the project may have a significant effect on the environment.

(3) Mitigation measures are required to ensure all potentially significant impacts are reduced to levels of insignificance. Mitigation proposed for the project includes:

MM-BIO-1 California Coastal Gnatcatcher

The following measure would apply to all project sites near Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub habitats, including Site 2 (Audubon Lift Station), Site 5 (AWMA2), Site 7 (Little Niguel Pump Station) and Site 9 (Upper Salada Lift Station):

If construction activities are proposed between March 1 and August 15, a USFWS protocol survey for California Gnatcatcher shall be performed by a USFWS-permitted biologist. For the survey area, a total of six surveys at least seven days apart are required if conducted from March 1-August 15, or a total of nine surveys 14 days apart if conducted between July 1 through March 14. If surveys are negative, no further action is required. If surveys are positive, the following restriction would apply. If the applicant does not wish to perform USFWS protocol surveys, species presence can be assumed and the following requirement followed.

A) No construction activities shall result in noise levels exceeding 60 dB(A) hourly average or raise the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average within occupied California Gnatcatcher habitat (as determined by a USFWS-permitted biologist based on USFWS protocol surveys; or in any Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub habitat if Gnatcatcher presence is assumed). An analysis showing consistency with this requirement must be completed by a qualified acoustician (possessing current noise engineer license or registration with monitoring noise level experience with ESA-listed animal species) at least two weeks prior to commencement of construction activities.

OR

B) At least two weeks prior to the commencement of construction activities, under the direction of a qualified acoustician, noise attenuation measures (e.g., berms, walls) shall be

implemented to ensure that noise levels will not exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average at the edge of occupied California Gnatcatcher habitat (as determined by a USFWS-permitted biologist based on USFWS protocol surveys; or in any Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub habitat if protocol surveys are not performed and Gnatcatcher presence is assumed) or raise noise levels above ambient if levels already exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average. Concurrent with the commencement of construction activities and the construction of necessary noise attenuation facilities, noise monitoring shall be conducted at the edge of California Gnatcatcher occupied/presumed occupied habitat to ensure that noise levels do not exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average or raise the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. If the noise attenuation techniques are determined to be inadequate by the qualified acoustician or biologist, then construction activities shall cease until such time that adequate noise attenuation is achieved or until the end of breeding season (August 16). Construction noise monitoring shall continue to be monitored at least twice weekly on varying days, or more frequently depending on the construction activity, to verify that noise levels at the edge of occupied/presumed occupied habitat are maintained below 60 dB(A) hourly average or to the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. If not, other measures shall be implemented in consultation with the biologist as necessary, to reduce noise levels to below 60 dB(A) hourly average or to the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, limitations on the placement of construction equipment and the simultaneous use of equipment.

MM-BIO-2 Least Bell's Vireo

The following mitigation measure is applicable to Site 1 (Aliso Creek Lift Station):

If construction activities are proposed between April 10 and July 31 at, a USFWS protocol survey for Least Bell's Vireo shall be performed by a qualified biologist. Protocol surveys require a total of eight surveys at least ten days apart between the period of April 10 to July 31. If surveys are negative, no further action is required. If surveys are positive, the following restriction would apply. Note that if the applicant does not wish to perform USFWS protocol surveys, species presence can be assumed and the following requirement followed.

No construction activities shall result in noise levels exceeding 60 dB(A) hourly average or raise the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average within occupied Least Bell's Vireo habitat (as determined by a qualified biologist based on USFWS protocol surveys; or in any riparian forest habitat if least Bell's vireo presence is assumed). An analysis showing consistency with this requirement must be completed by a qualified acoustician (possessing current noise engineer license or registration with monitoring noise level experience with Endangered Species Act-listed animal species) at least two weeks prior to commencement of construction activities.

OR

At least two weeks prior to the commencement of construction activities, under the direction of a qualified acoustician, noise attenuation measures (e.g., berms, walls) shall be implemented to ensure that construction noise levels will not exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average at the edge of occupied Least Bell's Vireo habitat (as determined by a USFWS-permitted biologist based on USFWS protocol surveys; or in any riparian forest habitat if least Bell's vireo presence is

assumed) or raise levels above ambient if levels already exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average. Concurrent with the commencement of construction activities and the construction of necessary noise attenuation facilities, noise monitoring shall be conducted at the edge of least Bell's vireo occupied/presumed occupied habitat to ensure that noise levels do not exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average or raise levels above ambient if levels already exceed 60 dB(A) hourly average. If the noise attenuation techniques are determined to be inadequate by the qualified acoustician or biologist, then construction activities shall cease until such time that adequate noise attenuation is achieved or until the end of breeding season (August 1). Construction noise monitoring shall continue to be monitored at least twice weekly on varying days, or more frequently depending on the construction activity, to verify that noise levels at the edge of occupied/presumed occupied habitat are maintained below 60 dB(A) hourly average or to the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. If not, other measures shall be implemented in consultation with the biologist as necessary, to reduce noise levels to below 60 dB(A) hourly average or to the ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dB(A) hourly average. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, limitations on the placement of construction equipment and the simultaneous use of equipment.

MM-BIO-3 Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The following mitigation measure applies to all proposed construction sites.

No direct impacts to nesting birds are permitted. If construction is proposed within 300 feet of trees or ornamental vegetation during the breeding season (January 15 through September 15), a pre-construction survey must be performed by a qualified biologist to determine if any birds are nesting within or immediately adjacent to the impact area. The survey must be conducted no more than three days prior to commencing project activities. If surveys show that nesting birds are present, a no-work buffer would be placed around the nest. The buffer size would be determined by a qualified biologist and would vary based on site conditions and type of work to be conducted. The no-work buffer would be maintained until the end of the breeding season or until surveys by a qualified biologist confirm that fledglings are no longer dependent on nest. If no nesting birds are detected during pre-construction surveys, no restrictions would be necessary and construction may proceed as planned.

A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

If adopted, the Mitigated Negative Declaration means that an Environmental Impact Report will not be required. Reasons to support this finding are included in the attached Initial Study. The project file and all related documents are available for review at the Moulton Niguel Water District, Engineering Department, 26161 Gordon Road, Laguna Hills, CA 92653.

7-29-2015
Date of Determination

Eva Plajzer

#4.

Appendices A through G are contained on a CD in back pocket of document.