

4.1 Land Use

4.1.1 Abstract

Agriculture is the largest land use in Monterey County, and represents about 56% of the total land area in the county. The second largest land use, about 23.5% of the total land area, consists of public and quasi-public land uses such as parks, military facilities, recreational and community facilities. Approximately 4.8% of Monterey County (including the incorporated cities) is developed with residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. The remaining 16% is in resource conservation or other land uses. Most of the urban development is concentrated in the northern one-third of the county, near several incorporated cities including Salinas, Marina and Monterey. Likewise, most of the county's population is concentrated in the incorporated cities located in the northern one-third of the county. A quarter of the county residents live in unincorporated areas. The largest unincorporated communities are Prunedale, Castroville, Carmel Valley, Del Monte Forest, and Pajaro.

Most population growth has occurred within the cities. As described in Section 4.15, Population and Housing, cities currently account for approximately 75% of the total county population. In 1980, cities accommodated about 71% of the total population. Proposed county policies would encourage this trend and limit urbanization within the county to Community Areas and Rural Communities, with density enhancements available within defined Affordable Housing Overlay areas. Additional proposed policies would support continued agricultural use.

All potential land use impacts from development and land use activities proposed by the 2007 General Plan would be less than significant and would not require mitigation.

4.1.2 Environmental Setting

4.1.2.1 Existing Land Use

Monterey County contains a broad array of land use types, as summarized in Section 3, Project Description, Table 3-4, "Countywide General Plan Land Uses." The largest land group in the County is agricultural land, followed by public and quasi-public lands (consisting mostly of federal and state lands). Urban development is primarily located along Monterey Bay and in the Salinas Valley. Rural and semi-rural development is scattered throughout the county.

4.1.2.2 1982 General Plan

Monterey County's most recent General Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in September 1982. The existing 1982 General Plan has been amended numerous times over the past 26 years to include the seven Area Plans, the Carmel Valley and Fort Ord Master Plans, the Local Coastal Plans, several specific plans, and various property owner requests for land use re-designations. The acreage of each land use category in the existing 1982 General Plan, as amended, is summarized in Section 3, "Project Description," in Table 3-4, "Countywide General Plan Land Uses."

The Land Use Element of the 2007 General Plan establishes policies to designate the general distribution and intensity of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, public facilities, and open space uses of the land in the county. The main vision of the Land Use Element is to create a general framework that encourages growth within or near developed/developing areas in order to reduce impacts to agricultural production, natural resources, or public services. Areas where development would be encouraged include incorporated cities and designated community areas where existing services are available. These areas would be subject to additional levels of planning consisting of the general plans adopted by cities, and community plans or specific plans to be adopted by the Board of Supervisors for the community areas. In addition, the 2007 General Plan designates rural centers where development has already occurred and that would be allowed to develop in a semi-rural character (Monterey County 2007).

The 2007 General Plan consists of policies that apply countywide and policies unique to a specific region. Countywide policies are applicable to the entire unincorporated area and are included in the Land Use Element. More focused policies that address specific regional or local issues are found in Area Plans (Monterey County 2007).

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the 2007 General Plan guides the county in the long-term conservation and preservation of open space lands and natural resources while protecting private property rights. The County's intent is not to alter existing regional, State or Federal laws or regulations, but rather to enable greater cooperation among public agencies and the public to share management responsibilities in accomplishing a shared goal of conserving and protecting the resources of the region (Monterey County 2007). Among the more prominent features within Monterey County are the Santa Lucia and Gabilan Mountain Ranges, the Salinas and Carmel Valleys, and about 100 miles of coastline. Of special note are such features as the Elkhorn Slough (North County), sandy beaches of Monterey and Carmel Bays, and the rocky shores/cliffs of the Monterey Peninsula and the Big Sur coast.

Area Plans and Master Plans

Following the adoption of the existing General Plan in 1982, the County prepared and adopted area plans for seven sub-areas: North County, Greater Salinas,

Central Salinas Valley, Greater Monterey Peninsula, Toro, Cachagua, and South County. Each Area Plan contains supplemental policies intended to more specifically guide future land use activities in accordance with the local characteristics of each area. The locations of the Area Plans are depicted in Section 3, Project Description, Exhibit 3-2, and are further detailed in Exhibits 3-3 through 3-10. The existing 1982 General Plan land use designations within each Area Plan are also summarized in Section 3.

In addition to the Area Plans, the County prepared and adopted two master plans within the *Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan* to further guide land use activities in two unique areas of the County. The *Carmel Valley Master Plan* was adopted in 1986, and the *Fort Ord Master Plan* was adopted in 2001. The *Carmel Valley Master Plan* establishes detailed land use policies designed to preserve the semi-rural character and natural features of Carmel Valley. Land use policies in the *Fort Ord Master Plan* are designed to facilitate redevelopment of the former U.S. Army installation to civilian uses.

Local Coastal Program

The proposed 2007 General Plan is not proposing any changes to the County's Local Coastal Program. The following is presented as general background on state regulations within the coastal area. Any future proposals to amend any of the Local Coastal Programs would be separate from the proposed 2007 General Plan.

Pursuant to the California Coastal Act, Monterey County amended its General Plan in the 1980s to adopt a Local Coastal Program (LCP) made up of land use plans (policy) and coastal implementation plans (regulatory) that govern land use within the coastal zone. Monterey County's LCP consists of four planning areas: North County—Coastal, Del Monte Forest, Carmel Area, and Big Sur Coast. Policies for development within these areas are established in land use plans that have been certified by the California Coastal Commission (CCC). In addition, the *North County Land Use Plan* includes the *Moss Landing Community Plan* (a component of the *Coastal Land Use Plan*), which serves as a master plan for that community.

As stipulated in the Coastal Act, the CCC has authority to certify land use policy in the coastal zone. CCC retains land use authority in areas of original jurisdiction and for all work below the mean high tide level. In addition, CCC has limited appeal authority over the following coastal permit applications (Chapter 20.88 Capital Improvement Program [CIP]):

- Approved projects between the sea and the first through public road paralleling the sea or within 300 feet of the inland extent of any beach or of the mean high tide line of the sea where there is no beach, whichever is the greater distance.

- Approved projects in county jurisdiction located on tidelands, submerged lands, public trust lands, within 100 feet of any wetland, estuary, or stream or within 300 feet of the top of the seaward face of any coastal bluff.
- Any approved project involving development that is permitted in the underlying zone as a conditional use. Uses listed as principal uses are not appealable to the CCC unless they fall within the above categories by location.
- Any project involving development that constitutes a major public works project or a major energy facility.

Section 30241 of the California Coastal Act also serves as a regulatory framework for agricultural uses in the coastal zone. That section states:

The maximum amount of prime agricultural land shall be maintained in agricultural production to assure the protection of the area's agricultural economy, and conflicts shall be minimized between agricultural and urban land uses through all of the following:

- (a) By establishing stable boundaries separating urban and rural areas, including, where necessary, clearly defined buffer areas to minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban land uses.
- (b) By limiting conversions of agricultural lands around the periphery of urban areas to the lands where the viability of existing agricultural use is already severely limited by conflicts with urban uses or where the conversion of the lands would compete a logical and viable neighborhood and contribute to the establishment of a stable limit to urban development.
- (c) By permitting the conversion of agricultural land surrounded by urban uses where the conversion of the land would be consistent with Section 30250.
- (d) By developing available lands not suited for agriculture prior to the conversion of agricultural lands.
- (e) By assuring the public service and facility expansions and nonagricultural development do not impact agricultural viability, either through increased assessment costs degraded air and water quality.
- (f) By assuring that all divisions of prime agricultural lands, except those conversions approved pursuant to subdivision (b), and all development adjacent to prime agricultural lands shall not diminish the productivity of such prime agricultural lands. (Amended by: Ch. 1066, Stats. 1981; Ch. 43, Stats. 1982.)

4.1.3 Regulatory Framework

4.1.3.1 Federal and State

Habitat Conservation Plans

The U.S. and California Endangered Species Acts prohibit unauthorized take of species listed as endangered or threatened. The meaning of "take" includes deliberate harm, such as trapping or shooting, but also unintentional harm that occurs incidental to an otherwise lawful activity, such as residential or commercial development. A Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), under section 10(a)(2)(A) of the Endangered Species Act, is a planning document that is a mandatory component of an Incidental Take Permit application. Both the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) contain requirements and restrictions for incidental take, but only the federal ESA specifically requires an HCP. An approved HCP allows the property owner to harm a listed species or its habitat in order to carry out an approved land use, providing that other habitat is protected to benefit the listed species. An HCP must ensure that the effects of the authorized incidental take will be adequately minimized and mitigated to the maximum extent practicable. An Incidental Take Permit allows a project to have a negative impact on endangered species as long as mitigation identified in the HCP is provided. An HCP contains the following components: an assessment of impacts likely to result from the proposed taking of one or more Federally listed or unlisted species; measures the applicant will undertake to monitor, mitigate and minimize the impact on wildlife; funding sources that will be available to implement the plan; procedures to deal with unforeseen circumstances; and alternative actions that the applicant analyzed and the reasons why the applicant did not adopt such alternatives. HCPs vary in size from several acres to several hundred-thousand acres. There are several HCPs in Monterey County, including the Post Ranch Inn HCP in Big Sur (approved 2006), the Sarment Property HCP in Carmel Highlands (approved 2007), and the Wildcat Line LP HCP in Carmel Highlands (approved 2001). A Habitat Management Plan has been adopted for Fort Ord, but that is not an HCP.

Natural Community Conservation Plans

In 1991, California's Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (NCCPA) was enacted to implement broad-based planning that balances appropriate development and growth with conservation of wildlife and habitat (California Fish and Game Code, Section 2800 *et seq.*). Pursuant to the NCCPA, local, state, and federal agencies are encouraged to prepare Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCPs) to provide comprehensive management and conservation of multiple species and their habitats under a single plan, rather than through preparation of numerous individual plans on a project-by-project basis. The primary objective of the NCCP program is to conserve natural communities at the ecosystem scale while accommodating compatible land use. An approved

NCCP provides for take of species whose conservation and management are provided for in the Plan (California Fish and Game Code Section 2835). To be approved by the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), an NCCP must provide for the conservation of species and protect natural communities within the plan area in perpetuity. While HCPs are required for compliance with the federal ESA, participation in NCCPs is voluntary. There are no proposed or approved NCCPs in Monterey County.

4.1.3.2 California Housing Element Law

Housing Element Law (Government Code Section 65580, et seq.) requires the County to adopt a housing element as part of its general plan. In brief, the housing element must identify the housing needs of all economic segments of the community and designate sufficient land with compatible zoning to meet that need. Because meeting the housing need depends upon the private sector, and the economics of housing tends to favor the production of market-rate housing, the most challenging portion of overall housing need to meet is affordable housing (i.e., housing for very low-income, low-income, and moderate income market segments). Housing Element Law establishes the process by which the County is assigned a portion of the regional housing need, as projected by the State Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) and AMBAG. The housing element is subject to review by HCD to determine its consistency with Housing Element Law.

4.1.3.3 Local

Local Agency Formation Commission of Monterey County

A Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is a regulatory agency with county-wide jurisdiction established by state law to discourage urban sprawl and to encourage orderly and efficient provision of public services, such as water, sewer and fire protection. In California, LAFCO actions are governed by the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000. LAFCOs are responsible for reviewing and approving proposed jurisdictional boundary changes, including the annexation and detachment of territory to or from cities and most special districts, formations of new special districts, and consolidations of existing districts. In addition, LAFCOs must determine and approve spheres of influence for each city and district within a county.

The broad mission of the Monterey County LAFCO is to provide for an orderly pattern of growth that reconciles the varied needs of the multiple jurisdictions within the County. One of the fundamental principles of the Monterey County LAFCO is to ensure the establishment of an appropriate and logical municipal government structure for the distribution of efficient and appropriate public services. Monterey County LAFCO land use objectives include the following:

- Discouraging urban sprawl;

- Preserving of the physical and economic integrity of agricultural lands;
- Preserving open space within urban development patterns;
- Promoting the orderly formation and development of agencies by shaping local agency boundaries;
- Minimizing the number of agencies providing services to a given area; and
- Utilizing Spheres of Influence to guide future development of agency boundaries.

4.1.3.4 Growth Management Policy

The 2007 General Plan has its basis in the following Growth Management Policy adopted by the Board of Supervisors in October 1979:

Managed growth must be incorporated into the General Plan of the County. In so doing, the General Plan must be written to include appropriate growth areas within the County. These areas must recognize the diversity among the lands of the County and provide for the planning of each area in a way that utilizes its unique characteristics. The policies for each planning areas to be defined within the General Plan must countenance differences between the planning areas in terms of natural resources, physical and environmental attributes, economic development, and sociocultural development. Furthermore, growth areas shall be designated only where there is provision for an adequate level of services and facilities such as water, sewer, fire protection, and drainage, and be coordinated with school authorities.

The Growth Management Policy establishes a land use policy within the county to preserve vast areas of agricultural lands and natural open space and to establish areas of suburban developments and a number of more urban unincorporated communities.

The Growth Management Policy states that growth must be managed in the County and identifies appropriate growth areas. Growth areas are to be designated where provision for an adequate coordination with school authorities can be achieved. The Growth Management Policy also states that urban development should be discouraged in areas lying outside the boundaries of urban service areas and limits premature and unnecessary conversion of open space outside the urban service areas. New areas of development concentration are to be encouraged if they can be shown to achieve other aspects of growth management, such as preservation of prime agricultural lands or the protection of other natural resources. New areas of development concentration are to provide urban services such as water, sewage treatment, roads, commercial facilities, schools, and fire protection. The Community Area designation in the 2007 Plan is the successor to this concept. The area of development concentration designation will not longer be included in the General Plan.

4.1.3.5 2007 General Plan Goals and Policies

The 2007 General Plan Land Use Element establishes goals and corresponding policies to address land use impacts.

4.1.4 Project Impacts

This section describes the CEQA impact analysis relating to land use and plan consistency for the proposed project. It describes the methods used to determine the proposed project's impacts and lists the thresholds used to conclude whether an impact would be significant. If applicable, measures to mitigate (avoid, minimize, rectify, reduce, eliminate, or compensate for) significant impacts accompany each impact discussion.

4.1.4.1 Methodology

The analysis assesses potential conflicts that could arise from proposed land use policies and designations associated with the implementation of the 2007 Monterey County General Plan. The thresholds of significance listed below are used to determine whether the proposed project would result in significant environmental impacts.

4.1.4.2 Thresholds of Significance

Criteria for determining the significance of impacts related to land use and planning are based on criteria set forth in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines (14 Cal. Code Regs. §15000 et seq.). Implementation of the 2007 General Plan would cause a significant impact on land use if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Physically divide an established community;
- Conflict with any applicable land use plans or policies adopted by agencies with jurisdiction over the Project area (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;
- Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

4.1.4.3 Impact Analysis

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan to the 2030 planning horizon and buildout in the year 2092 would designate growth and increased densities in

specific areas, such as in the Community Areas, Rural Centers, Affordable Housing Overlay Areas. However, growth areas would be designated only where an adequate level of services and facilities such as water, sewerage, fire and police protection, transportation, and school exists or be assured.

Division of an Established Community

Impact LU-1: Implementation of the 2007 General Plan would potentially result in the physical division of established communities. (Less-Than-Significant Impact.)

2030 Planning Horizon

Impact of Development with Policies

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan to the 2030 planning horizon would result in changes to land use designations in several areas of the County. The areas that could be affected include the Community Areas, Rural Centers, and AHOs because the anticipated intensification of land uses in these areas would potentially result in the division of established communities. Examples of such intensification include new urban development and new infrastructure that could create physical barriers between existing community elements, such as residential areas and parks.

However, the 2007 General Plan land use patterns and policies are designed to ensure that there would be no division of an established community. Some areas where population has started to establish under prior plans are identified as Community Areas or Rural Centers. The following policy discussion describes the applicable policies and how this impact would be avoided.

2007 General Plan Policies

The 2007 General Plan and Area Plan policies summarized below set forth comprehensive measures to avoid and minimize adverse impacts of the physical division of an established community.

Land Use Element

A number of the Land Use Element Policies between LU-1.1 and LU-1.20 (city-centered growth) discourage the division of established communities and the introduction of incompatible land uses. Policy LU-1.2 (scattered development) discourages premature and scattered development. Policy LU-1.4 (adequate services) designates growth areas only when an adequate level of services and public facilities exist. Policy LU-1.5 (land use compatibility) stipulates that land uses be designated to achieve compatibility with adjacent uses. Policy LU-1.7 (clustering) encourages clustering of residential development to those

portions of the property which are most suitable for development. Policy LU-1.9 (infill) promotes infill of vacant non-agricultural lands in existing developed areas, and requires infill development to be compatible with surrounding land use and development. Policy LU-1.19 (overlay districts) designates Community Areas, Rural Centers and Affordable Housing Overlay districts as the top priority for development in the incorporated areas of the county. Outside of those areas, a Development Evaluation System (DES) shall be established to provide systematic, consistent, predictable, and quantitative methods for decision-makers to evaluate developments. Policies LU-2.15 through LU-2.18 (city-centered growth policies) encourage new urbanization to occur within the incorporated cities, rather than in the surrounding county area. Policies LU-2.21 through LU-2.29 (community area policies) stipulate that urbanization within the county will be limited to the Community Areas (first priority) and Rural Centers (second priority). The AHO policies will encourage higher density development in selected areas near existing development. Policies LU-2.27 through LU-2.33 (rural center policies) stipulate maintaining a village character while allowing greater intensity development in some areas.

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan policies listed above would expressly avoid the division of an established community, and would promote managed growth in specific locations in coordination with sound planning principles.

Area Plan Policies

The 2007 General Plan includes seven existing Area Plans and two existing Master Plans that establish detailed policies for development in specific geographical areas within the county. The 2007 General Plan provides additional supplemental policies specific to these areas to ensure that new development is compatible with existing developments, neighborhoods, and land uses.

North County Area Plan

North County Area Plan Policy NC-2.1 identifies rerouting Hwy 101 around the community of Prunedale. Therefore, this same policy would also address the physical division of the community of Prunedale by Hwy 101. The development criteria outlined in the North County Area Plan would not promote the physical division of Prunedale, or any other existing community within the North County Area Plan. In fact, the North County Area Plan outlines policies to re-route Hwy 101 around the community of Prunedale, which would in turn remove a physical barrier (Highway 101) within the community.

Greater Salinas Area Plan

Greater Salinas Area Plan Policies GS-1.1 through GS-1.12 identify multiple Special Treatment Areas (STAs) and Study Areas (SAs), including Butterfly Village, Spence/Potter/Encinal Road and Highway 68/Foster Road among others. These STAs and SAs establish specific standards to guide development at those locations. For example, GS 1.4 stipulates that development in the town of Spreckels would be allowed only under specific conditions, including the requirement that development would only occur within the land use boundary shown in the Area Plan. The development criteria outlined in the Greater Salinas Area Plan establishes specific standards to guide orderly development, and would not promote the physical division of an existing community within Greater Salinas.

Central Salinas Valley Area Plan

Central Salinas Valley Plan Policies CSV-1.3 through CSV-1.6 identify several STAs and SAs, including Spence/Potter/Encinal Roads and Old Mission Union School. These STAs and SAs establish specific standards to guide development at these locations. For example, CSV 1.4 stipulates that the minimum parcel size in the Spence/Potter/Encinal Roads SA shall be 10 acres so that the area remains in agricultural operations. In addition, prior to new development within the Spence/Potter/Encinal Roads SA, a cumulative impact analysis of the industrial build-out of the study area would be required. The development criteria outlined in the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan Policies establishes specific standards to guide orderly development, and would not promote the physical division of an existing community within the Central Salinas Valley.

Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan

Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan Policies GMP-1.6 through GMP-1.9 identify several STAs, including Rancho San Carlos and the San Clemente Ranch. These STAs establish specific standards to guide orderly development at these locations. For example, residential development within portions of the Santa Lucia Preserve (formerly Rancho San Carlos) must follow specific densities and policies. The development criteria outlined in the Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan establishes specific standards to guide orderly development, and would not promote the physical division of an existing community within the Greater Monterey Peninsula.

Carmel Valley Master Plan

Carmel Valley Master Plan Policies CV-1.22 through CV-1.26 identify STAs and set forth specific standards to guide orderly

development at those locations. STAs in the Carmel Valley Master Plan include the Carmel Valley Ranch, the Condon/Chugach Property, portions of the Santa Lucia Preserve Rancho San Carlos (formerly Rancho San Carlos) and the Gardiner/Tennis Club area. In addition, Policy CV-1.3 states that open spaces shall be located between the development areas in order to clearly define them and maintain a distinction between the more rural and more suburban areas of the valley. Policy CV-1.8 promotes cluster development and the preservation of open space. The development criteria outlined in the Carmel Valley Master Plan establishes specific standards to guide orderly development, and would not promote the physical division of an existing community within Carmel Valley.

Toro Area Plan

Toro Area Plan Policy C-1.4 identifies the Greco STA and sets forth specific standards to guide orderly development at this location. Toro Area Plan policy T-1.2 prohibits industrial land uses (other than utilities) in the Toro Area. Therefore, the development criteria outlined in the Toro Area Plan establishes specific standards to guide orderly development, and would not promote the physical division of an existing community within the Toro area.

Cachagua Area Plan

Cachagua Area Plan Policy CACH-1.5 identifies Syndicate Camp as a STA and sets forth standards to guide future development on that site. Cachagua Area Plan policy CACH-1.1 requires that new service centers located in Cachagua have low visibility, have safe and unobtrusive access and conform to all Area Plan requirements. Cachagua Area Plan policy CACH-1.3 prohibits industrial land uses (other than those that are agriculturally related) in the Cachagua Area. The development criteria outlined in the Cachagua Area Plan establishes specific standards to guide orderly development, and would not promote the physical division of an existing community within the Cachagua area.

South County Area Plan

South County Area Plan Policy SC-1.1 allows only low residential densities on lands adjacent to Fort Hunter Liggett in order to prevent residential encroachment. South County Area Policy SC-1.2 encourages clustered development in all areas where development is permitted in order to make the most efficient use of land and to preserve agricultural land and open space. The development criteria outlined in the South County Area Plan establishes specific standards to guide orderly development, and would not promote the physical division of an existing community within the South County area.

Agricultural Winery Corridor Plan

The 2007 General Plan includes an Agricultural Winery Corridor Plan (AWCP) that is designed to promote the orderly development of an integrated wine industry in Monterey County. The AWCP designates three winery (roadway) corridors in the Salinas Valley, including the River Road Segment, the Metz Road Segment and the Jolon Road Segment. The AWCP serves as a type of Area Plan that provides a greater level of detail about how to address viticulture related uses within portions of three existing Planning Areas (Toro, Central Salinas Valley, and South County). The AWCP specifically outlines the planned and orderly development of wineries in specific areas of the Salinas Valley. In so doing, the AWCP specifically discourages the division of an established community by winery development within the Salinas development. Although the AWCP includes portions of the *Toro*, *Central Salinas Valley*, and *South County Area Plans*, the AWCP would not facilitate the division of an established community within the defined corridor.

Community Area Policies

Fort Ord Master Plan

The purpose of the Fort Ord Master Plan is to designate land uses and incorporate objectives, programs and policies to be consistent with the Fort Ord Reuse Plan (Reuse Plan) adopted by the Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) in 1997. The plan incorporates all applicable policies and programs contained in the adopted Reuse Plan as they pertain to the Fort Ord military base. In addition, the Fort Ord Master Plan contains additional Design Objectives and land use description clarification to further the Design Principles contained in the adopted Reuse Plan. The area subject to the Fort Ord Master Plan are generally located within the central portion of the former Fort Ord military base. The city limits of the City of Marina are located to the north, the city limits of the City of Seaside are located to the west, and the City limits of the Cities of Monterey and Del Rey Oaks are located to the south. The primary goal of the Land Use Element of the Fort Ord Master Plan is to promote the orderly, well-planned, and balanced development to ensure educational, housing and economic opportunities as well as environmental protection. Therefore, the development policies outlined in the Fort Ord Master Plan would not promote the physical division of the former Fort Ord military base, or any surrounding community.

Significance Determination

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan would result in the development of new urban areas and new infrastructure in the Community Areas, Rural

Centers, and AHOs. Additional development would occur on individual lots, but on a more limited basis due to the Development Evaluation System (LU-1.17), proof of long-term water supply (PS-3.1 through PS-3.3), infrastructure concurrency (PS-1.6), and other policies of the 2007 General Plan. There are about 4,629 lots of record within the unincorporated county, of varying sizes and development potential. Implementation of the 2007 General Plan and Area Plan policies would ensure that potential division of established communities is avoided or minimized through land use guidelines that emphasize orderly development and compatibility with surrounding land uses.

There are no planned infrastructure projects included in the 2007 General Plan that would divide established communities. The Transportation Agency of Monterey County (TAMC) fee program projects and county capacity enhancement projects listed in Section 4.6, Transportation, would result in changes to specific existing roads and highways by widening or adding turn lanes to selected roads, replacing at-grade road crossings with interchanges, modifying existing interchanges, and installing traffic signals. In accordance with standard practice, pedestrian crossings would be provided at all intersections. Because these are limited to existing roads, they will not physically divide any communities to a substantially greater extent than they are already divided by the road.

Accordingly, implementation of the 2007 General Plan would not result in significant community division impacts and therefore associated impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation beyond the 2007 General Plan policies is necessary.

Significance Conclusion

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan would not result in significant community division impacts and therefore associated impacts would be less than significant.

Buildout

Impact of Development

Buildout of the 2007 General Plan in the year 2092 would result in new urban development in urban areas beyond 2030 levels. By 2092, all of the existing lots of record will presumably be developed with at least a single-family residence. Because individual development does not create physical barriers, it would not physically divide any community.

In addition, implementation of the 2007 General Plan to the year 2092 would result in changes to land use designations in several areas of the county. The land uses within the Community Areas and Rural Centers would be more

dense (i.e., higher residential density, more intensive commercial use in some cases) than existing conditions. Policies of the 2007 General Plan, including LU-1.5, would discourage placing incompatible uses next to one another. This would avoid physical division of established communities.

2007 General Plan Policies

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan policies listed above under the 2030 Planning Horizon would expressly avoid the division of an established community, and would promote managed growth in specific locations in the County through buildout in 2092.

Significance Determination

Buildout by 2092 would potentially result in the physical division of an established community within Monterey County. . The 2007 General Plan employs land use concepts such as city-centered growth and preservation of natural areas that would discourage the physical division of an existing community. Despite the 2007 General Plan and associated Area Plan policies, additional infrastructure improvements could result in community division if they include major new roads or rail lines that do not provide connections such as pedestrian crossings. However, whether such infrastructure would be built, as well as the types, locations, and mitigating design features of such future infrastructure are not known at this time. As a result, concluding that this might occur would be speculative. Accordingly, implementation of the 2007 General Plan up to the year 2092 would not result in the physical division of established communities. Therefore associated land use impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation beyond the 2007 General Plan policies is necessary.

Significance Conclusion

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan up to buildout in the year 2092 would not result in significant community division impacts. Therefore any associated community division impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is necessary.

Conflict with Adopted Land Use Plans

Impact LU-2: Implementation of the 2007 General Plan would potentially conflict with an adopted land use plan, 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.)

2030 Planning Horizon

Impact of Development with Policies

A General Plan is by definition a comprehensive long-range planning document that serves as the blueprint for future growth in a particular jurisdiction. General Plans establish land use patterns for urban and rural development, agriculture, resource preservation, and public uses. Monterey County's 2007 General Plan has been drafted to be consistent with adopted local land use plans, LCPs, and zoning ordinances within the County.

Each incorporated city within the County has an adopted land use plan for its specific jurisdictional area. These plans include each city's vision for growth that may include expansion of the city's boundaries. To address this, the 2007 General Plan has considered desired growth within each city's general plan relative to the County's policies.

The County has offered consultation with cities as part of the process to prepare the 2007 General Plan. This consultation process is designed to identify potential land use conflicts and to develop strategies to address these potential conflicts. Below is a discussion of the various policies contained in the 2007 General Plan that address adopted land use plans within the County.

The County has adopted four Local Coastal Programs that, under the Coastal Act, contain policies and other measures to protect the environmental integrity of the California coast. The Local Coastal Programs for Big Sur Coast, Carmel Area, Del Monte Forest/Greater Monterey, and North County have been certified by the California Coastal Commission.

HCPs and NCCPs are also plans intended to avoid environmental impacts. However, they differ from the other land use plans discussed above because they are adopted pursuant to Federal and State law, and are unaffected by County policies. HCPs are required for projects under federal jurisdiction, whether they are federal projects or projects requiring federal permits, that would otherwise result in the "take" of one or more federally listed species. NCCPs are prepared where affected jurisdictions and property owners wish to comprehensively plan for the avoidance of take that might otherwise occur as a result of future development. Neither of these programs is dependent on County policies for its implementation.

2007 General Plan Policies

The 2007 General Plan Land Use Element establishes numerous policies that are intended to ensure consistency with adopted local land use plans and reduce inconsistencies with such plans.

Land Use Element

Land Use Element Policy LU-2.15 (City-centered growth) promotes cooperation with the AMBAG and other cities to direct the majority of urban growth, including higher density housing development, into cities and their spheres of influence. This policy would in turn promote consistency between the 2007 General Plan and each city's sphere of influence policy.

Land Use Element Policy 2.16 (Urban reserve) applies an Urban Reserve Overlay where an incorporated city may expand (annex) or provide new infrastructure to a proposed project. Growth limits identified in an incorporated city's adopted general plan, and determined to be consistent with the County's 2007 General Plan, may be included as part of the Urban Reserve area. Development in an Urban Reserve area shall be determined by the County's underlying land use designation. The County would consult with the pertinent city regarding projects located within their Urban Reserve. Hence, this policy would promote consistency between the 2007 General Plan and the Urban Reserve policies.

Land Use Element Policy LU-2.17 (housing near employment centers) states that the County will coordinate with cities to maintain sufficient land areas designated for new housing close to employment centers. In addition, land use conflicts, competition and consumptive land use patterns are to be minimized. This policy would promote consistency between the 2007 General Plan and employee housing policies.

Land Use Element Policy LU-2.18 (LAFCO) states that the County, in coordination with cities and LAFCO, will designate spheres of influence to represent the probable 20-year growth area around each city. This 20-year growth area shall also be designated as an Urban Reserve overlay within the 2007 General Plan. In addition, any annexation request or request for a change in a city's boundaries or sphere of influence may be supported if it is found to be consistent with the 2007 General Plan policies, including the following requirements: 1) directing city growth away from the highest quality farmlands, 2) providing adequate buffers along developing agricultural-urban interfaces, and 3) mitigating impacts to county infrastructure. This policy would reduce land use conflicts between the 2007 General Plan and each city's sphere of influence policy.

Land Use Element Policy LU-2.19 (County review) states that the County shall critically review development proposals and general plan amendments within cities to assure that the impacts of growth to the County's infrastructure are adequately quantified and fully mitigated. This policy would in turn reduce conflicts between the 2007 General Plan and the infrastructure needs of local cities.

Land Use Element Policy LU-2.20 (City review) states that the County shall refer amendments to the 2007 General Plan and zoning changes that would result in the creation of new residential, industrial, or commercial areas to the nearest cities for review and comment. This policy would reduce land use conflicts created by any future amendments to the 2007 General Plan, and would give each city the ability to influence the 2007 General Plan amendment process.

Land Use Element Policy LU-9.1 (General plan consistency with zoning) states that within three months after adoption of the updated General Plan, the Director of Planning shall bring to the Board of Supervisors for their approval a work program to update the County's land use regulations to ensure consistency with the General Plan. The work program would identify the regulations to be updated, the timeframe for the update and identify the resources needed to implement the work program. This policy would specifically promote consistency between the 2007 General Plan and the County's zoning ordinance once the 2007 General Plan is adopted.

In summary, the 2007 General Plan policies discussed above promote land use concepts that emphasize city-centered growth and discourage conflicts with existing land use policies and plans. Collectively, these land use consistency policies promote close coordination between the cities, LAFCO, AMBAG and the County regarding land use policies and designations within each city's sphere of influence. These policies would specifically reduce conflicts between the 2007 General Plan and locally-adopted land use plans.

Open Space Element

Open Space Policies OS-5.1 and OS-5.3 promote the conservation of threatened and endangered plants and special status wildlife species. Policy OS-5.4 provides for consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) over federally protected species and mitigation of impacts (an HCP is mitigation of "take"). Policy OS-5.17 would allow County participation in the development of an NCCP, when pertinent to mitigating loss of critical habitat.

Area Plan Policies

The 2007 General Plan includes Area Plans that establish policies for development that address conditions that are unique to specific geographical locations within the County. Each of the Area Plans described in this EIR is a component of the 2007 General Plan and is therefore consistent with all of its applicable goals and policies. Several of the Area Plans provide supplemental policies to ensure consistency with locally-adopted land use plans, thereby reducing inevitable inconsistencies with such plans. As an intrinsic component of the 2007 General Plan, the Area Plans would not conflict with an adopted land use plan or policy.

Agricultural Winery Corridor Plan

The AWCP is a component of the 2007 General Plan and is consistent with all of its applicable goals and policies. The AWCP serves as a type of Area Plan that provides a greater level of detail of how to address viticulture related uses within portions of three Planning Areas (Toro, Central Salinas Valley, and South County). The AWCP is consistent with the goals and policies for each of the three affected Planning Areas, in addition to the 2007 General Plan as a whole. The AWCP policies provide a greater level of detail than either the 2007 General Plan or the affected Area Plans regarding how these uses will be handled. Included in the AWCP are general regulations, allowed uses, permitted uses, development standards, and design criteria that are intended to guide the development of wine-related facilities.

Local Coastal Program

Monterey County prepared an LCP pursuant to the California Coastal Act that has been certified as consistent with the Coastal Act by the CCC. The LCP is implemented through four local coastal land use plans. The four local coastal land use plans in unincorporated Monterey County (*North County Land Use Plan*, the *Del Monte Forest Land Use Plan*, the *Carmel Land Use Plan*, and the *Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan*) contain separate goals and policies to address coastal development.

The four adopted local coastal land use plans contained in the existing 1982 Monterey County General Plan will not be amended as part of the 2007 General Plan. The 2007 General Plan's goals and policies have been developed with the LCPs in mind and do not contain any provisions that would conflict with the four adopted local coastal plans. The current distribution of planning roles between the general plan (effective in the unincorporated areas) and the LCPs (effective in the unincorporated coastal areas) will not be

changed by the 2007 General Plan. Therefore, no conflicts with the LCP would occur from implementation of the 2007 General Plan.

LAFCO Policies

In some instances, development projects within the 2007 General Plan would be required to comply with applicable Monterey County LAFCO requirements. LAFCO requirements apply to land development activities that involve annexations, changes in district boundaries, and other governmental reorganizations. These may result in the conversion of agricultural lands to urban uses, extension of utilities and service systems into previously unserved areas, and activities that alter existing agency boundaries—all of which are subject to LAFCO policies and additional CEQA review. LAFCO would review projects subject to its approval and would have the ability to approve or deny applications based on whether its criteria were met. Accordingly, no conflicts with LAFCO policies would occur from implementation of the 2007 General Plan because future development considered within the 2007 General Plan would be required to comply with all applicable Monterey County LAFCO requirements.

Growth Management Policy

The Growth Management Policy adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1979 forms the underlying foundation of the entire 2007 General Plan. The 2007 General Plan incorporates the stated goals of the Growth Management Policy in its land use map, elemental policies, and Area Plan supplemental policies. The Growth Management Policy states that managed growth must be incorporated into the General Plan. In so doing, the General Plan must be written to include appropriate growth areas within the County. These areas must recognize the diversity among the lands of the County and provide for the planning of each area in a way that utilizes its unique characteristics. Growth areas shall be designated only where there is provision for an adequate level of services and facilities. The 2007 General Plan designates Community Areas and Rural Centers as the primary areas for future growth. This is consistent with the growth management policy. Accordingly, implementation of the 2007 General Plan would not conflict with the Growth Management Policy because the 2007 General Plan incorporates the stated goals of the policy throughout the entire General Plan.

Significance Determination

The 2007 General Plan is a comprehensive update to the existing 1982 General Plan. As a comprehensive planning document, it establishes land use concepts, and sets forth goals and policies to guide future development

and preserve natural and agricultural areas from urban encroachment. Inherently, the goals and policies of the 2007 General Plan must be internally consistent with each other as well as with the supplemental policies of each Area Plan.

As discussed above, the goals and policies of the 2007 General Plan Land Use Element and those of the Area Plans are internally consistent. Therefore, no internal conflicts would occur. The 2007 General Plan Land Use Element and Area Plans would form the basis for preparing the plans for the Community Areas and Rural Centers. As a result, one can reasonably assume that those future land use plans will be consistent with one another and with the General Plan. In addition, the 2007 General Plan is written to be consistent with local land use plans, the County LCP, LAFCO policies, and the County Growth Management Policy.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation beyond the 2007 General Plan policies is necessary.

Significance Conclusion

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan policies would avoid impacts related to consistency with adopted land use plans, LCPs, LAFCO policies and the Growth Management Policy and no mitigation is necessary.

Buildout

Impact of Development with Policies

Monterey County's 2007 General Plan is drafted to be consistent with adopted local land use plans, the LCPs, and zoning ordinances within the county through 2092. Buildout of the 2007 General Plan to 2092 would result in new development in many areas of the County beyond 2030 levels. In addition, implementation of the 2007 General Plan in the buildout year 2092 would result in changes to land use designations in several areas of the County.

The Community Areas and Rural Centers are expected to absorb most of the future development within the unincorporated county up to the 2030 planning horizon. After that time, the Community Areas and Rural Centers will be largely built out and development will shift to individual lots.

Each incorporated city within the County has an adopted land use plan for its area. These plans include each city's vision for growth that may include expansion of the city's boundaries to the 2092 buildout year. To address this, the 2007 General Plan has considered ultimate buildout within each city's general plan relative to the County's policies.

2007 General Plan Policies

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan policies listed above under the 2030 Planning Horizon would ensure consistency with adopted local land use plans and reduce inevitable inconsistencies with such plans through 2092.

Significance Determination

The 2007 General Plan includes comprehensive measures to avoid conflicts with adopted land use plans, County LCP, LAFCO policies and zoning ordinances through buildout in the year 2092. As discussed above, the goals and policies of the 2007 General Plan Land Use Element and those of the Area Plans are internally consistent.

The County is relying upon the Community Areas and Rural Centers to provide a substantial portion of the future affordable housing that will be required in order to meet its housing needs allocation. In general, development on individual lots tends not to be affordable to very low-income, low-income, and moderate-income market segments. The Community Areas and Rural Centers will provide higher density that would lend itself to affordable housing production. As time passes and development fills the current Community Areas and Rural Centers, Housing Element Law will require the County to provide new places where affordable housing can be built. It is reasonable to assume that in order to meet future housing need allocations the County will amend the general plan to either expand the current Community Areas and Rural Centers or establish new Community Areas and Rural Centers. This would allow the County to remain consistent with its policy of city-centered development.

Impacts related to inconsistency of the 2007 General Plan Land Use Element with Area Plans would be less than significant. Any impacts related to inconsistency of the 2007 General Plan with the LCP, LAFCO policies or the Growth Management Policy would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation beyond the 2007 General Plan policies is necessary.

Significance Conclusion

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan policies at buildout in the year 2092 would reduce impacts related to consistency with adopted land use plans to a less than significant level and no mitigation is necessary. In addition, any impacts related to inconsistency of the 2007 General Plan with the LCP, LAFCO policies or the Growth Management Policy would be less than significant.

Conflict with an Adopted Habitat Conservation Plan

Impact LU-3: General Plan implementation would potentially conflict with an existing adopted habitat conservation or a natural community conservation plan. (Less-than-Significant Impact.)

2030 Planning Horizon

Impact of Development with Policies

HCPs and NCCPs are increasingly being used by resource agencies in California as a tool to conserve species and natural communities. The USFWS indicates that there are several HCPs approved in Monterey County for individual projects (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2008). These include the Post Ranch Inn HCP in Big Sur (approved 2006), the Sarment Property HCP in Carmel Highlands (approved 2007), and the Wildcat Line LP HCP in Carmel Highlands (approved 2001). All of these are located in the coastal zone and would not be affected by the 2007 General Plan. Further, the Fort Ord Habitat Management Plan (HMP) has been adopted to coordinate protections of special status species. The HMP is discussed below.

Fort Ord Base Closure Plan HMP

The former Fort Ord military installation spans nearly 28,000 acres near the cities of Seaside, Sand City, Monterey, Del Rey Oaks and Marina in Monterey County, California. Fort Ord was established in 1917 as a training for infantry troops. It was expanded for use as a maneuver and training ground for field artillery and cavalry troops stationed at the Presidio of Monterey.

In 1991, the federal Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommended that Fort Ord be closed, and the base was closed in September 1994. Closure, disposal and reuse of Fort Ord required consultation between the U.S. Army and the USFWS under Section 7 of the ESA. The U.S. Army's actions potentially affected several species listed as threatened or endangered or proposed for listing under the ESA. Hence, the Army developed a HMP to minimize incidental take of listed species and their habitat, and to mitigate impacts to vegetation and wildlife resources within Fort Ord. The Army developed the HMP with input from Federal, State, and local agencies and organizations concerned with the natural resources and reuse of Fort Ord. The USFWS, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), DFG, the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks), the University of California (UC), the FORA and other members of the local Monterey Bay area community were active participants in the development of the HMP. The HMP describes a cooperative Federal, State, and local conservation program for plant and animal species and habitats of concern known to occur at Fort Ord. The HMP's conservation program establishes land use categories and habitat management requirements for

all lands on the former base. Developable lands and habitats reserve areas are defined along with habitat corridors and restricted development areas. Resources conservation and management requirements are described and responsible parties for each designated habitat area on the former base are identified. (69 Federal Register [FR] 58181.) This is not, however, a formal HCP.

An installation-wide Multispecies HCP is under development for the former Fort Ord. About 3,968 acres of the former base were originally developed for military facilities with approximately 23,718 acres left as relatively natural habitat used for military training and other purposes. The multispecies HCP is being developed to provide the framework for ensuring conservation, enhancement and recovery of 19 special status plant and wildlife species and the natural communities that support them on former Fort Ord.

There are no NCCPs in Monterey County.

2007 General Plan Policies

The 2007 General Plan Land Use Element and Open Space and Conservation Element establish numerous policies that are intended to ensure consistency with adopted or proposed HCP/NCCPs.

Land Use Element

The 2007 General Plan Land Use Element does not address the detailed requirements of a specific HCP or NCCP. However, the County's intent is not to alter existing regional, State or Federal laws or regulations, but rather to enable greater cooperation among public agencies and the public to share management responsibilities in accomplishing a shared goal of conserving and protecting the resources of the region (Monterey County 2007). The 2007 General Plan would not interfere with establishment of new HCPs, nor with implementation of the existing adopted HCPs.

Open Space and Conservation Element

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the 2007 General Plan guides the County in the long-term conservation and preservation of open space lands and natural resources while protecting private property rights.

Open Space and Conservation Element Policy OS-1.7 (transfer of development rights) establishes a voluntary, transfer of development rights (TDR) program to direct development away from areas with unique visual or natural features, critical habitat, or prime agricultural soils. This 2007 General Plan policy would not conflict with an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the County.

Open Space and Conservation Element Policy OS-1.8 (clustering) calls for programs to encourage clustering development in rural and agricultural areas to reduce impacts to critical habitat areas, and would assist with implementation of the requirements of an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the County.

Open Space and Conservation Element Policy OS-4.1 (species protection) states that Federal and State designated native marine and fresh water species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant shall be protected. Species designated in Area Plans shall also be protected. This policy would not conflict with an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the County.

Open Space and Conservation Element Policy OS-5.1 and 5.2 (species inventory) states that the extent and acreages of the designated critical habitat of Federal and State listed threatened or endangered plants or wildlife species shall be inventoried to the extent feasible and mapped in GIS. Conservation of these threatened and endangered plants shall be promoted. In addition, the extent and acreages of the potentially suitable habitat for special status plant and wildlife species shall be inventoried to the extent feasible and mapped in GIS. Conservation of special status species shall be promoted as provided in the Area Plans. This policy would in turn assist with implementation of the requirements of an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the County.

Open Space and Conservation Element Policy OS-5.3 (conservation/maintenance) states that development shall be carefully planned to provide for the conservation and maintenance of designated critical habitat of plant and animal species listed by federal agencies as threatened or endangered. This policy would assist with implementation of the requirements of an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the County.

Open Space and Conservation Element Policy OS-5.12 (DFG Consultation) states that the CDFG shall be consulted and appropriate measures shall be taken to protect Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) for State and federally listed species. This policy would assist with implementation of the requirements of an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the County.

Open Space and Conservation Element Policy OS-5.13 (preservation) states that efforts to obtain and preserve natural areas of particular biologic, scientific, or educational interest and restrict incompatible uses from encroaching upon them shall be encouraged. This policy is compatible with implementation an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the County.

Open Space and Conservation Element Policy OS-5.16 (biological surveys) requires any development project that could potentially disturb a special status species or its critical habitat identified by the County requiring analysis, or identified for protection under an adopted Area Plan shall be required to conduct a biological survey of the site. Based on the findings of this report, additional focused surveys for certain species may be required. This biological survey report, and any mitigation measures recommended in the report, shall be used as a basis for CEQA documentation for the project except if the County, in the exercise of its independent judgment, requires additional analysis. If sensitive biological resources are found on the site, the project biologist shall recommend measures necessary to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. All feasible measures shall be incorporated as conditions of approval in any permit issued. An ordinance establishing minimum standards for a biological report shall be enacted. This policy would not conflict with implementation of the requirements of an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the County.

Open Space and Conservation Element Policy OS-5.17 (mitigation program) requires the county to prepare, adopt, and implement a program that allows projects to mitigate the loss of critical habitat. The program may include ratios, payment of fees, or some other mechanisms in consultation with responsible state and/or federal regulatory agencies. Until such time as the program has been established, projects shall mitigate the loss of critical habitat on an individual basis in consultation with responsible state and/or federal regulatory agencies. This policy would assist with implementation of the requirements of an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the County.

Open Space and Conservation Element Policy OS-5.18 (permitting requirements) requires that all applicable federal and state permitting requirements shall be met, including all mitigation measures for development of jurisdictional areas and associated riparian habitats, prior to disturbing any federal or state jurisdictional areas. Therefore, this policy would assist with implementation of the requirements of an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the County.

Area Plan Policies

North County Area Plan

North County Area Plan Policy NC-3.3 requires the conservation of North County's native vegetation. Conservation of North County's native vegetation shall be given high priority to retain the viability of threatened or limited vegetative communities and animal habitats. In addition, the area's natural scenic qualities shall be promoted, and

rare, endangered and endemic plants shall be preserved for scientific study. Property owners shall be encouraged to cooperate with the County in establishing conservation easements over areas of native vegetation. This policy would in turn assist with implementation of the requirements of an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the North County area.

North County Area Plan Policy NC-3.5 states that critical habitat areas should be preserved as open space. In turn, when an entire parcel cannot be developed due to this policy, a low intensity, clustered development may be approved. However, the development should be located on those portions of the land least biologically significant so that the development will not upset the natural function of the surrounding ecosystem. This policy would assist with implementation of the requirements of an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the North County area.

Greater Salinas Area Plan

There are no additional policies within the Greater Salinas Area Plan that specifically pertain to HCPs or NCCPs. However, there are no adopted HCPs or NCCPs within the Greater Salinas area at this time.

Central Salinas Valley Area Plan

There are no additional policies within the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan that specifically pertain to HCPs or NCCPs. However, there are no adopted HCPs or NCCPs within the Central Salinas Valley area at this time.

Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan

Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan policy GMP-3.5 states that development in the Greater Monterey Peninsula area shall be designed to prevent, to the maximum extent feasible, the destruction of native oak, pine, and redwood forest habitat and wetlands in the Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan area.

Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan Policy GMP-3.8 and GMP-3.9 (open space) calls for open space areas to include a diversity of habitats with special protection given to ecologically important zones such as areas where one habitat grades into another, or areas used by wildlife for access routes to water or feeding grounds. In addition, critical habitat areas should be preserved as open space. Development should be located on those portions of the land least biologically significant so that the development will not upset the natural function of the surrounding ecosystem. These policies would in turn assist with implementation of the requirements

of an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the Greater Monterey Peninsula area.

Carmel Valley Master Plan

Carmel Valley Master Plan Policy CV-3.7 (open space preservation) calls for areas of biological significance to be identified and preserved as open space. These areas include, but are not limited to the redwood community of Robinson Canyon, the riparian community and redwood community of Garzas Creek, all wetlands, including marshes, seeps and springs. In addition, native bunchgrass stands and natural meadows shall be identified and preserved, as well as ridgelines and wildlife migration routes.

Carmel Valley Master Plan Policy CV-3.12 (habitat diversity) necessitates that open space areas include a diversity of habitats with special protection given to areas where one habitat grades into another and areas used by wildlife for access routes.

Carmel Valley Master Plan Policy CV-3.15 (development rights/easements) supports alliances between public and private agencies such as the Big Sur Land Trust, the Monterey Regional Park District and others to acquire development rights and/or accept easements and dedications for significant areas of biological, agricultural or other open space land. Combined, these policies would in turn assist with implementation of the requirements of an existing or proposed HCP/NCCP within the Carmel Valley area.

Toro Area Plan

There are no policies within the Toro Area Plan that specifically pertain to HCPs or NCCPs. In addition, there are no adopted HCPs or NCCPs within the Toro area at this time.

South County Area Plan

There are no policies within the South County Area Plan that specifically pertain to HCPs or NCCPs. In addition, there are no known adopted HCPs or NCCPs within the South County area at this time.

Community Area Policies

Fort Ord Master Plan

The 1997 Fort Ord Installation-wide Multi-species Habitat Management Plan (Fort Ord HMP) outlines management requirements for lands on the former Fort Ord. The HMP identifies four general categories of parcel-specific land uses: habitat reserve,

habitat corridor, development with reserve areas and restrictions, and development with no restrictions. These four land uses are thoroughly incorporated into the Fort Ord Master Plan. For example, one of the Fort Ord Master Plan Design Objectives establishes site planning and design criteria that provide buffers and addresses compatibility with adjacent open space areas in conformance with the adopted Fort Ord HMP. Program B-2.5 stipulates that buffers are required as a condition of approval adjacent to Habitat Management areas, and that buffers shall be designed in a manner consistent with those guidelines set out in the Fort Ord HMP. Since the requirements of the Fort Ord HMP are thoroughly integrated into the Fort Ord Master Plan, it is not anticipated that implementation of the Fort Ord Master Plan would significantly conflict with the implementation of the Fort Ord HMP.

Agricultural Winery Corridor Plan

No adopted HCP or NCCP exists within the AWCP boundaries. This condition precludes the possibility of the AWCP conflicting with an adopted conservation plan; therefore, no impact would occur.

Significance Determination

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan would not introduce any new policies that would conflict with an existing adopted HCP or NCCP within the County. None of the planned Community Areas, Rural Centers, or AHOs would overlap with HCPs. Development on lots of record would be required to comply with any applicable future HCPs in order to meet federal law. In addition, implementation of the 2007 General Plan would not conflict with existing land use designations or policies within the Fort Ord HMP boundaries. The prospective multi-species HCP will set out parameters for development and conservation. As a signatory to the HCP, the County would amend any portion of the Fort Ord Master Plan that might conflict with the HCP. Accordingly, implementation of the 2007 General Plan would not result in significant conflicts with an existing HCP or NCCP and associated impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation beyond the 2007 General Plan policies is necessary.

Significance Conclusion

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan policies would not conflict with an adopted HCP in the County. The impact would be less than significant.

Buildout

Impact of Development with Policies

Buildout of the 2007 General Plan in the year 2092 would result in new development in many areas of the County beyond 2030 levels. In addition, implementation of the 2007 General Plan in the year 2092 would inevitably result in changes to land use designations in several areas of the County, including Community Areas and Rural Centers in order to meet future housing needs pursuant to Housing Element Law, as discussed above.

2007 General Plan Policies

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan policies listed above would ensure consistency with adopted HCPs and NCCPs and would reduce inconsistencies with such plans through the year 2092.

Significance Determination

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan would be consistent with adopted HCPs and NCCPs in the County through the year 2092. Prospective HCPs and NCCPs developed and adopted after the adoption of the 2007 General Plan would take into account current and future development patterns in the County. Further, they would be adopted under federal and state law, outside of County land use regulations. Therefore, while nothing is known about prospective HCPs and NCCPs (other than Fort Ord), the potential for a significant effect on prospective HCPs or NCCPs at ultimate buildout is low for these reasons. Therefore, implementation of the 2007 General Plan would have a less than significant impact on existing and future HCPs or NCCPs through 2092, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation beyond the 2007 General Plan policies is necessary.

Significance Conclusion

Implementation of the 2007 General Plan would have a less than significant impact on future HCPs or NCCPs through buildout in the year 2092, and no mitigation is required.

4.1.5 Level of Significance after Mitigation

All impacts related to land use would be less than significant with implementation of the measures in the 2007 General Plan, and no additional mitigation would be required.