# CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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Filed:October 12, 200949th Day:November 30, 2009180th Day:April 10, 2010Staff:Gabriel Buhr-SDStaff Report:November 19, 2009Hearing Date:December 9 - 11, 2009Commission Action:

# STAFF REPORT: CONSENT CALENDAR

**APPLICATION NUMBER:** 6-09-049

**APPLICANT:** California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

AGENT: Bruce April

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Interstate 5 (I-5) at the northbound and southbound Aliso Creek Roadside Rest Areas, adjacent to Camp Pendleton (San Diego County)

**DESCRIPTION:** The proposed project includes site and building rehabilitation of the northbound and southbound I-5 Aliso Creek Roadside Rest Area. Proposed development includes the demolition of four existing comfort stations and the construction of five new comfort stations; the construction of two 3,000 gallon water towers and associated pump equipment; the reconfiguration of existing scenic outlooks; and landscape improvements.

**Combined Northbound and Southbound Rest Areas** 

Lot Area Building Coverage Paved Area (Pedestrian) Paved Area (Parking) Landscaped Area 1,226,142 square feet 8,746 square feet 75,050 square feet 306,196 square feet 234,824 square feet

## SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The applicant is proposing construction of comfort stations, water towers, reconfiguration of existing scenic outlooks and landscape improvements. The major issues with this development involve landscaping and managing potential effects from runoff on water quality.

Staff is recommending that the Commission <u>APPROVE</u> a coastal development permit for the proposed development with Three (3) special conditions addressing: 1) conformance with submitted drainage and run-off control plans; 2) storage of construction materials and mechanized equipment and removal of construction debris; and 3) submittal of a revised landscaping plan.

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# SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS:

- 1. Categorical Exemption/Categorical Exclusion Determination Form for State Project Number 261400.
- 2. Biological Resources Memorandum, prepared by Sue Scatolini for Caltrans, dated February 1, 2006.
- 3. Coastal Development Permit 6-06-64, approved October 2006.

LOCAL APPROVALS RECEIVED: County of San Diego, 8/17/09.

# LIST OF EXHIBITS

- 1. Location Map
- 2. Assessor's Parcel Map
- 3. Aerial Photo
- 4. Site Plan
- 5. Elevations

# STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution to <u>APPROVE</u> the coastal development permit application:

# **MOTION**: I move that the Commission approve coastal development permit applications included on the consent calendar in accordance with the staff recommendations.

Staff recommends a <u>YES</u> vote. Passage of this motion will result in approval of all permits included on the consent calendar. An affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present is needed to pass the motion.

# **RESOLUTION**:

# I. APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

The Commission hereby <u>APPROVES</u> a coastal development permit for the proposed development and adopts the findings set forth below on grounds that the development as conditioned will be in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3. Approval of the permit complies with the California Environmental Quality Act because either 1) feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the development on the environment, or 2) there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.

# II. STANDARD CONDITIONS:

- 1. <u>Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment.</u> The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
- 2. <u>Expiration.</u> If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date this permit is reported to the Commission. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
- 3. <u>Interpretation.</u> Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
- 4. <u>Assignment.</u> The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.
- 5. <u>Terms and Conditions Run with the Land.</u> These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

# III. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

# 1. Drainage and Run-Off Control Plan

- A. The applicant shall conform to the drainage and run-off control plan received on October 12, 2009 showing all roof drainage and runoff directed to area collection drains and sub-drain systems on site for discharge to on-site infiltration basins.
- B. The permittee shall undertake development in accordance with the approved final plans. Any proposed changes to the approved plan shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the approved plan shall occur without a Commission amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is legally required.

# 2. <u>Storage of Construction Materials, Mechanized Equipment and</u> <u>Removal of Construction Debris</u>

The permittee shall comply with the following construction-related requirements:

 Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Good Housekeeping Practices (GHPs) designed to prevent spillage and/or runoff of construction-related materials, and to contain sediment or contaminants associated with

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construction activity, shall be implemented prior to the on-set of such activity;

- No construction materials, debris, or waste shall be placed or stored where it may enter a storm drain
- All trash and debris shall be disposed in the proper trash or recycling receptacle at the end of every construction day.
- Construction debris and sediment shall be properly contained and secured on site with BMPs, to prevent the unintended transport of sediment and other debris into coastal waters by wind, rain or tracking. All stock piles and construction materials shall be covered, enclosed on all sides, shall be located as far away as possible from drain inlets and any waterway, and shall not be stored in contact with the soil;
- Construction debris and sediment shall be removed from construction areas as necessary to prevent the accumulation of sediment and other debris which may be discharged into coastal waters. All debris and trash shall be disposed of in the proper trash and recycling receptacles at the end of each construction day;
- The discharge of any hazardous materials into any receiving waters shall be prohibited;
- A pre-construction meeting shall be held for all personnel to review procedural and BMP/GHP guidelines;
- All BMPs shall be maintained in a functional condition throughout the duration of the project.
- Debris shall be disposed at a legal disposal site or recycled at a recycling facility. If the disposal site is located in the coastal zone, a coastal development permit or an amendment to this permit shall be required before disposal can take place.

# 3. <u>Revised Landscaping Plan</u>

- A. **PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT**, the applicant shall submit for review and written approval of the Executive Director, two (2) sets of a finalized landscaping plan prepared by an appropriately licensed professional that satisfies the following requirements:
  - (1) The plan shall demonstrate that:
    - a. No plant species listed as problematic and/or invasive by the California Native Plant Society, the California Invasive Plant Council, or as may be identified from time to time by the State of California shall be utilized on the property. No plant species listed as a 'noxious weed' by the State of California or the U.S. Federal Government shall be utilized within the property. Any existing landscaping within the limits of the proposed project that doesn't meet the above requirements in this paragraph and those requirements listed in subsection b below shall be removed;
    - All plants employed on the site shall be drought tolerant, (low water use) plants identified by U. C. Davis and/or the Water Resources Board;

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- c. All planting will be completed within 60 days after completion of construction;
- d. All vegetation shall be maintained in good growing condition throughout the life of the project, and whenever necessary, shall be replaced with new plant materials to ensure continued compliance with the landscaping plan.
- (2) The plan shall include, at a minimum, the following components:
  - a. A map showing the type, size, and location of all plant materials that will be on the developed site, the irrigation system, topography of the developed site, and all other landscape features;
  - b. A schedule for installation of plants.
- B. The permittee shall undertake development in accordance with the approved plan. Any proposed changes to the approved final plan shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the approved final plan shall occur without a Commission amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is legally required.

# IV. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS:

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

## A. <u>Project Description and Location/History</u>

The subject site is located on southbound and northbound I-5 adjacent to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, in northern San Diego County, approximately 12 miles south of the Orange County Line (Exhibit #1 and #2). The subject site is surrounded primarily by extensive undeveloped open space on the adjacent Marine Base, and contains some ocean views from the scenic outlooks available at both northbound and southbound rest areas. The rest areas are both comprised of two existing comfort stations, vending kiosks, scenic overlooks and open space areas with associated lawns, large trees and picnic tables (Exhibit #3). The rest areas also provide extensive parking areas for both small vehicles and larger shipping trucks that are not proposed to be improved as a part of this project. The proposed project includes rehabilitation of the existing rest areas on both northbound and southbound sides of the freeway (Exhibit #4). The Commission approved a similar project (6-06-064) for the subject site in 2006 that was never constructed and the permit has since expired. The new project submitted by Caltrans and reviewed in this staff report includes more extensive rehabilitation and new development than the original permit.

#### Southbound Rest Area

The two existing comfort stations located at the southbound rest area are proposed to be demolished and be replaced by two, new 1,298 square foot comfort stations with

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restrooms and attached storage rooms, the maximum height above finished grade of these two buildings would be approximately seventeen feet. A third, new 1,943 square foot comfort station is also proposed, this building would include restrooms, a maintenance crew room, a storage room, and a California highway patrol drop-in office, and would have a maximum height above finished grade of approximately twenty feet (Exhibit #5). The project proposes to reconfigure the scenic outlook and access ramp to comply with current ADA requirements. Construction of a new 3,000 gallon water storage tank and associated electrical equipment and pumps is also proposed on a 480 square foot concrete pad. The water tower would function to alleviate problems with fluctuations in water pressure to the rest area. The water tower would be oriented horizontally and shielded from view by a four foot earthen berm.

### Northbound Rest Area

The two existing comfort stations located at the northbound rest area are proposed to be demolished and be replaced by two, new comfort stations. One of the proposed buildings would be 1,298 square feet and would include restrooms and an attached storage room, and have a maximum height above finished grade of approximately seventeen feet. The other new 1,943 square foot comfort station as proposed would include restrooms, a maintenance crew room, a storage room, and a maintenance electrical/mechanical room and would have a maximum height above finished grade of approximately twenty feet (Exhibit #5). The project proposes to reconfigure the scenic outlook and access ramp to comply with current ADA requirements. Construction of a new 3,000 gallon water storage tank and associated electrical equipment and pumps is also proposed on a 480 square foot concrete pad. The water tower would function to alleviate problems with fluctuations in water pressure to the rest area. The water tower would be oriented horizontally and shielded from view by a six foot high masonry retaining wall.

Proposed improvements to both northbound and southbound rest areas also include landscape and hardscape improvements. Landscape improvements would include the removal and replacement of some existing plantings that are dead or diseased, the removal of any healthy mature trees on-site is not proposed. New ADA compliant curb ramps would also be constructed at both rest areas to provide access to the facilities from the parking lots.

The subject site is located in an unincorporated area of the County of San Diego, adjacent to the Camp Pendleton United States Marine Corps Base. Because there is no certified LCP for this area, the standard of review for this development is Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act.

## B. <u>Aquatic and Biological Resources</u>

The proposed development has a potential for a discharge of polluted runoff from the project site into coastal waters. Due to this, the Commission has imposed **Special Condition #2**, which requires the applicant to comply with construction-related requirements related to storage of construction materials, mechanized equipment and removal of construction debris, and **Special Condition #1**, which requires the applicant to conform to the submitted drainage and pollution runoff control plan that includes the direction of run-off to onsite infiltration basins.

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Other sources of polluted runoff could include runoff from the large amount of impervious surface in the proposed project and over-watering, which sometimes occurs from installation of landscaping with a high water demand. Plants with a high-water demand are typically not well-suited to the Mediterranean climate of southern California, and therefore often require intense fertilization and application of pesticides/herbicides as a maintenance regime, in addition to regular irrigation. Thus, this type of landscaping can add pollutants to both dry weather and stormwater runoff. Therefore, the use of drought tolerant plants or low-maintenance landscaping is a preferred alternative.

The term "drought tolerant" is equivalent to the terms "low water use" and "ultra low water use" as defined and used by "A Guide to Estimating Irrigation Water Needs of Landscape Plantings in California" prepared by University of California Cooperative Extension and the California Department of Water Resources dated August 2000 and is available for review at <<u>http://www.owue.water.ca.gov/landscape/pubs/pubs.cfm></u>. The applicant has submitted a landscaping plan. Commission staff reviewed the submitted landscaping plan for drought tolerant vegetation and determined that the majority of the proposed plants are drought tolerant.

Invasive plants can invade an area and displace native plants, impeding restoration and preservation efforts. Seed dispersal can occur via water transport and drainage, wind, and via avian and mammalian species. Invasive plants are generally those identified by the California Invasive Plant Council (<u>http://www.cal-ipc.org</u>) and California Native Plant Society (<u>www.CNPS.org</u>) in their publications. Commission staff reviewed the submitted landscape plan and determined that the plan does contain two invasive species of concern, *Carpobruts edulis* (iceplant), and *Hedera canariensis* (Algerian ivy).

Therefore the Commission has imposed **Special Condition #3** requiring the applicant to submit a revised landscape plan for the review and approval of the Executive Director. The plan requires the applicant to plant non-invasive, drought tolerant vegetation on the site. Non-invasive, drought tolerant plants are used because they require little to no watering once they are established (1-3 years), they have deep root systems that tend to stabilize the soil, and are spreading plants that tend to minimize erosion impacts of rain and water run-off.

As conditioned, the Commission finds that the proposed development conforms with Sections 30230 and 30231 of the Coastal Act regarding the protection of water quality to promote the biological productivity of coastal waters and to protect human health, and with Section 30240 regarding the protection of sensitive habitats.

## C. <u>Community Character/Visual Quality</u>

The proposed improvements to the existing rest areas are compatible with the character and scale of the adjacent I-5 freeway corridor. The proposed improvements to the existing scenic overlooks located on the subject site will not impair or reduce the visual aesthetics currently available to visitors, and no existing public ocean views will be impacted by the proposed development. The subject sites are screened from the freeway corridor by significant stands of mature trees presently located on-site and existing differences in elevation that create a natural barrier from the freeway.

The development is located within an existing developed area and, as conditioned, will be compatible with the character and scale of the surrounding area, and has been

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designed to assure structural integrity. Therefore, the Commission finds that the development, as conditioned, conforms with Sections 30250 and 30251 of the Coastal Act.

# D. <u>Public Access/Parking</u>

The I-5 corridor functions as a vital link in coastal access by connecting the coastal communities of San Diego and Orange Counties through Camp Pendleton. Coastal visitors travelling laterally along the coast in either northern or southern directions may utilize the subject site as a rest area in route to their final coastal destinations. The improvements proposed in this project seek to improve and rehabilitate the subject rest areas to enhance the visitor experience at these locations.

As conditioned, the proposed development will not have any new adverse impacts on public access to the coast or to nearby recreational facilities. Thus, as conditioned, the proposed development conforms with Sections 30210 and 30252(4) of the Coastal Act.

# E. Local Coastal Program

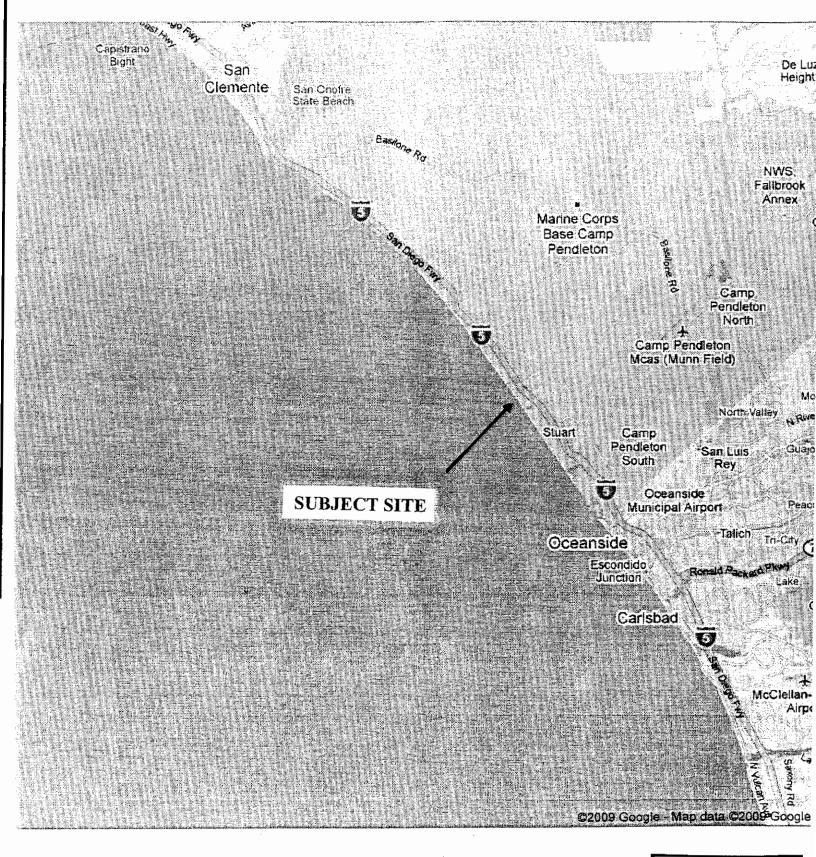
The County of San Diego does not have a certified LCP. As conditioned, the proposed development will be consistent with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. Approval of the project, as conditioned, will not prejudice the ability of the County of San Diego to prepare a Local Coastal Program that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3.

## F. <u>California Environmental Quality Act</u>

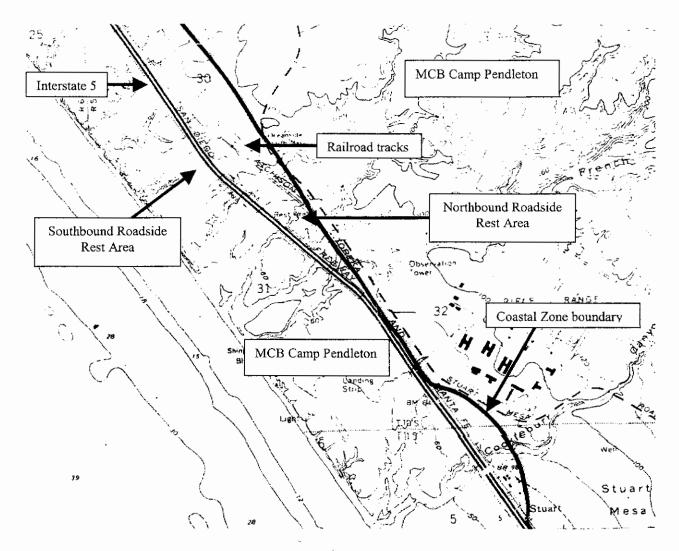
Section 13096 of the Commission's regulations requires Commission approval of Coastal Development Permit applications to be supported by a finding showing the application, as conditioned by any conditions of approval, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A) of CEQA prohibits a proposed development from being approved if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect which the activity may have on the environment.

As conditioned, there are no feasible alternatives or additional feasible mitigation measures available that would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect that the activity may have on the environment. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned to mitigate the identified impacts, is the least environmentally damaging feasible alternative and is consistent with the requirements of the Coastal Act to conform to CEQA.

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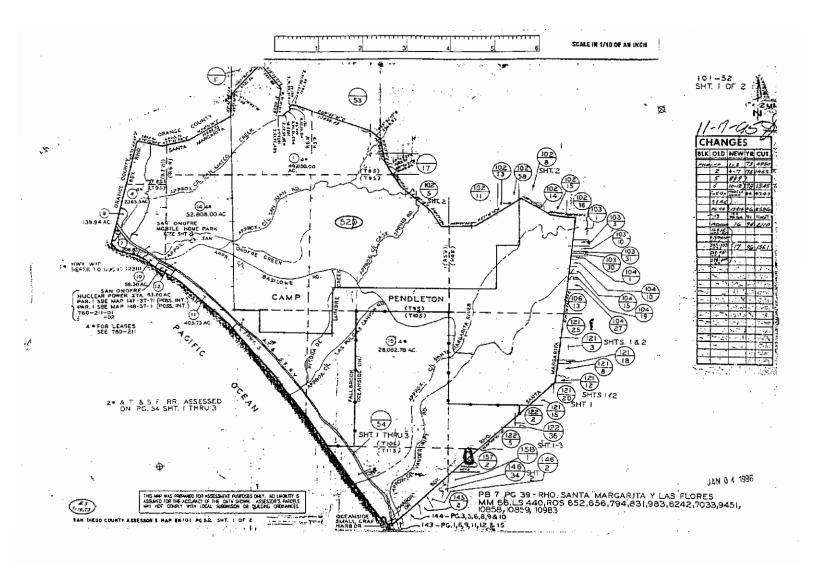


California Department of Transportation EA 261400, 11-SD-5, PM R59.4-R60.0 Aliso Creek Roadside Rest Areas Rehabilitation Project 06/17/09

Figure 1a. LOCATION MAP

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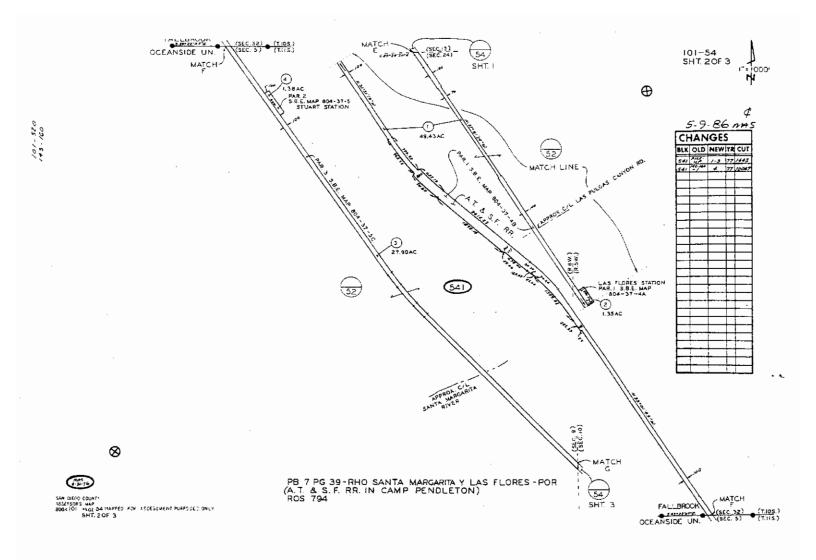
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