

## **CHAPTER 2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

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As required by Section 15125 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, this chapter of the environmental impact report (EIR) includes a brief description of the existing physical conditions at the proposed Cypress Point Project (project) site and the surrounding vicinity at the time of filing of the Notice of Preparation. Although in some cases current data were not available to represent conditions at the time of filing the Notice of Preparation, the most recent data available are described in this chapter and serve as the CEQA baseline for this EIR. This chapter also provides an overview of the regulatory setting on the project site pursuant to Section 15125(d) of the CEQA Guidelines. Additional details and descriptions of the existing conditions specific to each environmental issue can be found throughout Chapter 4, Environmental Analysis. The environmental conditions discussed in this chapter and throughout the EIR constitute the baseline conditions by which significances of impacts will be determined.

### **2.1 PROJECT SETTING**

#### **2.1.1 Project Location**

The 7.3-acre project site is a vacant, undeveloped parcel, located in the north central portion of the City of Oceanside (City), which is within the northwestern portion of San Diego County (Figure 2-1, Project Location). State Route 76 is approximately 1 mile to the south of the project site. The site is located west of Los Arbolitos Boulevard at the Aspen Street and Pala Road intersections. The site is bordered on the north and west by the San Luis Rey River, and by existing residential developments on the south and east. A portion in the northwest corner of the site has been left undeveloped as a part of the City of Oceanside's Draft Subarea Plan hardline preserve and to accommodate the existing San Luis Rey Trail located on the property.

The project site is located on the U.S. Geological Service 7.5-minute San Luis Rey quadrangle map in Section 7, Township 11 South, Range 4 West. The project site is identified as Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 158-301-46-00.

#### **2.1.2 Site Background**

The project site (APN 158-301-46-00) is a vacant parcel of approximately 7.3 acres recently purchased from the City of Oceanside. This parcel is undeveloped, with isolated culverts and dirt pedestrian pathways throughout. In general, the property has been impacted by grading and the construction of two man-made drainage trenches and three dirt walking trails. The property has also been previously disturbed by land development on adjacent parcels. Refer to Section 4.4, Cultural Resources, of this EIR for more historical information.

### 2.1.3 Existing Land Uses

#### On-Site Land Uses

The project site is currently disturbed, vacant land, as shown in Figure 2-2, Project Site. The adjacent neighborhoods currently use the project site as an extension of the adjacent open space. The site is currently used for dog walking and is used by the adjacent neighborhood to access the San Luis Rey River corridor and associated trail.

#### Surrounding Land Uses

Uses in the vicinity of the project site primarily include residential development. The San Luis Rey River corridor and associated trail are to the north and the west, bordering the project site. The project site abuts existing residential developments to the east and south. The San Luis Rey River corridor includes a native habitat conservation area and a two-way asphalt bicycle path.

### 2.1.4 Existing Zoning Designations

The project site, as well as the nearby neighborhood east of the project site, are currently zoned for RS-Single family residential. Surrounding areas are zoned open space in the areas adjacent to the San Luis Rey River, and the nearby neighborhoods contain a variety of residential zones, including RS (Single-Family Residential District), RM-A (Medium Density A District), RM-B (Medium Density B District), and RH (High-Density Residential District) (Figure 2-3, Zoning Designations). These zoning designations are described in detail in Chapter 4.10, Land Use, of this EIR.

The City Zoning Ordinance Article 10 outlines the requirements of the Inland Residential Districts. As presented in Section 1010 of the Zoning Ordinance, the specific purposes of the residential districts are as follows:

- Provide appropriately located areas for residential development that are consistent with the General Plan and with standards of public health and safety established by the City Code.
- Ensure adequate light, air, privacy, and open space for each dwelling, and protect residents from the harmful effects of excessive noise, population density, traffic congestion, and other adverse environmental effects.
- Promote development of housing affordable by low- and moderate-income households by providing a density bonus for projects in which a portion of the units are affordable for such households.
- Protect residential areas from fires, explosions, landslides, toxic fumes and substances, and other public safety hazards.

- Protect adjoining single-family residential districts from excessive loss of sun, light, quiet, and privacy resulting from proximity to multifamily development.
- Achieve design compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.
- Provide sites for public and semipublic land uses needed to complement residential development or requiring a residential environment.
- Ensure the provision of public services and facilities needed to accommodate planned population densities.

The additional purposes of the RS Single-Family Residential District are as follows:

- To provide opportunities for single-family residential land use in neighborhoods, subject to appropriate standards. Duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes existing as of the effective date of this ordinance are allowed to remain, but all new residential construction shall be single-family dwellings or approved accessory structures (except as otherwise noted in Section 1030). In the RS District, the base density is 3.6 dwelling units per gross acre and the maximum potential density is 5.9 dwelling units per gross acre.

### **2.1.5 Existing General Plan Land Use Designations**

The project site and the immediately adjacent areas to the east and south have a General Plan land use designation of Single Family Detached Residential (SFD-R). The areas to the north and the west of the project site have a General Plan land use designation of Open Space (City of Oceanside 2021a).

## **2.2 REGIONAL SETTING**

### **2.2.1 Climate**

The local climate within the project area is characterized as semi-arid with consistently mild, warmer temperatures throughout the year. The average summertime high temperature in the region is approximately 67.6°F, with highs reaching 73.6°F on average during the months of July through September. The average wintertime low temperature is approximately 52.9°F, reaching as low as 44.2°F on average during November through March. Average precipitation in the local area is approximately 10.54 inches per year, with the bulk of precipitation falling November through March (WRCC 2016).

### **2.2.2 Air Basin**

The project site is located within the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB) and is subject to San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) guidelines and regulations. The SDAB is one of 15 air basins that geographically divide California. The SDAB lies in the southwest corner of California, comprises the entire San Diego region, and covers approximately 4,260 square miles.

The climate of the San Diego region, as in most of Southern California, is influenced by the strength and position of the semi-permanent high-pressure system over the Pacific Ocean, known as the Pacific High. This high-pressure ridge over the West Coast often creates a pattern of late-night and early-morning low clouds, hazy afternoon sunshine, daytime onshore breezes, and little temperature variation year-round. The SDAB is characterized as a Mediterranean climate with dry, warm summers and mild, occasionally wet winters. Average temperature ranges (in degrees Fahrenheit (°F)) from the mid-40s to the high 90s, with an average of 201 days warmer than 70°F. The SDAB experiences 9 to 13 inches of rainfall annually, with most of the region's precipitation falling from November through March, with infrequent (approximately 10%) precipitation during the summer. El Niño and La Niña patterns have large effects on the annual rainfall received in San Diego, where San Diego receives less than normal rainfall during La Niña years.

Air quality standards have been set pursuant to the federal and state Clean Air Acts, which are referred to as the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS). The favorable climate of San Diego also works to create air pollution problems. The SDAB has been determined to be in non-attainment of the federal and state O<sub>3</sub> air quality standards. In the fall months, the SDAB is often impacted by Santa Ana winds, which can transport air pollution from the South Coast Air Basin and increase O<sub>3</sub> concentrations in the San Diego area. Under certain conditions, atmospheric oscillation results in the offshore transport of air from the Los Angeles region to San Diego County that also raises the O<sub>3</sub> concentrations within the SDAB. Due to this condition and the associated Clean Air Act requirements, Regional Air Quality Strategy have been developed to address reducing O<sub>3</sub> in the SDAB (see Section 2.3.3).

Refer to Section 4.2, Air Quality, for additional information regarding air quality in the SDAB.

### **2.2.3 Soils**

Soils in the project site are made up of artificial fill and quaternary young alluvial flood-plain deposits. Generally, soils consist of 0 to 2 inches of loose silty sand from artificial fill, and 2 to 10 inches of denser silty sand of quaternary young alluvium (Appendix E). Refer to Section 4.6, Geology and Soils, for additional information.

### **2.2.4 Terrain**

The topography of the project site is generally flat and previously graded. The project site primarily consists of disturbed habitat and non-native grassland. Elevations range from approximately 44 feet to 51 feet above mean sea level.

### **2.2.5 Watersheds and Hydrology**

The project site is located within the San Luis Rey Hydrologic Unit (903), within the Lower San Luis Hydrologic Area (903.1) and the Mission Hydrologic Sub-Area (903.11) of the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin (California Regional Water Quality Control Board 2016). The major surface waterbody in the vicinity of the Cypress Point project is the San Luis Rey River, which flows east to west. The portion of the San Luis Rey River directly north and west of the project site flows approximately 4 miles until its confluence with the Pacific Ocean. Within this Hydrologic Sub-Area, downstream impaired 303(d) listed water bodies include the Pacific Ocean Shoreline and San Luis Rey River Mouth. The technical analysis identifies potential groundwater at a depth between 10 and 20 feet below the ground surface. Refer to Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, for additional details.

### **2.2.6 Vegetation and Habitats**

Four vegetation/habitat types were identified within the project biological study area that includes the project property parcel, proposed off-site project elements, and a 25-foot habitat mapping buffer: southern willow scrub, non-native grassland, disturbed habitat and urban/developed land. Southern willow scrub consists of dense, broadleaved, winter-deciduous stands of trees dominated by scrubby willows in association with mule fat and scattered emergent cottonwood and western sycamores. Non-native grassland: broadleaf-dominated is a subset of non-native grassland that includes more than 50% of non-native broadleaf species. As is this case with respect to the project site, this community often develops as a result of disturbance. Disturbed habitats are areas that have been physically disturbed and are no longer recognizable as native or naturalized vegetation associations. Urban/developed land is a land cover type which includes areas where vegetation growth is prevented by an existing structure or material, such as a building or road, and includes ornamental vegetation associated with structures. These vegetation communities and land cover types are described in more detail in Section 4.3, Biological Resources.

### **2.2.7 Utilities**

Potable water is currently provided by the City's Water Utilities Department. The project site is situated in the western portion of the City in an area served by the Talone 320 Pressure Zone. The nearest existing 320 Pressure Zone public water lines in the vicinity of the project site are a 12-inch-diameter water line in Pala Road and an 8-inch-diameter water line in Los Arbolitos Boulevard. The water supply to this area comes mainly from three reservoirs and several pressure reducing valves in the Talone 320 Pressure Zone. The three reservoirs are the 5-million-gallon Wire Mountain Reservoir, the 3-million-gallon Fire Mountain Reservoir, and the 3-million-gallon John Paul Steiger Reservoir. These reservoirs provide gravity service to the Talone 320 Pressure Zone.

The existing public sewer system in the vicinity of the project consists of 8-inch-diameter sewer lines in Pala Road and in Los Arbolitos Road. The sewer in Pala Road joins the Los Arbolitos

sewer at the intersection of the streets and then flow continues south in Los Arbolitos Boulevard in a 12-inch sewer. This sewer flows south to Mission Avenue and then to the Mission Avenue Lift Station.

Several force mains and outfalls also run through the project and adjacent to the project. On the west side of the project, there is a 24-inch San Luis Rey Land Outfall and the 24-inch Mission Avenue Lift Station Force Main along with another 24-inch force main and a 10-inch force main. On the east side of the project is the 42” Buena Lift Station Force Main and space reserved for future sewers. Refer to Section 4.17, Utilities and Services Systems, for additional discussion about sewer and water utilities.

On-site drainage is overland flow and concentrated natural flow. Runoff from the residential area to the west flows onto the site at the dead-end of Aspen Street. It then flows across the site in a graded channel and enters a concrete drainage channel that runs along the east side of the site, discharging to a vegetated area adjacent to San Luis Rey River. Runoff from Pala Road enters the site immediately south of the intersection of Los Arbolitos Boulevard and Pala Road. This runoff flows east across the undeveloped right-of-way and discharges to the same vegetated area as the on-site flows. Refer to Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, for additional details.

## **2.3 APPLICABLE PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

The following describes local and regional planning documents applicable to the proposed project. Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15125, Environmental Setting, the environmental setting chapter of an EIR shall discuss any inconsistencies between the project and applicable general plans, specific plans, and regional plans. Below is a summary of such regional and local plans, as well as a brief disclosure of any inconsistencies. Additional details regarding the consistency with applicable planning documents can be found in each individual environmental issue area section in this EIR, as noted below.

### **2.3.1 City of Oceanside General Plan**

California law requires that each county and city adopt a General Plan “for the physical development of the County or City, and of any land outside its boundaries which . . . bears relation to its planning” (California Government Code, Section 65300). Each General Plan must be internally consistent, and all discretionary land use plans and projects must also be consistent with the General Plan.

The City’s General Plan is the primary source of long-range planning and policy direction that is used to guide development within the City and serves as a policy guide for determining the appropriate physical development and character of the City. The City’s General Plan is founded on the community’s vision for the City and expresses the community’s long-range goals. The document was last reformatted in 2002 to rearrange the text and include introductory material. The

City's General Plan contains the following 10 elements: Land Use (amended in 1986), Circulation (updated in 2012), Recreational Trails (adopted in 1996), Housing (2013–2021 Housing Element adopted in August 2013), Environmental Resource Management (adopted in 1975), Public Safety (adopted 1975), Noise (adopted in 1974), Community Facilities (adopted in 1990), Hazardous Waste Management (adopted in 1990), and Military Reservation (adopted in 1981). Each of the City's General Plan elements contains goals for the future of the City. In addition, the City's General Plan contains a land use map, which depicts the planned land uses for properties within the City. Objectives and policies established for each land use designation are described within the City's General Plan's Land Use Element (City of Oceanside 1986).

In 2019, the City Council adopted Phase I of the General Plan Update, which included the Economic Development Element, Energy and Climate Action Element, and Climate Action Plan. Phase 2 of the General Plan Update will include updating of the City's existing Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation and Open Space, Community Facilities, Safety, and Noise Elements. This planning process aims to revisit important planning elements last updated in 2002 (City of Oceanside 2021b). An Environmental Impact Report is being prepared for the City's General Plan Update, which will address all topic areas outlined in the CEQA Appendix G Environmental Checklist Form. The comment period for the scoping phase of the General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report ran from May 24 to June 23, 2021. The [onwardoceanside.com](http://onwardoceanside.com) website provides up-to-date information about the General Plan Update. Additionally, in June 2021 the City released five project background reports which was considered the first major technical step in the process of updating the City's General Plan and preparing the Smart and Sustainable Corridors Specific Plan. The background reports provide a comprehensive analysis of resources, trends, and concerns that will frame and guide choices for the long-term development of the City. These five background reports include, 1) Baseline Economic and Market Analysis; 2) Land Use and Community Resources; 3) Mobility; 4) Environmental Resources; and 5) Smart and Sustainable Corridors Background Report. These five background reports can also be found on the [onwardoceanside.com](http://onwardoceanside.com) website.

The proposed project would be consistent with the General Plan, as discussed further in in Section 4.10, Land Use and Planning.

### **2.3.2 City of Oceanside Zoning Ordinance**

The City of Oceanside's Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation tool for the Land Use Element. The Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map identify specific types of land use, intensity of land use, and development and performance standards applicable to specific areas and parcels of land within the City.

### **2.3.3 Oceanside Subarea Plan of the North County Multiple Habitat Conservation Plan**

The project site is located within the North County Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP) area. The North County MHCP is a long-term regional conservation plan established to protect sensitive species and habitats in northern San Diego County (SANDAG 2003). The North County MHCP is divided into seven subarea plans—one for each jurisdiction within the MHCP area—that will be permitted and implemented separately from one another. The Oceanside Subarea Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan (Oceanside Subarea Plan) has been prepared, and although the Oceanside Subarea Plan has not been approved or permitted, it is used as a guidance document for projects in the City (City of Oceanside 2010). The project would be consistent with the MHCP. Refer to Section 4.3, Biological Resources, for additional discussion regarding the Oceanside Subarea Plan.

### **2.3.4 Regional Plans**

In addition to the above City planning documents, the following regional plans are also applicable to the proposed project.

#### **2019 Federal Regional Transportation Plan**

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is the regional planning agency for the County of San Diego (County), and serves as a forum for regional issues relating to transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. SANDAG serves as the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for the County. With respect to air quality planning and other regional issues, SANDAG prepared San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan (Regional Plan) for the San Diego region (SANDAG 2015). The Regional Plan combines the big-picture vision for how the region will grow over the next 35 years with an implementation program to help make that vision a reality. The Regional Plan, including its Sustainable Communities Strategy, is built on an integrated set of public policies, strategies, and investments to maintain, manage, and improve the transportation system so that it meets the diverse needs of the San Diego region through 2050. The 2019 Federal Regional Transportation Plan (Federal RTP) builds on San Diego Forward: The 2015 Regional Plan with updated project costs and revenues and a new regional growth forecast. The 2019 Federal RTP complies with federal requirements for the development of regional transportation plans, retains air quality conformity approval from the U.S. Department of Transportation, and preserves funding for the region's transportation investments (SANDAG 2019). SANDAG is currently preparing the 2021 Regional Plan, which will be adopted in the fall of 2021. For additional information regarding the Regional Plan, refer to Sections 4.2, Air Quality; 4.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions; 4.10 Land Use and Planning; and 4.15, Transportation.

## **Regional Air Quality Plan**

The SDAPCD and SANDAG are responsible for developing and implementing the clean air plan for attainment and maintenance of the ambient air quality standards in the San Diego Air Basin. The Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) for the San Diego Air Basin was initially adopted in 1991 and is updated on a triennial basis, most recently in 2016 (SDAPCD 2016). As discussed under Section 2.2.2 above, the SDAB is in non-attainment for O<sub>3</sub>. The RAQS outlines SDAPCD's plans and control measures designed to attain the state air quality standards for O<sub>3</sub>. The RAQS relies on information from the California Air Resources Control Board (CARB) and SANDAG, including mobile and area source emissions, as well as information regarding projected growth in the County and the cities in the County, to forecast future emissions and then determine from that the strategies necessary for the reduction of emissions through regulatory controls. The CARB mobile source emission projections and SANDAG growth projections are based on population, vehicle trends, and land use plans developed by the County and the cities in the County as part of the development of the General Plans (SANDAG 2017a, 2017b). The project would be consistent with the RAQS considering the project complies with the General Plan and Zoning for the site. For additional information regarding air quality plans, refer to Section 4.2 Air Quality.

## **Water Quality Plans**

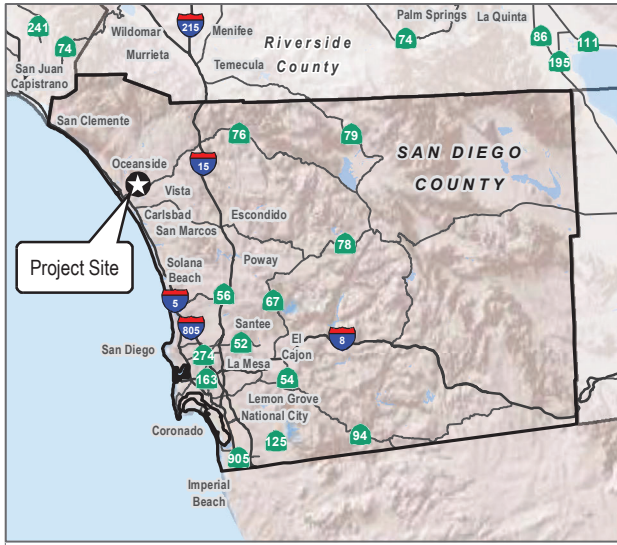
### ***San Luis Rey Watershed Water Quality Improvement Plan***

On May 8, 2013, the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) approved a regional municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit that is applicable to local jurisdictions within San Diego, southern Orange, and southwestern Riverside Counties (Order No. R9-2013-0001). The region-wide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit (Regional MS4 Permit) sets the framework for municipalities, such as the City, to implement a collaborative watershed-based approach to restore and maintain the health of surface waters. The Regional MS4 Permit requires development of Water Quality Improvement Plans (WQIPs) that will allow the City (and other watershed stakeholders) to prioritize and address pollutants through an appropriate suite of best management practices (BMPs) in each watershed.

The City lies within the San Luis Rey Watershed Management Area and is one of the responsible municipalities for the watershed's WQIP. The San Luis Rey Watershed WQIP was accepted by the RWQCB on February 12, 2016 and finalized in March 2016 (City of Oceanside et al. 2016). The WQIP includes strategies to improve water quality in receiving waterbodies. The project would comply with these strategies and would be consistent with this plan. For additional information water quality, refer to Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality.

### **Oceanside Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan**

The County's Regional Airport Authority develops and adopts airport land use compatibility plans (ALUCPs) for each public use and military airport within its jurisdiction. The Oceanside Municipal ALUCP, as amended in December 2010, provides policies to ensure compatibility with the airport and surrounding land uses. These policies span various topics including noise, overflight zones, and safety. The ALUCP is based upon the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approved Airport Layout Plan. The project site is not located within the noise or safety zones designated by this ALUCP, but a small southern portion of the project site is within the Airport Overflight Notification Area. The project would comply with this notification requirement and would be consistent with this plan. For additional information regarding the ALUCP, refer to Section 4.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Section 4.11, Noise.



 Project Boundary

SOURCE: SANGIS 2019



**FIGURE 2-1**  
Project Location

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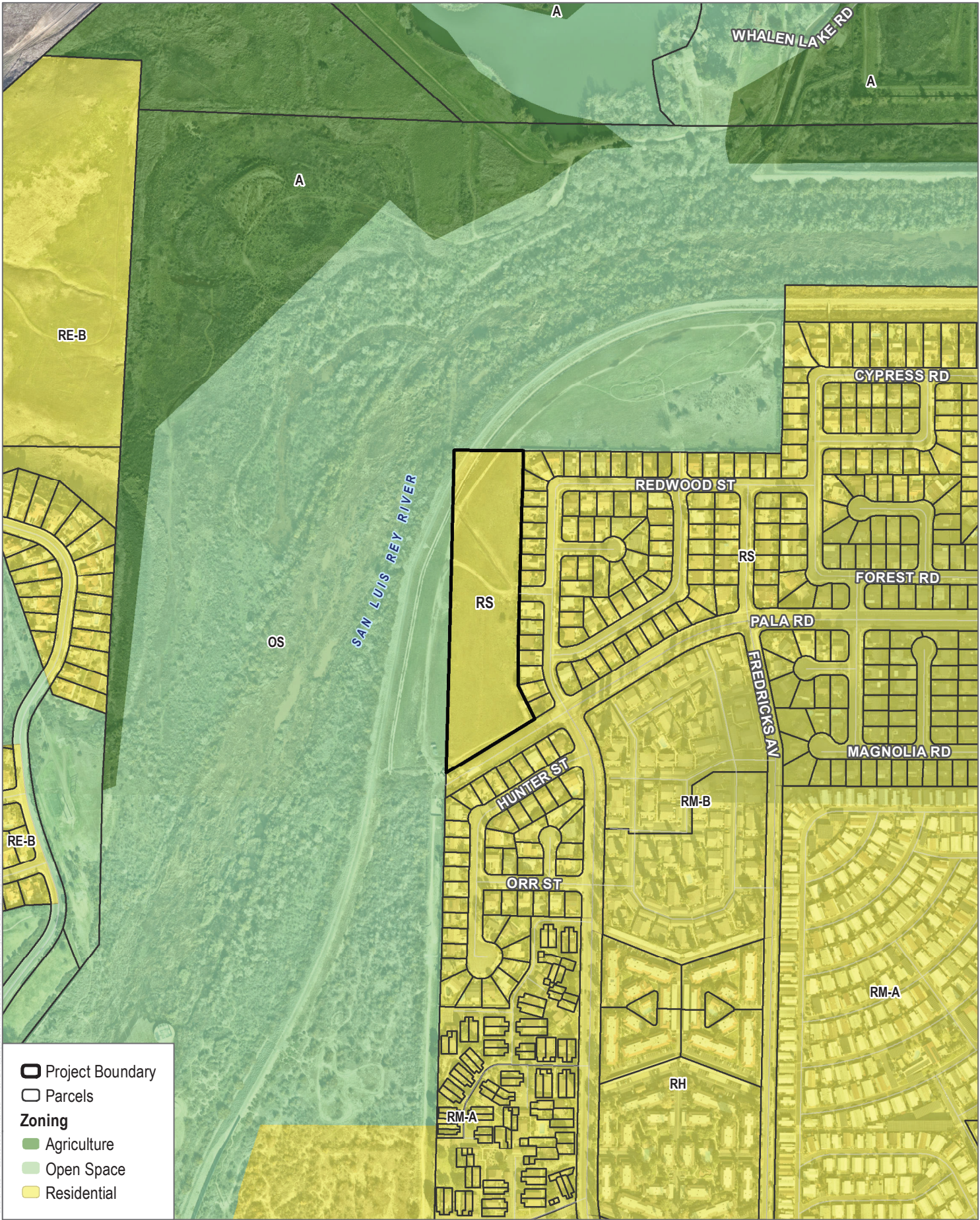


SOURCE: SANGIS 2019



**FIGURE 2-2**  
Project Site

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SOURCE: SANGIS 2019



**FIGURE 2-3**

**Zoning Designations**

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