

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE SHAMROCK SEED PROJECT

Project Applicant: Shamrock Seed Company
File Number: 9555-16A-16G
Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 841-49-002

As the Lead Agency, the County of Santa Clara will prepare an Environmental Impact Report for the Shamrock Seed Project. A brief description of the proposed project, figures (including Figure 1: Regional Map, Figure 2: Vicinity Map, Figure 3: Aerial Photograph and Surrounding Land Uses, and Figure 4: Site Plan), and a summary of the potential environmental impacts are attached. The project proposes the demolition of several existing greenhouses and construction of an approximately 10,000 square-foot agricultural research building, two greenhouses, and associated improvements in unincorporated Santa Clara County, approximately one mile east of the City of Gilroy, California. The project requires Architecture and Site Approval and Grading Approval by the County.

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, comments on this Notice of Preparation are due within 30 days of receipt of this notice. Please address your comments or provide via email to:

County of Santa Clara
Planning Division
Attention: Robert Salisbury
County Government Center
70 West Hedding Street, 7th Floor, East Wing
San Jose CA 95110
(408) 299-5785
robert.salisbury@pln.sccgov.org

Prepared by:
Robert Salisbury, Senior Planner



Signature

4/10/18
Date

Approved by:
Rob Eastwood, Planning Manager



Signature

4/10/18
Date

Introduction

The purpose of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to inform decision-makers and the public of the environmental impacts of a proposed project that an agency may implement or approve. The EIR process is intended to provide information sufficient to (a) evaluate a proposed project and its potential for significant impacts on the environment, (b) to examine methods of reducing adverse impacts; and (c) to consider alternatives to the project.

The EIR for the proposed project will be prepared and processed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended, and will include the following:

- A summary of the project and its environmental impacts;
- A project description;
- A detailed description of the existing environmental setting, potential environmental impacts, and proposed mitigation measures;
- A cumulative impact discussion;
- Alternatives to the proposed project; and
- CEQA required environmental consequences, including (a) significant environmental impacts that cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; (b) significant irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources; (c) growth inducing impacts; and (d) effects found not to be significant.

Project Location

The project site (Shamrock Seed Company) is located at 6640 Holsclaw Road on two legal parcels, totaling approximately 22.5 acres, under a single assessor's parcel number (841-49-002) in an unincorporated area of Santa Clara County, approximately one mile east of the City of Gilroy. The project area is accessed via Holsclaw Road from Highway 152. The project location is shown on attached Figure 1: Regional Map, Figure 2: Vicinity Map, and Figure 3: Aerial Photograph and Surrounding Land Uses. Project activities would occur within the portion of assessor's parcel number 841-49-002 that is closest to Holsclaw Road, as shown in attached Figure 3.

Project Description

Proposed Development

The project proposes the removal of approximately 15 existing, 500- to 1,000-square-foot greenhouses (the existing modular office structure, barn, and equipment shed would remain) and construction of a new 10,000-square-foot, one-story agricultural research building. The agricultural research building would include offices, laboratory area, and conference rooms to support the agricultural research use. The approximately 20-foot-tall structure would have metal walls and a metal roof and would front Holsclaw Road. A 31-space parking lot would be located along the south and east side of the agricultural research building and would be accessed via the

existing driveway at the site. Water would be provided by existing on-site wells. A septic system would be installed to service the agricultural research building.

Two new greenhouse structures (measuring approximately 100 feet by 130 feet and 85 feet by 300 feet) would also be constructed at the site. These two greenhouses would be up to 22 feet tall, and composed of a translucent material, to allow sunlight to enter during daylight hours. The greenhouses would be internally illuminated during a portion of non-daylight hours.

Hours of Operation and Staffing

The agricultural research building would operate daily between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. The greenhouses would be illuminated at varying times of day, depending on the season, to provide a maximum of 16 continuous hours of light each day.

The proposed project would increase the number of employees at the site by approximately 10 people, for a total of up to approximately 25 on-site employees. Work schedules for the employees would vary given the nature of research activities.

Required Permits and Approvals

The existing agriculture research facility was granted Architecture and Site Approval (ASA) in 2007 for its current configuration and uses. A new ASA and Grading Approval are required for the proposed project.

Potential Environmental Effects of the Project

The EIR will address the environmental resource areas that could potentially have a significant impact from the implementation of the proposed project, including the following:

- **Aesthetics** – The EIR will describe the existing visual character of the project site and the anticipated change in visual character resulting from development of the proposed project. Environmental effects of proposed lighting will be addressed. Mitigation measures will be identified to reduce or avoid significant aesthetic impacts, as necessary.
- **Cultural Resources** – The proposed project site is adjacent to the Wilson House, a County Heritage Resource Inventory-listed building. The EIR will discuss the potential impacts of the project on the historical character of the Wilson House. Further, the EIR will evaluate the potential for disturbance and/or discovery of archaeological resources during ground-disturbing activities. Mitigation measures to reduce potential significant impacts will be identified, as applicable.
- **Energy** – The EIR will identify the potential for the project to result in energy impacts and describe conservation measures included in the project to avoid wasteful or inefficient use of energy. Mitigation will be identified for impacts, if necessary.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** – The EIR will describe the regulatory context surrounding the issue of global climate change and will evaluate the project's greenhouse gas

emissions and contribution to global climate change. Mitigation measures will be identified to reduce significant greenhouse gas emissions impacts, if necessary.

- Cumulative Impacts – The EIR will include a discussion of significant cumulative impacts of the project when considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area. This section will cover relevant subject areas discussed in the EIR (e.g., aesthetics, cultural resources, energy, and greenhouse gas emissions) and will specify which of the areas are anticipated to experience significant cumulative impacts. Mitigation measures will be identified to reduce or avoid the project's contribution to significant cumulative impacts, if necessary.
- Alternatives to the Project – The EIR will identify and evaluate project alternatives that might reasonably be assumed to reduce significant project impacts. Alternatives that may be discussed include a no project, reduced scale, and/or location alternative. The EIR will identify the degree to which each alternative might reduce or increase one or more of the project's impacts, and the degree to which the alternative is consistent with the project's goals and objectives. In accordance with CEQA, the EIR will identify an environmentally superior alternative.
- Other Required Sections – The EIR will include the following required information required: 1) Growth Inducing Impacts; 2) Significant, Unavoidable Impacts; 3) Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes; 4) Consistency with Relevant Plans and Policies; 5) References; and 6) EIR Preparers.



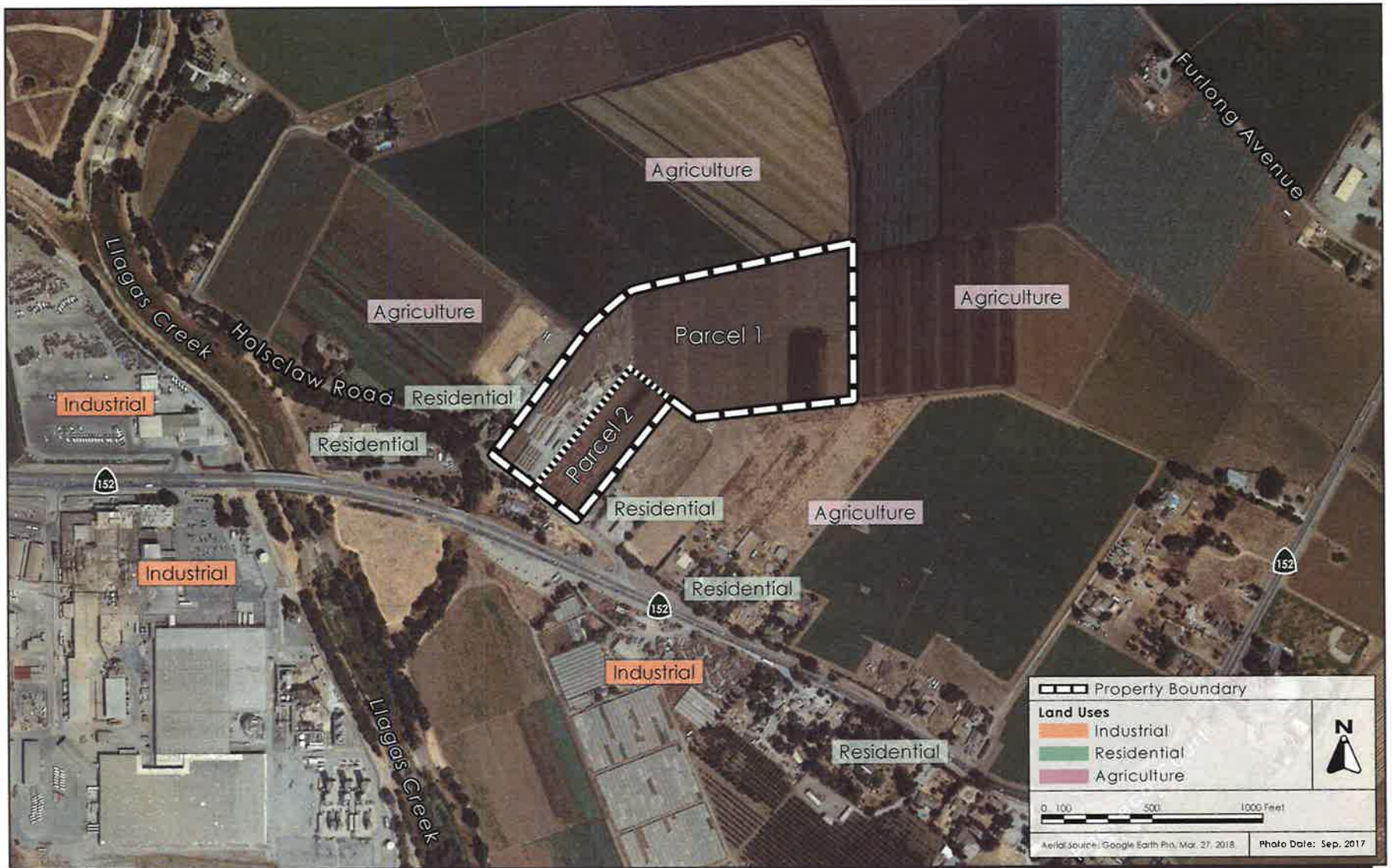
REGIONAL MAP

FIGURE 1



VICINITY MAP

FIGURE 2



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH AND SURROUNDING LAND USES

FIGURE 3

File: 33536
Dexter Creek

May 17, 2018

Mr. Robert Salisbury
County of Santa Clara
Planning Department
County Government Center
70 West Hedding Street, 7th Floor, East Wing
San Jose, CA 95110

Subject: Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) –
Holsclaw Road, Gilroy, CA

Dear Mr. Salisbury:

The Santa Clara Valley Water District (District) is a special district with jurisdiction throughout Santa Clara County. The District acts as the county's groundwater management agency, principal water resources manager, flood protection agency and is the steward for its watersheds, streams and creeks, and underground aquifers. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the scope of the EIR for the Shamrock Seeds Project. This letter transmits comments that focus on the areas of interest and expertise of the District.

The project will add a 10,000 square foot main building, which will increase impervious surface. Impervious development can increase runoff and reduce groundwater recharge. The Environmental Impact Report needs to include measures that either avoid or mitigate for loss of groundwater recharge and increased flows in storm water runoff.

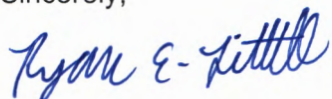
Finish grading on the site and construction of access roads, building pads, and parking areas must not redirect flood flows nor create induced flooding on adjacent properties. Please reference FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map No.06085C0643H dated May 18, 2009. Most of the site is within Zone A, an area subject to flooding by the 1% annual chance flood (no base flood elevations determined). Increases in runoff associated with the development should be detained on site utilizing a detention basin or hydro-modification basin to prevent increases to peak discharge on Old Llagas Creek or Dexter Creek. Preventative measures should be proposed that will ensure base flood elevations and existing floodplain boundaries do not increase as a result of the project. However, the industrial nature of the development has the potential to adversely impact groundwater quality if infiltration is used to manage storm water in conformance with the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program and Regional Water Quality Control Board requirements. The impacts of any infiltration should be evaluated.

Old Llagas Creek, as well as Dexter Creek, are both located within 100 feet of the parcel where the work is proposed. The Environmental impact report should address potential impacts to the two streams, including water quality impacts, erosion prevention, and setback requirements for septic systems and leach fields.

Mr. Robert Salisbury
Page 2
May 17, 2018

Please provide a copy of the DEIR for District review once available. Reference District File No. 33536 on further correspondence regarding this project. If you have any questions or need further information, you can reach me at (408) 630-2536 or by email at Rlittell@valleywater.org.

Sincerely,



Ryan Littell
Assistant Civil Engineer
Community Projects Review Unit

cc: U. Chatwani, Y. Arroyo, R. Littell, File

May 9, 2018

County of Santa Clara, Planning Division
Attention: Robert Salisbury
County Government Center
70 West Hedding Street, 7th Floor, East Wing
San Jose, CA 95110
(Sent Via Email to robert.salisbury@pln.sccgov.org)

R.e. Comments on Notice of Preparation of an EIR – Shamrock Seed Project
File Number 9555-16A-16G, APN 841-49-002

Dear Mr. Salisbury:

Thank you for sending the Notice of Preparation (“NOP”) of an EIR for the Shamrock Seed Project. My comments are as follows:

1. Figure 3 – Aerial Photograph is missing an important “Residential” label on the opposite side of Holsclaw Road from the demising line of Shamrock Seed parcels 1 and 2.
2. Figure 4 – Site Plan is referenced on the signature page but is not attached to the document.
3. Page 1 – Proposed Development lists 15 existing greenhouses. I believe this is inaccurate with the actual number approximating 5 (as restricted by the 2007 ASA).
4. Page 2 – Hours of Operation and Staffing documents current number of employees as 10 people. The 2007 ASA restricts the number of employees to 5. Shouldn't stated growth be based on the number of approved employees?
5. Page 2 – Potential Environmental Effects of the Project appears to omit Transportation/Traffic, Noise, Air Quality and other environmental factors from the EIR. I believe these areas should be addressed given the large increase in project size over existing (growth for employees at 5x, greenhouse volume at 6x, office/research square feet at 17x). This is a large project relative to our neighborhood. The impacts on traffic, noise, air quality and other factors should not be overlooked.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carmen Patane".

Carmen Patane, CPA
6650 Holsclaw Road
Gilroy, CA 95020
(408) 209-6444

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 4

P.O. BOX 23660

OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660

PHONE (510) 286-5528

FAX (510) 286-5559

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*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life!*

May 10, 2018

Mr. Robert Salisbury
Santa Clara County
Planning and Development Department
70 West Hedding Street, 7th Floor
San Jose, CA 95110

SCH# 2017022062
04-SCL-2018-00398
PM: SCL-152-11.4
GTS ID 221

Shamrock Seeds Project – Notice of Preparation (NOP)

Dear Mr. Salisbury:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced project. In tandem with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), Caltrans mission signals a modernization of our approach to evaluating and mitigating impacts to the State Transportation Network (STN). Caltrans' *Strategic Management Plan 2015-2020* aims to reduce Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) by tripling bicycle and doubling both pedestrian and transit travel by 2020. Our comments are based on the NOP.

Project Understanding

The applicant proposes to construct a 10,000 square foot (sf) agricultural research building, a 13,000 sf greenhouse, and a 25,500 sf greenhouse at 6640 Holsclaw Road. The agricultural research building will contain offices, a laboratory area, and conference rooms. The proposed project will remove approximately 15 existing structures which range from 500 sf to 1,000sf. The proposed project would increase the number of employees at the site by approximately ten people, for a total of approximately 25. Hours of operation will be from 6:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m., seven days a week. Work schedules for the employees would vary given the nature of research activities. The applicant proposes to provide 31 parking spaces. Access to the project site will be provided via an existing drive on Holsclaw Road. The project site is located approximately 364 feet north of the State Route (SR) 152/ Holsclaw Road Highway intersection.

Hydraulics

Provide calculations of design discharge for pre-and post-development. The design discharge of post development shall not exceed the design discharge under existing conditions. Please provide the site grading plan for review.

Cultural Resources

In support of the draft Environmental Impact Report, we recommend that Santa Clara County conduct a cultural resource technical study that at a minimum includes a records search at the Northwest Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) at Sonoma State University and a field survey of the project area by a qualified archaeologist and qualified architectural historian. Previous grading, agricultural use, or other development does not preclude the existence of archaeological sites, or other cultural resources, potentially eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources.

We recommend that Santa Clara County, per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Assembly Bill (AB) 52, conduct Native American consultation with tribes, groups, and individuals who are interested in the project area and may have knowledge of Tribal Cultural Resources, Traditional Cultural Properties, or other sacred sites. If an encroachment permit is needed for work within Caltrans right-of-way (ROW), we may require cultural resource technical studies be prepared in compliance with CEQA, Public Resources Code (PRC) 5024, and the Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference (SER) Chapter 2 (<http://www.dot.ca.gov/ser/vol2/vol2.htm>). Should ground-disturbing activities take place within Caltrans ROW and there is an inadvertent archaeological or burial discovery, in compliance with CEQA, PRC 5024.5, and the SER, all construction within 60 feet of the find shall cease and the Caltrans District 4 Office of Cultural Resource Studies (OCRS) shall be immediately contacted at (510) 622-1673.

Operations Analysis

We are concerned with the projected increase in generated trips, which have the potential to create significant speed differentials and increase the number of conflicts. Please submit a Travel Demand Analysis (TDA) evaluating project-related trip generation, distribution, turning movements, and trip assignment estimates within the STN and associated intersections. The analysis of state facilities is necessary to determine the scope and significance of issues that may arise from the project's potential conflicts. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) does not exempt these types of operational concerns from evaluation. The TDA should include the STN intersections and ramps listed below.

SR 152 at:

- Lake Road;
- Holsclaw Road;
- Cameron Blvd; and
- Camino Arroyo.

US 101 north- and southbound ramps, including at the 10th Street intersection.

To avoid impacts such as on-ramp queues backing up onto the city streets, the project should evaluate on-ramp storage capacity as listed above, and determine if queues spill-back onto the freeway mainline. In conducting these evaluations, Demand Volumes should be applied rather than output or constrained flow volumes.

Vehicle Trip Reduction

In Caltrans' *Smart Mobility 2010: A Call to Action for the New Decade*, this project falls under **Place Type 5 Rural and Agricultural Lands – Rural Settlements and Agricultural Lands**, which includes settlements patterns with widely-spaced towns separated by farms, vineyards, orchard, or grazing lands, which can significantly affect land uses, character and mobility needs. This place type has scattered dwelling units and supporting commercial uses and public facilities with no significant subdivisions and limited nonagricultural industrial or commercial land use. Given this Place Type and intensification of use, which typically leads to high levels of VMT and corresponding low levels of active transportation, encourage the County to establish a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program including the elements described below to promote smart mobility and reduce regional VMT and traffic impacts to the STN.

- Commuter subsidy for transit, carpool, and vanpool for employees on an ongoing basis;
- Project design to encourage walking, bicycling, and convenient transit access;
- Ten percent vehicle parking reduction;
- Electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and designated parking spaces for EVs and clean fuel vehicles;
- Carpooling incentives and dedicated parking spaces for carpooling employees;
- Bicycle route mapping resources and bicycle parking incentives;
- Bicycle share membership;
- Fix-it bicycle repair station(s); and
- Showers, changing rooms, and clothing lockers;

For additional TDM options, please refer to Chapter 8 of Federal Highway Administration's *Integrating Demand Management into the Transportation Planning Process: A Desk Reference*, which is available online at: <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/fhwahop12035.pdf>. For information about parking ratios, please see MTC's report, *Reforming Parking Policies to Support smart growth*, or visit the MTC parking webpage: http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/smart_growth/parking.

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the County of Santa Clara is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the STN. The project's financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and Lead Agency monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures. Mitigation that includes the requirements of other agencies such as Caltrans are fully

Mr. Robert Salisbury, Santa Clara County
May 10, 2018
Page 4

enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally-binding instruments under the control of the County.

Encroachment Permit

Please be advised that any work such as tree trimming or traffic control that encroaches onto Caltrans ROW requires an encroachment permit that is issued by the Department. Tree trimming requirements will be addressed in the encroachment permit process. To apply for an encroachment permit, please complete an encroachment permit application, environmental documentation, and five (5) sets of plans clearly indicating State ROW, and submit to the following address: David Salladay, District Office Chief, Office of Permits, California Department of Transportation, District 4, P.O. Box 23660, Oakland, CA 94623-0660. Traffic-related mitigation measures should be incorporated into the construction plans prior to the encroachment permit process. See the website link below for more information: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits>.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Stephen Conteh at (510) 286-5534 or Stephen.conteh@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



for PATRICIA MAURICE
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

c: State Clearinghouse



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

MATTHEW RODRIGUEZ
SECRETARY FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

State Water Resources Control Board

Division of Drinking Water

May 7, 2018

Mr. Robert Salisbury
Senior Planner
Department of Planning and Development
County of Santa Clara
70 W. Hedding Street, 7th Floor
San Jose, CA 95110

COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA

2018 MAY -7 AM 11:30

NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP) OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR SHAMROCK SEEDS PROJECT (SCH#2017022062)

Dear Mr. Salisbury:

The State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) Division of Drinking Water's (Division or DDW) comments on the proposed project are as follows:

It was indicated in the Notice of Preparation (NOP) that the proposed project involves the construction of a new 10,000-square foot, one-story agricultural research building, (which would house offices, laboratory area, and conference rooms to support the agricultural research use), two greenhouse structures and a 31-space parking lot. Water at the project site will be provided by existing on-site wells and a septic system will be installed to service the agricultural research building. The NOP also stated that the proposed project will employ up to approximately 25 on-site employees.

A public water system, as specified in Section 116275(h) of the California Health and Safety Code (CHSC), is a system for the provision of piped water to the public for human consumption that has 15 or more service connections or regularly serves at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year. Human consumption is defined in Section 116275 (e) of the CHSC as the "use of water for drinking, bathing or showering, hand washing, oral hygiene, or cooking, including, but not limited to, preparing food and washing dishes."

The Division, based on the information provided in the NOP, is assuming that the proposed facility meets the definition of a public water system (PWS). As such, pursuant to Section 116527 (b)(1) of the CHSC, the project proponent needs to submit a technical report, as specified in Section 116527 (c) of the CHSC, to the Division for its review and assessment at least six months before initiating construction of any water-related improvement.

FELICIA MARCUS, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

850 Marina Bay Parkway, Bldg. P, 2nd Floor, Richmond, CA 94804-6403 | www.waterboards.ca.gov

The Division will recommend that the project not move forward if the above technical report is not submitted to this office in a timely manner.

Section 116527 (b)(2) of the CHSC also states that to assist in expediting the permitting process, a person that is considering applying for a permit for a proposed new public water system is encouraged, but is not required, to submit a preliminary technical report, as specified in Section 116527 (c) of the CHSC, no later than seven days after submission of an application to the city or county for a building permit for any water-related improvement. In addition, pursuant to Section 116527 (b)(3) of the CHSC, the applicant shall also submit a copy of the preliminary technical report to the Division for a proposed new public water system that would be regulated by a local primacy agency.

Finally, if it is determined that the proposed project serves at least twenty-five persons at least 60 days of the year or plans to develop a public water system, it must first apply for and receive a domestic water supply permit from this office in accordance with Section 116525 of the CHSC.

If you have any questions, please call Jose P. Lozano IV at (510) 620-3459 or myself at (510) 620-3453.

Sincerely,



Eric Lacy, P.E.
District Engineer
Santa Clara District
Division of Drinking Water
State Water Resources Control Board

cc: Santa Clara County Environmental Health Department

Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
P. O. Box 3044
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

Ms. Amanda Musy-Verdel
Hanna and Brunetti
7651 Egleberry Street
Gilroy, CA 95020