

## CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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# W14a

**DATE:** July 25, 2013

**TO:** Commissioners and Interested Persons

**FROM:** John Ainsworth, Senior Deputy Director  
Steve Hudson, District Manager  
Denise Venegas, Coastal Program Analyst

**SUBJECT:** **Notice of Impending Development (NOID) 1-13** for the Segovia Road Access Project, for Public Hearing and Commission Action at the August 14, 2013, Commission Meeting in Santa Cruz, CA.

## SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The impending development consists of redeveloping an existing 6-foot wide, 65-foot long portion of a pedestrian pathway that stretches east-west along Segovia Road from Segovia Road's termination at the eastern border of Isla Vista and continues east approximately 65 feet to the Student Heath Building lawn area on the Main Campus of University of California, Santa Barbara. The impending development includes: demolition of the existing concrete stairway and 6-foot wide path; the construction of an asphalt bicycle path with curb and gutter approximately 90 linear feet in length and 12 feet wide, with an adjacent 80 linear-foot, 6 foot wide, concrete sidewalk; the removal of three mature non-native Eucalyptus; implementation of the erosion control plan and practices; trees, and approximately 400 cubic yards of cut grading to be exported from the site. The redeveloped pathway would provide bicycle circulation, which is not currently accommodated in this location, in addition to enhanced pedestrian circulation to connect Isla Vista to the Main Campus. The bicycle paths on- and off-campus are part of a larger regional public access and alternative transportation system. This project provides an enhancement to public access and recreation in the area and further serves to foster alternative transportation in the region. The improvement of this path is consistent with the circulation identified in the certified LRDP.

Staff recommends that the Commission determine that the Notice of Impending Development **is consistent** with the certified University of California Santa Barbara Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) with four (4) special conditions. The motions and resolution for Commission action can be found starting on **page 4**.

The project site is located on the west side of Main Campus, adjacent to the property line between Isla Vista (County of Santa Barbara) and University of California, Santa Barbara at Segovia Road (Exhibit 1). The project site is surrounded by existing apartment buildings and Segovia Road to the west; a north-south bicycle and pedestrian pathway, Ocean Road and

existing landscaping to the east; and a eucalyptus tree windrow to the north and south. The project site is currently developed with an existing pedestrian pathway consisting of a concrete stairway that allows access across an existing dirt berm. In order to construct the new pathway through the existing dirt berm, it is necessary to remove three (3) large mature eucalyptus trees which are part of the larger, north-south trending windrow of eucalyptus trees. The trees to be removed are not located within the proposed path footprint, but rather are located in the footprint of the existing dirt berm that would be graded to 4:1 (H:V horizontal:vertical) finished slope. The trees on the project site do not constitute environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA). The project site is located in a developed portion along the western edge of Main Campus; the eucalyptus windrow is not designated ESHA according to Figure 28, Environmentally Sensitive Habitat, of the Certified LRDP; and the biological surveys for this project indicate that the trees on the site do not support nesting raptors or other sensitive species.

The University has submitted two raptor surveys completed within the last year to evaluate and document foraging and nesting activity of the surrounding eucalyptus tree windrow located along Ocean Road. The raptor surveys did not identify any raptor nesting activity within the three trees proposed for removal; however, one Red-tailed Hawk was found perching within the immediate vicinity of the project site and a Cooper Hawk's nest was found approximately 400 ft. north of the project site within the eucalyptus tree windrow. Although the three trees proposed for removal are not ESHA, these types of non-native trees still have the potential to provide habitat for sensitive bird species. The site-specific surveys identified raptor nesting activity within 500 feet of the project site. Therefore to ensure that potential impacts to nesting bird species are avoided during construction activities, **Special Condition One (1)** requires that bird surveys be conducted by a qualified specialist during the breeding and nesting season and prohibits construction activities within 300 feet (500 feet for raptors) of any sensitive bird species nests unless the noise can be attenuated to a level that will not have adverse impacts to nesting.

Although the three individual, non-native eucalyptus trees proposed for removal are not ESHA, they still have the potential to provide habitat for sensitive bird species. The removal of these mature trees must be mitigated to ensure that there are no adverse impacts or permanent loss of potential raptor nesting habitat. Therefore **Special Condition Three (3)** requires the planting of replacement trees at a ratio of 3:1 for each tree removed. Specifically, **Special Condition Three (3)** requires the University to submit a native tree replacement planting program, prepared by a qualified biologist, arborist, or other resource specialist, which specifies replacement tree locations, tree or seedling size planting specifications, and a five-year monitoring program with specific performance standards to ensure that the replacement planting program is successful.

In past actions, the Commission has found that erosion on disturbed sites can be minimized by revegetating all disturbed areas with native plants compatible with the surrounding area. However, in this case, the University is not proposing to revegetate any of the disturbed areas on site after construction is complete and has instead proposed to simply add mulch over the disturbed/exposed soil areas. **Special Condition Four (4)** has been required to ensure that all areas that are disturbed on site are revegetated in accordance with the LRDP provisions to minimize the potential for adverse impacts to water quality and aquatic resources resulting from potential increases in erosion and sedimentation. Specifically, **Special Condition Four (4)**

requires the University to submit revegetation plans, for review and approval by the Executive Director, to revegetate all disturbed areas on site with primarily native plant species endemic to the surround area to minimize the rate of soil erosion and reduce the runoff of pollutants.

Additionally, **Special Condition Two** (Removal of Excess Material) is necessary to ensure that disposal of excess material occurs in a manner that will not have adverse impacts to the adjacent eucalyptus windrow or other coastal resources. Only as conditioned will the proposed impending development minimize adverse impacts to environmentally sensitive habitat areas, water quality and coastal resources to the maximum extent possible.

The standard of review for the proposed NOID is the policies of the certified University of California Santa Barbara Long Range Development Plan.

**Additional Information:** For further information, please contact Denise Venegas at the South Central Coast District Office of the Coastal Commission at (805) 585-1800. The UCSB Notice of Impending Development 1-13 is available for review at the Ventura Office of the Coastal Commission.

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### SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS

University of California, Santa Barbara, 1990 Long Range Development Plan; “Ocean Road, Goleta Arborist Report” dated December 18, 2012, prepared by Deborah Ellis, MS. Consulting Arborist & Horticulturist; “Wintering Raptor Report for Former Devereux School and Ocean Road Project Sites” dated February 13, 2013, prepared by Dudek; “Breeding Season Raptor Report for Main Campus sties and West Campus Sites” dated June 24, 2013, prepared by Dudek.

### EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1. Vicinity Map
- Exhibit 2. Aerial Map
- Exhibit 3. Existing Site Plan
- Exhibit 4. Proposed Project Site/Grading Plan
- Exhibit 5. Proposed Tree Removal Plan
- Exhibit 6. Project Site Photographs

## I. PROCEDURAL ISSUES

Section 30606 of the Coastal Act and Title 14, sections 13547 through 13550 of the California Code of Regulations<sup>1</sup> govern the Coastal Commission's review of specific development projects proposed to be undertaken pursuant to a certified LRDP. Section 13549(b) requires the Executive Director or his designee to review the notice of impending development (or development announcement) within ten days of receipt and determine whether it provides sufficient information to determine if the proposed development is consistent with the certified LRDP. The notice is deemed filed when all necessary supporting information has been received. The remaining items necessary to provide a complete notice of impending development for the project at issue in this report were received in the South Central Coast Office in late June, Commission staff reviewed them within 10 days of receiving them, and the notice was filed as complete on July 5, 2013.

Pursuant to section 13550(b) of the regulations, within thirty days of filing the notice of impending development, the Executive Director is to report to the Commission on the nature of the development and make a recommendation regarding the consistency of the proposed development with the certified LRDP. After a public hearing, by a majority of its members present, the Commission determines whether the development is consistent with the certified LRDP and whether conditions are required to bring the development into conformance with the LRDP. No construction shall commence until after the Commission votes to impose any conditions(s) necessary to render the proposed development consistent with the certified LRDP.

The notice of impending development at issue in this case was filed complete on July 5, 2013, the Executive Director would normally need to report the pendency of the proposed development to the Commission by August 4, 2013. The University has submitted a letter dated July 8, 2013, waiving the 30 day right to a Commission determination pursuant to Section 13550 (b) of the regulations to allow for additional time for staff review. Thus this notice of impending development is being reported at the first available meeting following August 4.

## II. MOTION & RESOLUTION

The staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution:

### **Motion:**

*I move that the Commission determine that the development described in the Notice of Impending Development 1-13 (Segovia Road Access Project), as conditioned, is consistent with the certified University of California at Santa Barbara Long Range Development Plan.*

Staff recommends a **YES** vote. Passage of this motion will result in a determination that the development described in the Notice of Impending Development 1-13 as conditioned, is consistent with the certified University of California at Santa Barbara Long Range Development

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<sup>1</sup> All further references to regulations are to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations

Plan, and adoption of the following resolution and findings. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

**Resolution:**

*The Commission hereby determines that the development described in the Notice of Impending Development 1-13, as conditioned, is consistent with the certified University of California at Santa Barbara Long Range Development Plan for the reasons discussed in the findings herein.*

**III. SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

**1. Construction Timing and Sensitive Bird Species Surveys**

For any construction or tree removal activities between February 15<sup>th</sup> and September 1<sup>st</sup>, the University shall retain the services of a qualified biologist or environmental resource specialist (hereinafter, “environmental resources specialist”) to conduct raptor and other sensitive bird species surveys and monitor project operations. At least 30 calendar days prior to commencement of any project operations, the University shall submit the name and qualifications of the environmental resource specialist, for the review and approval of the Executive Director. The environmental resources specialist shall ensure that all project construction and operations shall be carried out consistent with the following:

- A. The University shall ensure that a qualified environmental resource specialist with experience in conducting bird surveys shall conduct bird surveys 30 calendar days prior to the construction and/or tree removal activities to detect any active bird nests in all trees within 500 feet of the project (including, but not limited to, eucalyptus trees). A follow-up survey must be conducted 3 calendar days prior to the initiation of clearance/construction and nest surveys must continue on a monthly basis throughout the nesting season or until the project is completed, whichever comes first.
- B. If an active nest of any federally or state listed threatened or endangered species, species of special concern, or any species of raptor is found within 300 ft. of the project (500 ft. for raptors), the University shall retain the services of a qualified biologist with experience conducting bird and noise surveys, to monitor bird behavior and construction noise levels. The biological monitor shall be present at all relevant construction meetings and during all significant construction activities (those with potential noise impacts) to ensure that nesting birds are not disturbed by construction related noise. The biologist monitor shall monitor birds and noise every day at the beginning of the project and during all periods of significant construction activities. Construction activities may occur only if construction noise levels are at or below a peak of 65 dB at the nest(s) site. If construction noise exceeds a peak level of 65 dB at the nest(s) site, sound mitigation measures such as sound shields, blankets around smaller equipment, mixing concrete batches off-site, use of mufflers, and minimizing the use of back-up alarms shall be employed. If these sound mitigations measures do not reduce noise levels, construction

within 300 ft. (500 ft. for raptors) of the nesting trees shall cease and shall not recommence until either new sound mitigation can be employed or nesting is complete.

- C. If an active nest of a federally or state-listed threatened or endangered species, bird species of special concern, or any species or raptor is found, UCSB will notify the appropriate State and Federal Agencies within 24 hours, and appropriate action specific to each incident will be developed. UCSB will notify the California Coastal Commission by e-mail within 24 hours and consult with the Commission regarding determinations of State and Federal agencies.
- D. The environmental resource specialist shall be present during all tree removal activities. The environmental resource specialist shall require the University to cease work should any breach in compliance occur, or if any unforeseen sensitive habitat issues arise. The environmental resource specialist(s) shall immediately notify the Executive Director if activities outside of the scope of Notice of Impending Development 1-13 occur. If significant impacts or damage occur to sensitive habitats or to wildlife species, the applicants shall be required to submit a revised or supplemental program to adequately mitigate such impacts. Any native vegetation which is inadvertently or otherwise destroyed or damaged during implementation of the project shall be replaced in kind at a 3:1 or greater ratio. The revised, or supplemental, program shall be processed as a new NOID.

## **2. Removal of Excess Material**

Prior to commencement of construction activities, the University shall provide evidence to the Executive Director of the location of the disposal site for all excess excavated material from the site. If the disposal site is located in the Coastal Zone, the disposal site must have a valid NOID for the disposal of fill material. If the disposal site does not have a NOID, such NOID will be required prior to the disposal of material.

## **3. Tree Removal Mitigation**

Prior to commencement of construction activities, the University shall submit for the review and approval by the Executive Director, a native tree replacement planting program, prepared by a qualified biologist, arborist, or other resource specialist, which specifies replacement tree locations, tree or seedling size planting specifications, and a five-year monitoring program with specific performance standards to ensure that the replacement planting program is successful. At least 3 replacement native trees shall be planted as mitigation for the removal of each Eucalyptus tree as shown on Exhibit 5 of this staff report. The removal of the three eucalyptus trees shall require the planting of nine native trees which shall be planted in the project vicinity of the location where the Eucalyptus trees were removed.

The University shall commence implementation of the approved tree replacement planting program concurrently with the commencement of construction on the project site. An annual monitoring report on the replacement trees shall be submitted for the review and approval of the Executive Director for each of the 5 years. If monitoring indicates the replacement trees are not

in conformance with or has failed to meet the performance standards specified in the monitoring program approved pursuant to this notice of impending development, the University shall submit a revised or supplemental planting plan for the review and approval of the Executive Director. The revised planting plan shall specify measures to remediate those portions of the original plan that have failed or are not in conformance with the original approved plan.

#### **4. Revegetation Plan**

Prior to commencement of construction activities, the University shall submit a revegetation plan, prepared by a licensed landscape architect or a qualified resource specialist, for review and approval by the Executive Director. The plan shall incorporate the following criteria:

- A. All disturbed areas on the project site shall be planted and maintained for erosion control purposes within (60) days after demolition is completed. All plantings shall consist primarily of native plants/shrubs and trees. All native plant species shall be of local genetic stock. No plant species listed as problematic and/or invasive by the California Native Plant Society, the California Invasive Plant Council, or by the State of California shall be employed or allowed to naturalize or persist on the site. No plant species listed as a 'noxious weed' by the State of California or the U.S. Federal Government shall be utilized or maintained within the property.
- B. Plantings will 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 applicable revegetation requirements.
- C. Rodenticides containing any anticoagulant compounds (including, but not limited to, Warfarin, Brodifacoum, Bromadiolone or Diphacinone) shall not be used.
- D. The University shall undertake development in accordance with the approved final plans. Any proposed changes to the approved final plans shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the approved final plans shall occur without a new notice of impending development unless the Executive Director determines that a new notice of impending development is not legally required.

#### **IV. FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL OF THE NOTICE OF IMPENDING DEVELOPMENT**

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

##### **A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND**

The University proposes to redevelop an existing 6-foot wide, 65-foot long portion of a pedestrian pathway that stretches east-west along Segovia Road from Segovia Road's termination at the eastern border of Isla Vista and continues east approximately 65 feet to the Student Health Building lawn area on the Main Campus of University of California, Santa Barbara. The impending development includes: the construction of an asphalt bicycle path with



curb and gutter approximately 90 linear feet in length and 12 feet wide, with an adjacent 80 linear-foot, 6 foot wide concrete sidewalk; the removal of three mature non-native Eucalyptus trees; implementation of the erosion control plan and practices; and approximately 400 cubic yards of cut grading to be exported from the site. The total project area is approximately 4,600 sq. ft. with approximately 2,400 sq. ft. of impervious surface, comprised of 1,700 sq. ft. for the asphalt bike path and 700 sq. ft. of sidewalk. The remaining 2,200 sq. ft. of site area is part of the graded slope areas and the University proposes to mulch approximately 1,800 sq. ft. of exposed surface.

The redeveloped pathway would provide bicycle circulation, which is not currently accommodated in this location, in addition to enhanced pedestrian circulation to connect the community of Isla Vista to the Main Campus. The bicycle paths on- and off-campus are part of a larger regional public access and alternative transportation system. This project provides an enhancement to public access and recreation in the area and further serves to foster alternative transportation in the region. The improvement of this path is consistent with the certified Bicycle Circulation map (Figure 15) in the LRDP.

The proposed project will improve the existing access to accommodate Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and improve bicycle and pedestrian access for University students and the public. Currently, the existing pedestrian pathway between the eastern terminus of Segovia Road and campus consist of a 6-foot wide pedestrian path with a five-step staircase (Exhibit 3). It does not accommodate bicycle traffic and is not ADA compliant to provide for users with limited mobility.

The project site is located on the west side of Main Campus, adjacent to the property line between Isla Vista (County of Santa Barbara) and University of California, Santa Barbara at Segovia Road (Exhibit 1). The project site is surrounded by existing apartment buildings and Segovia Road to the west; a north-south bicycle and pedestrian pathway, Ocean Road and existing landscaping to the east; and a eucalyptus tree windrow to the north and south. The certified UCSB Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) currently designates this area as Open Space. The project site is currently developed with an existing pedestrian pathway consisting of a concrete stairway that allows access across an existing dirt berm.

The existing staircase on the existing path was installed to allow access across a dirt berm which occurs at the property line between UC Santa Barbara and Segovia Road (located within Santa Barbara County's jurisdiction). The existing sidewalk to the west along Segovia Road is approximately 52 feet above mean sea level and the existing bicycle and pedestrian paths on UCSB property are approximately 56 feet above mean sea level. The existing dirt berm in between the existing sidewalk on Segovia Road and the bicycle and pedestrian paths on UCSB property reaches approximately 62 feet in elevation. The existing dirt berm is currently planted with large mature eucalyptus trees, which are part of a north-south trending eucalyptus tree windrow that spans approximately 3,000 feet in length, and is adjacent to a wood retaining wall approximately 4 ft. high that retains the berm on UCSB property to the east.

In order to construct the new pathway through the existing dirt berm, it is necessary to remove three (3) large mature eucalyptus trees which are part of a larger, windrow of eucalyptus trees

(consisting of approximately 121 non-native, primarily eucalyptus, trees). The trees to be removed are not located within the proposed path footprint, but rather are located in the footprint of the existing dirt berm that would be graded to 4:1 (H:V, horizontal:vertical) finished slope. The trees on the project site do not constitute environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA). The project site is located in a developed portion along the western edge of Main Campus; the eucalyptus windrow is not designated ESHA according to Figure 28, Environmentally Sensitive Habitat, of the Certified LRDP; and the biological surveys for this project indicate that the trees on the site do not support nesting raptors or other sensitive species.

The University has submitted two raptor surveys, completed within the last year, to evaluate and document foraging and nesting activity of the surrounding eucalyptus windrow located along Ocean Road and conclusions of those reports are discussed in detail further below. The removal of the trees could not be avoided by alternative configurations of the project. The raptor surveys did not identify any raptor nesting activity within the three trees proposed for removal; however, one Red-tailed Hawk was found perching within the immediate vicinity of the project site and a Cooper Hawk's nest was found approximately 400 ft. north of the project site within the eucalyptus tree windrow.

## **B. CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

The standard of review for a Notice of Impending Development is consistency with the certified Long Range Development Plan (LRDP). UCSB's LRDP was certified by the Commission in 1990 and contains policies and provisions that identify areas for campus development while protecting coastal resources including environmental sensitive habitat areas, water quality, and public access.

Section 30240 of the Coastal Act, which has been included as part of the University's certified LRDP, states that environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHAs) shall be protected and requires that development in areas adjacent to ESHA be sited and designed to prevent impacts that would significantly degrade such areas. ESHA are defined as areas in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments. Additionally, the LRDP contains several policies that address sensitive resources. Policy 30240(a).4 states that special consideration and care shall be given to the removal or trimming of any significant native and non-native trees in order to protect nesting, roosting, or foraging habitat for raptors and sensitive bird species. Policy 30251.7 of the LRDP requires trees to be retained to the maximum extent feasible to preserve existing native and significant stands of trees. Policy 30240(b).24 of the LRDP states that ESHA on campus shall be protected and that all new development shall set back a sufficient distance from ESHA to ensure protection of sensitive biological resources.

Section 30230 and 30231 of the Coastal Act, which have also been included as part of the University's LRDP, mandate that marine resources and coastal water quality be maintained and where feasible restored and that uses of the marine environment be carried out in a manner that will sustain biological productivity and quality of coastal waters. Furthermore, the LRDP

contains several additional polices that require the protection of water quality. Policy 30231.1 of the LRDP requires that wetlands and coastal waters be protected from increased sedimentation or contamination associated with new development. Policy 30231.2 of the LRDP states that projects shall be designed to minimize soil erosion and, where possible, to direct surface runoff away from coastal waters, ESHA, and wetlands. Policy 30231.3 of the LRDP states that drainage and runoff shall not adversely affect the Campus wetlands and that pollutants shall not be allowed to enter wetlands through drainage systems.

### *Sensitive Bird Species & Tree Removal*

The impending development involves improvements to the existing pedestrian pathway from Segovia Road in Isla Vista and the construction of a new bicycle and pedestrian path connection to connect to the existing bicycle and pedestrian circulation on Main Campus. These improvements include the construction of an approximately 90 linear foot, 12 foot wide, asphalt bicycle path with curb and gutter with an adjacent 80 linear foot, 6 foot wide, concrete sidewalk. In order to construct the new path through the existing dirt berm, it would be necessary to remove 3 non-native eucalyptus trees. The three trees proposed for removal are not native trees however are a part of a large stand of trees that pre-date the establishment of the University. The University has submitted two raptor surveys completed within the last year to evaluate and document foraging and nesting activity of the surrounding eucalyptus windrow located along Ocean Road. The first raptor survey submitted “Wintering Raptor Report for Former Devereux School and Ocean Road Project Sites” dated February 13, 2013, prepared by Dudek did not find any raptor nesting activity within the trees proposed for removal however, one Red-tailed Hawk was found perching within the immediate vicinity of the project site. The second raptor survey submitted “Breeding Season Raptor Report for Main Campus sties and West Campus Sites” dated June 24, 2013, prepared by Dudek also did not find any raptor nesting activity within the three trees proposed for removal however, a Cooper Hawk nest was found approximately 400 ft. north of the project site along the eucalyptus windrow.

The project site is located adjacent to a heavily developed portion of Isla Vista to the west and the 1990 certified LRDP does not designate the project site as ESHA. Additionally, the two raptor surveys (noted above) submitted by the University did not find any raptor nesting activity within the three eucalyptus trees proposed for removal. However, due to the fact that the three trees proposed for removal still have the potential to provide habitat for sensitive bird species, it is necessary to ensure that potential impacts to nesting bird species are avoid during construction activities. Thus in order to avoid any potential adverse impacts to raptor or sensitive bird species, **Special Condition One (1)** requires that should construction activities occur between February 15 and September 1 (bird breeding season), a qualified environmental resource specialist shall conduct pre-construction bird surveys to determine whether nesting or breeding behavior is occurring and prohibit any construction activities within 500 feet of any nesting or breeding birds. Further, Special Condition One (1) requires that a qualified environmental resource specialist be present during all tree removal activities. If significant impacts or damage occur to sensitive habitats or to wildlife species, the applicants shall be required to submit a revised or supplemental program to adequately mitigate such impacts. Any

native vegetation which is inadvertently or otherwise destroyed or damaged during implementation of the project shall be replaced in kind at a 3:1 or greater ratio.

Additionally, because these three eucalyptus tree proposed for removal have the potential to provide habitat for sensitive bird species, the Commission requires the University to plant replacement trees at a ratio of 3:1 for each tree removed. In order to ensure that removal of the three trees are sufficiently mitigated consistent with the policies of the LRDP, **Special Condition Three (3)** has been included to require the University to submit a final native tree replacement planting program, prepared by a qualified biologist, arborist, or other resource specialist, which specifies replacement tree locations in the vicinity of the project site, tree or seedling size planting specifications, and a five-year monitoring program with specific performance standards to ensure that the replacement planting program is successful.

Although, the trees are not ESHA, the trees still have the potential to be habitat for nesting raptors or other birds. The University has submitted two separate conceptual alternatives: 1) construction of a 8-foot high concrete block retaining wall, north of the new bicycle pathway, and 2) grading the existing dirt berm to 2:1 (H:V, horizontal:vertical) finished slope and the construction of a 8-foot high concrete block retaining wall, north of the new bicycle pathway; however, the removal of the trees could not be avoided by alternative configurations of the project because the other alternatives would also have necessarily impacted the slopes and roots of the trees that the University has said would create instability of the trees and a resulting safety hazard. The University also stated that removing the three trees is necessary to create a clear range of vision for pedestrians and bicyclist connecting between campus and Segovia Road.

### *Erosion and Water Quality*

The proposed notice of impending development would involve 400 cubic yards of grading; grading activities during construction have the potential to adversely impact coastal water quality. In order to minimize impacts to coastal water quality during construction activities, the University has submitted an erosion control plan as part of this NOID application which includes erosion control measures and best management practices prior to construction, such as sediment traps, barriers, and other methods that will reduce erosion and sedimentation due to stormwater runoff. Additionally in order to ensure that the cut material does not have direct or indirect impacts on water quality or adjacent ESHA, either through direct placement or through erosion of excess excavated material from the project site, **Special Condition Two (2)** has been included to require that the University provide evidence of the location of the disposal site of all excess excavated material from the site.

The proposed project will result in bare soils on the grade slopes adjacent to the bicycle and pedestrian pathways and these disturbed areas could lead to a potential increase in the volume and velocity of stormwater runoff and sediment load that can be expected to leave the site and eventually be discharged into coastal waters. Pollutants commonly found in runoff associated with dirt, vegetation and litter can have excess nutrients causing algae blooms and sedimentation increasing turbidity which both reduce the penetration of sunlight need by aquatic vegetation which provide food and cover for aquatic species; disruptions to the reproduction cycle for

aquatic species; and acute and sublethal toxicity in marine organisms leading to adverse changes in reproduction and feeding behaviors. These impacts reduce the biological productivity and the quality of wetlands and coastal waters and reduce optimum population of marine organisms and have adverse impacts on human health.

In past actions, the Commission has found that erosion on site can be best minimized by revegetating all disturbed areas with native plants compatible with the surrounding area. However, in this case, the University is not proposing to revegetate any of the disturbed areas on site after construction is complete and has instead proposed to simply place mulch over the disturbed/exposed soil areas. Although use of mulch on disturbed areas provide some benefit in reducing surficial soil erosion, it does not provide the same level of erosion control as the use of revegetation, particularly on sites with sloped areas, such as the subject site, where mulch may be washed downslope by stormwater runoff. Therefore, **Special Condition Four (4)** has been required to ensure that all areas that are disturbed on site are adequately revegetated to minimize the potential for adverse impacts to water quality and wetlands resulting from potential increases in erosion and sedimentation. Specifically, **Special Condition Four (4)** requires the University to submit revegetation plans, for review and approval by the Executive Director, to revegetate all disturbed areas on site with primarily native plant species endemic to the surround area. All native plant species shall be of local genetic stock. No plant species listed as problematic and/or invasive by the California Native Plant Society, the California Invasive Plant Council, or by the State of California shall be employed or allowed to naturalize or persist on the site. No plant species listed as a 'noxious weed' by the State of California or the U.S. Federal Government shall be utilized or maintained within the property.

For the reasons described above, the Commission finds that the Notice of Impending Development, as conditioned, is consistent with the applicable LRDP policies with regards to environmentally sensitive habitat areas, water quality and coastal resources.