

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

This section provides a brief description of the current environmental conditions in the proposed Town Center Specific Plan area.

3.1 REGIONAL SETTING

The City of Scotts Valley is located approximately 6 miles north of Santa Cruz and 18 miles south of Los Gatos in northern Santa Cruz County. The City is situated on the upland slope of the southwestern edge of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Approximately two miles west is the San Lorenzo Valley. To the east lie unincorporated lands of Santa Cruz County and the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Scotts Valley encompasses approximately 4.5 square miles. The predominant land use in the City is residential, which comprises approximately 968.9 acres or about 36% of the City area. Larger lots with lower densities have been developed in the hillsides, while higher densities are located on the valley floor close to local shopping, public services and transportation facilities. Residential land uses in the unincorporated portions of the Scotts Valley Planning Area total approximately 1,449 acres, or about 51% of the unincorporated land in the Planning Area. Approximately 140 acres or about 5% of City land is designated for commercial uses, including shopping centers, service commercial and professional offices. An additional 144 acres (5%) of the total City lands is designated industrial. Public/quasi-public facilities and open space areas comprise approximately 128 acres within the City, or about 5% of the lands. Agricultural uses in the City total approximately 469.3 acres devoted to grazing, farming, animal husbandry and other related agricultural uses (Scotts Valley General Plan Land Use Element, 1994).

The climate is characteristic of mountainous coastal terrain. Summer is generally mild with occasional morning coastal fog. Fall is typically warm with little rainfall. Rainfall is concentrated in winter with temperatures ranging from 30 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit. Annual average temperature is 68 degrees, and average annual rainfall is 41.18 inches (City of Scotts Valley Community Profile, 2007).

3.2 SPECIFIC PLAN SITE SETTING

The Town Center Specific Plan area is located along the northern side of Mt. Hermon Road, south of Skypark Drive. Kings Village Road runs through the plan area in a north-south direction; however, it is situated in the eastern portion of the plan area.

3.2.1 General Site Characteristics

The proposed Specific Plan area includes several existing commercial land uses, and to a lesser degree public and quasi-public land uses. The plan area also contains commercially designated undeveloped land that was formerly used as an airport. The Specific Plan area is bordered by a park and medium to high density residential land uses to the north, west and east. Land uses to the south are predominately commercial. Despite the relatively mountainous terrain of Scotts Valley, the topography of the plan area is relatively flat. The site is approximately 520



feet above mean sea level. Elevations increase quickly in both north and south directions as the terrain becomes more mountainous.

3.2.2 Geologic Setting

The City of Scotts Valley is located in the south central Santa Cruz Mountains in the Central Coast ranges of California. This is a seismically active region that is influenced by numerous named and unnamed faults in the area. The project site is underlain by bedrock of the Purisima Formation, which is comprised of sandstone, diatomaceous siltstone, and shale. Portions of Scotts Valley have been mapped with a “high” and “moderate” liquefaction potential rating. The County’s landslide hazard area map has identified areas within the City of Scotts Valley that have a landslide hazard. Landslide hazards in the City are concentrated in the hillside areas in the near the western and eastern boundaries of the City, these include active (movement within the past 50 years), dormant (little movement within the past 50 years), and old (little movement within the past 100 years) landslides.

While the City is not within any of the County’s identified fault zone area or within a half-mile buffer of any known fault zone, the City is with the seismically active Santa Cruz Mountains. Major named faults in the area include the Zayante Fault, San Andreas Fault, and the San Gregorio Fault (Scotts Valley General Plan Safety Element, 1994). The Zayante Fault Zone is located approximately 1.5 miles north of the City of Scotts Valley, and is the closest fault to the City. The Zayante Fault is tied into the San Andreas Fault system and capable of producing earthquakes of magnitude 7.4 on the Richter scale.

3.2.3 Natural and Cultural Resources

The Specific Plan area contains trees that have the potential to support nesting habitat for raptors or other birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The southwestern portion of the Plan area is vegetated with native plant and tree species. There is an identified area containing wetland indicating species. The location of the potential wetland is between two of the old airport runways.

The Specific Plan area contains some existing structures that by virtue of their age (i.e. 50 years or older), may qualify as historic resources. As a result of potentially historic resources on site, a qualified historian shall evaluate the historical significance and their eligibility for the California Register of Historic Resources One archaeological site has been formally recorded within the Specific Plan area, and two others are recorded within one mile (see Tables 4.4-1 and 4.4-2 in Section 4.4 *Cultural Resources*). Two of these contain only prehistoric remains and one contains both prehistoric and historical materials.

3.3 CUMULATIVE PROJECTS SETTING

The State *CEQA Guidelines* require the analysis of the cumulative effects of a project in combination with other foreseeable development in the area. CEQA defines “cumulative impacts” as two or more individual events that, when considered together, are considerable or will compound other environmental impacts. Cumulative impacts are the changes in the environment that result from the incremental impact of development of the proposed project and other nearby projects. For example, traffic impacts of two nearby projects may be



insignificant when analyzed separately, but could have a significant impact when analyzed together. Section 15130 of the State *CEQA Guidelines* prescribes two methods for analyzing cumulative impacts: (1) use of a list of past, present, and reasonably anticipated future projects producing related or cumulative impacts; or (2) use of a summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document.

For the purpose of this EIR, cumulative impacts are based on long-range general plan buildout of both the City of Scotts Valley, and unincorporated portions of Santa Cruz County that may have some peripheral relationship to the City. Buildout under the Scotts Valley General Plan assumes a population capacity of 15,000 and an ultimate development capacity of approximately 6,500 residential units and 6.2 million square feet of commercial, industrial and office land uses. Buildout of peripheral cities as they relate to Scotts Valley and the proposed specific plan are discussed further in section 4.8 *Land Use*.

For informational purposes, this EIR also describes the projects currently pending, approved, or otherwise under consideration by the City in Table 3-1. This information does not form the basis of the cumulative projects analysis, except to the extent these projects are germane to the discussion of impacts associated with long-range cumulative development. The City currently has approximately 378 residential units and 274,977 square feet of commercial development proposed, as shown in Table 3-1 below. Cumulative impacts are discussed within each of the specific impact analysis discussions in Section 4.0, *Environmental Impact Analysis*. Table 3-1 below shows projects within Scotts Valley, which include those currently under construction, approved projects and potential development sites.

Table 3-1. City of Scotts Valley, Approved and Pending Projects, April 2008

Project	Zoning	Residential Units	Commercial Square Feet (sf)
Projects Under Construction			
Forrest Hill Reserve	Residential – SFD	1	
Scotts Valley Drive/Kelly Court (Mix Use)	Commercial Service		1,600
Monte Fiore (aka Heritage Parks)	Residential – SFD	2	
Tree Circus Commercial Center	Commercial Service		6,300
Scotts Valley Corners	Commercial Service		4,500
Wells Road	Residential – SFD	3	
Projects Approved – No Building Permit Issued			
Central Home Supply	Commercial Service		6,000
Bean Creek Estates	Residential – SFD	13	
Bethany University Dorm	Residential – Apts	30	
Blake Lane	Residential – Multifamily	3	
Collado Drive	Residential – SFD	4	
Fire Station	Commercial Service		9,600
Grace Way	Residential – SFD	1	
Granite Creek Estates	Residential – SFD	2	
Green Hills Road	Light Industrial		18,450
Hacienda Drive	Residential – SFD	1	
Monte Fiore	Residential – SFD	6	
Quarry Site Mixed Use	Commercial Service – PD	94	
Quarry Site Mixed Use	Commercial Service – PD		31,500
Ridgecrest PUD	Residential – SFD/PD	3	
San Augustine	Residential – SFD	1	
Scotts Valley Sports Center	Commercial Service		6,300
Projects Submitted – Not Approved			
Blake Lane – Paul Locatelli	Residential – Multifamily	6	



Table 3-1. City of Scotts Valley, Approved and Pending Projects, April 2008

Project	Zoning	Residential Units	Commercial Square Feet (sf)
Blue Bonnet Lane – Bill Brooks	Residential – Multifamily	48	
Granite Creek – Hodges	Residential – SFD	3	
Green Hills Road – Falcon Ridge	Residential – SFD	17	
Lockwood Lane – Jim Sisk	Residential – SFD		
Oak Creek Park Mixed Use	Commercial – Service		12,225
Oak Creek Park Mixed Use	Commercial – Service		12,225
Oak Creek Park Mixed Use	Commercial – Service	10	
Navarra – Allbach	Residential –SFD	1	
Pinnacle View	Commercial Service	13	
Pinnacle View	Commercial Service	8	
Polo Ranch	Residential - SFD	41	
Polo Ranch Scotts Valley	Residential - SFD	6	
Scotts Valley Drive	Commercial Service		4,560
Scotts Valley Drive	Commercial Service		6,687
Scotts Valley Drive	Residential Multifamily	6	
Scotts Valley Drive	Commercial Service	5	
Tabor Drive – Dr. Rossi	Residential –SFD	1	
Target *	Commercial Service		155,000
Terrace View	Residential Multifamily	2	
Timber Ridge Lane	Residential –SFD	8	
Miscellaneous	Residential – SFD	6	
Major Vacant Lost or Potential Redevelopment Sites – Not formally submitted			
Borland Phase II	Public/Quasi Public	22 Units	
Pinnacle Pass	Commercial Service	11 Units	
Scotts Valley Drive Terrace View	Commercial Service	NA	
Alpine Village			
Town Center	Commercial Service	NA	
Town Center	Commercial Service	NA	
Town Center	Commercial Service	NA	
Total		378	274,977

* To avoid double-counting, Gateway South is not included in the table above because a specific development plan for a Target shopping center in that plan area has been proposed.

Source: City of Scotts Valley, 2008

