



**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF
AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
Water Reclamation Facility Project
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo**

Date: September 14, 2022

To: State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and Individuals

Lead Agency: California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

Purpose of the Notice: The intent of this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to inform agencies and interested parties that California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly) is preparing a project-level Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) Project. The California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees is the lead agency pursuant to CEQA and as such is responsible for complying with the provisions of CEQA.

This NOP has been prepared pursuant to Sections 15082 and 15083 of the CEQA Guidelines and starts a public scoping period that will assist Cal Poly in the preparation of the Draft EIR. The purpose of the NOP is to provide responsible and trustee agencies, and other interested parties with a description of the project and its potential environmental impacts and allow the opportunity to provide input regarding the scope and content of the EIR, including possible environmental impacts, mitigation measures, and alternatives.

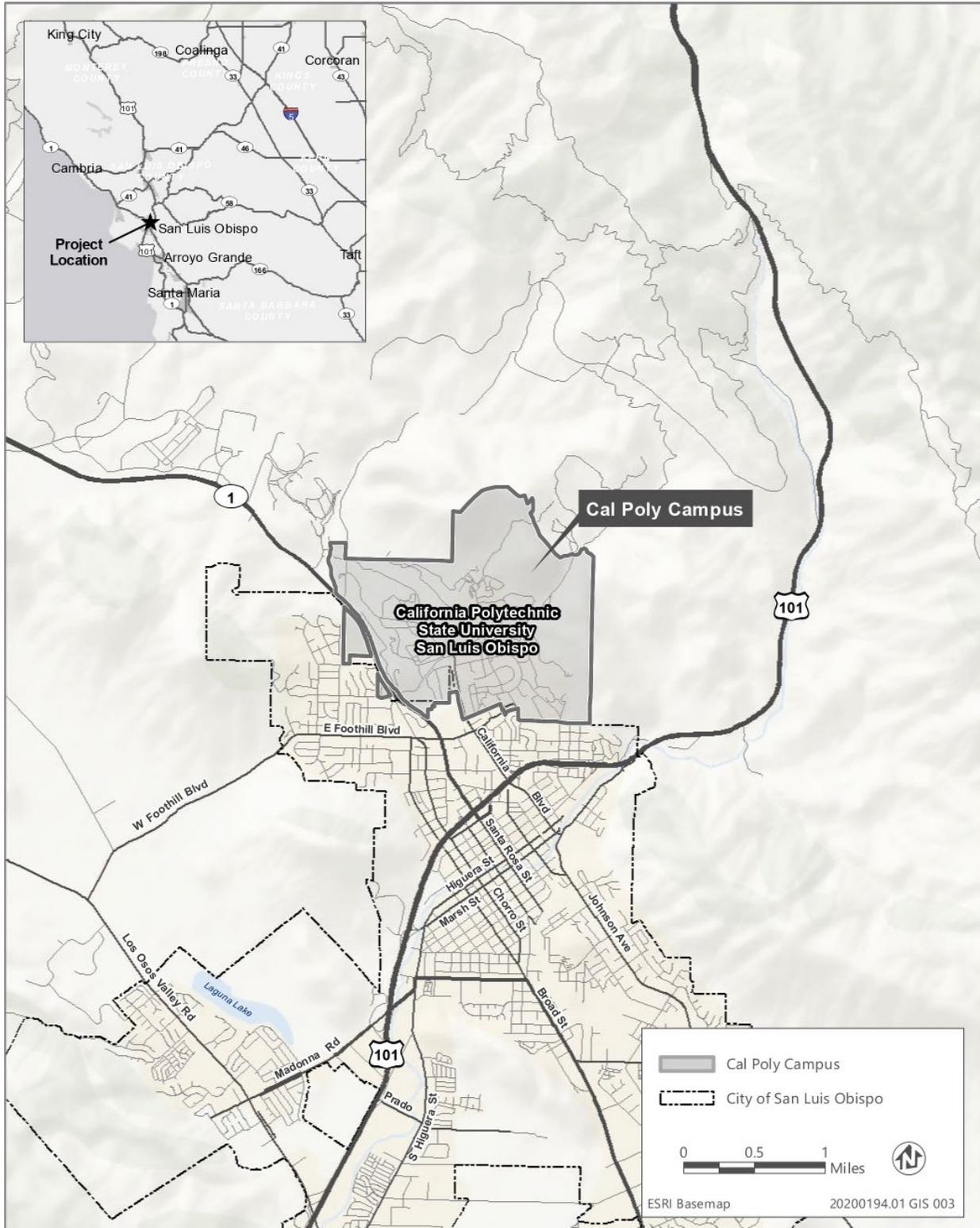
This NOP initiates the **30-day CEQA scoping process** which will run from **September 15, 2022, through October 14, 2022**. A hard copy of the NOP is available for public review at:

Cal Poly Facilities Management and Development Help Center
1 Grand Ave., Building 70, Room 107
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

The NOP is also available for public review online at: <https://afd.calpoly.edu/facilities/planning-capital-projects/ceqa/>.

Project Location: Located in San Luis Obispo County, the Cal Poly campus covers 1,339 acres and abuts the City of San Luis Obispo to the south and west, and open space, ranchland, and public land, to the north and east (Figure 1). Cal Poly's main campus consists of 855 acres. An additional 484 acres consisting of rangeland and steep terrain lies to the north, northeast, and northwest of the main campus, and makes up the remainder of the Cal Poly campus property.

Vehicle access to campus is limited to three primary entrances: Grand Avenue with a direct connection to U.S. Highway 101 (US 101) at the southeast corner of campus, Highland Drive directly off State Route (SR) 1 (Santa Rosa Street) on the west side of campus, and California Boulevard off Campus Way in the southwest corner of campus. The campus also has secondary entrances at Stenner Creek Road off SR 1 from the northwest and near the Albert B. Smith Alumni and Conference Center from the south. The Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way bifurcates the campus from Foothill Boulevard to Highland Drive and beyond to the north, limiting other access from the west.



Source: Adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2022

Figure 1: Project Site

Project Description: The project would involve construction and operation of an on-campus water reclamation facility (WRF) and recycled water storage and distribution system to produce and deliver disinfected tertiary recycled water meeting the requirements of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR Title 22. Social Security. Division 4. Environmental Health. Chapter 3. Water Recycling Criteria) for unrestricted reuse, including safe application to agricultural crops, pastures, and recreation fields on campus.

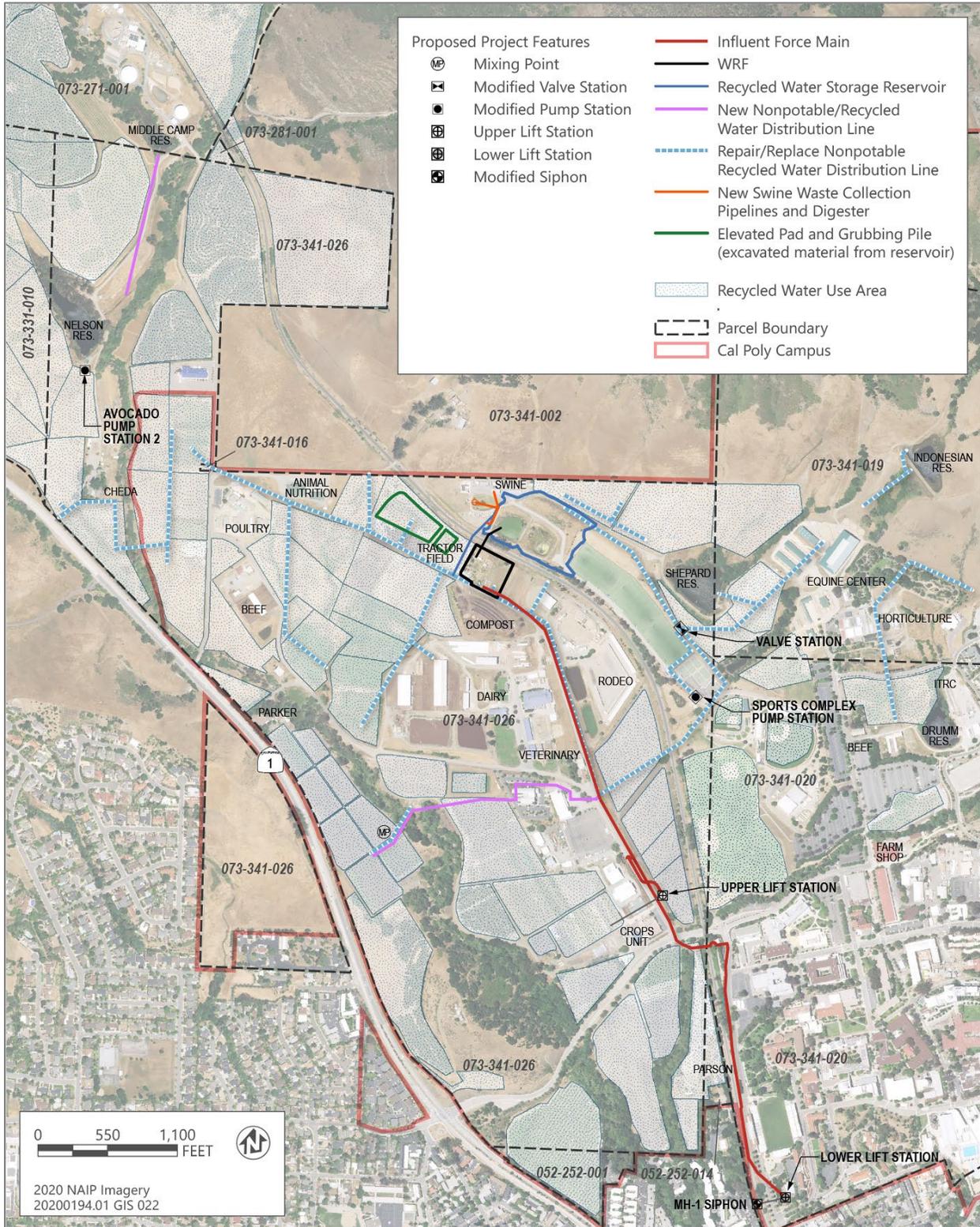
Elements of the proposed project are depicted in Figure 2 and include the following:

- WRF collection system,
- WRF,
- recycled water storage and distribution system, and
- utility improvements to support operation of proposed facilities.

The nonpotable water demands of the campus that are currently met via untreated water from Whale Rock Reservoir (approximately 15 miles to the northwest) would be transitioned over time to nonpotable recycled water supplied by the on-campus WRF. The campus would then use the Whale Rock Reservoir water freed up by operation of the WRF to meet future potable water demand associated with campus growth proposed under the Campus Master Plan. Cal Poly would continue to pump groundwater for agricultural purposes. Because Cal Poly would not increase agricultural operations as part of the Campus Master Plan, nonpotable water demands associated with agriculture are not anticipated to increase.

Potential Permits and Approvals Required: Elements of the project could be subject to permitting and/or approval by agencies other than the CSU Board of Trustees. As the lead agency pursuant to CEQA, the CSU Board of Trustees is responsible for considering the adequacy of the EIR and determining whether to approve the project. Permits that may be required from other agencies include:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife: Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement pursuant to California Fish and Game Code Section 1602; California Endangered Species Act incidental take permit authorizations
- California Division of State Architect: Review for accessibility compliance
- California State Fire Marshal: Future facility fire safety review and approval
- Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board: General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Domestic Water Systems with Flows Greater than 100,000 Gallons per Day (Order No. R3-2020-0020); Clean Water Act Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System construction stormwater permit (Notice of Intent to proceed under General Construction Permit); Section 401 Water Quality Certification for impacts to waters of the United States
- City of San Luis Obispo: Modifications to existing water supply treatment and wastewater agreements; utility connection permits; utility easements
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries: Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 consultation for authorization of incidental take of a listed species; consultation in compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation Management Act Section 305(b) for effects on essential fish habitat



Source: Adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2022

Figure 2: Proposed Project

- San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District: Authority to construct; Title V permit to operate; air quality management plan consistency determination
- State Office of Historic Preservation: National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 compliance; concurrence with effect determination
- State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water: Approval under General Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R3-2020-0020 for recycled water use consistent with the Uniform Statewide Recycling Criteria (CCR Title 22, Division 4, Chapter 3); CCR Title 22 Engineering Report approval
- Union Pacific Railroad: Crossing permit
- US Army Corps of Engineers: Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit for impacts to waters of the United States
- US Fish and Wildlife Service: ESA Section 7 consultation for authorization of incidental take of a listed species

Potential Environmental Effects: The EIR will describe the significant direct and indirect environmental impacts of the project. The EIR also will evaluate the cumulative impacts of the project, defined as impacts that could be exacerbated when considered in conjunction with other related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. The project could result in potentially significant environmental impacts in the following resource areas:

- **Aesthetics:** Temporary and long-term changes in visual character or views of the site from key vantage points.
- **Air Quality:** Temporary increases in air pollutant emissions associated with construction and long-term project operations and associated vehicular trips.
- **Archaeological, Historical, and Tribal Cultural Resources:** Disturbance of known or unknown archaeological or tribal cultural resources.
- **Biological Resources:** Although the project site is disturbed and located within a semi-urban setting, the potential for impacts to biological resources, including tree removal, nesting birds, and special-status species, will be evaluated.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Temporary increases in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with mobile-source exhaust from construction worker commute trips, truck haul trips, and equipment (e.g., excavators, graders); and long-term increases associated with project operations, including stationary and mobile sources.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality:** Potential to degrade surface water and groundwater quality during construction and operation of the WRF project, including a discussion of permit requirements.
- **Noise:** Temporary increases in noise (including off-site, vehicle traffic noise) and vibration levels during construction; and long-term increases in noise from project operation, including stationary and mobile sources.

- **Utilities and Service Systems:** Increased demand for water, wastewater service, electricity, or natural gas at the project site and the potential need to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure.

The WRF was contemplated as a near-term project in the Cal Poly 2035 Master Plan and was evaluated at the level of detail known at the time in the Master Plan EIR, certified in 2020. Because air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and noise impacts of the WRF were sufficiently evaluated in the 2035 Master Plan EIR, the project-specific Draft EIR for the WRF will not include further evaluation of these resources, but will summarize the impact assessments and applicable mitigation measures in the 2035 Master Plan EIR and provide rationale as to why additional analysis is unnecessary. No significant environmental impacts are anticipated for agriculture and forestry resources, energy, hazards and hazardous materials, geology and soils, land use and planning, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, and wildfire. Therefore, Cal Poly does not propose to evaluate these resources in depth in the Draft EIR. Rather, brief discussions of these resources will be provided in the Draft EIR with explanations as to why significant impacts are not anticipated.

The environmental factors that will be evaluated in depth in the Draft EIR will therefore include aesthetics, archaeological, historical and tribal cultural resources, biological resources, hydrology and water quality, noise, and utilities and service systems. As necessary, feasible mitigation measures will be recommended to reduce any identified significant or potentially significant impacts.

Scoping Period: Written comments on the scope and content of the Draft EIR may be submitted during the 30-day scoping period, which runs from **September 15, 2022, through October 14, 2022**. Cal Poly will accept mailed or electronic comments submitted by 5:00 p.m. on October 14, 2022, to the following addresses:

Marcus Jackson
Facilities Planning and Capital Projects
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo
1 Grand Avenue
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407
Email: mjackson@calpoly.edu

Comments provided via email should include “Water Reclamation Facility Project NOP Scoping Comment” in the subject line and the full name of the commenter in the body of the email.

Public Scoping Meeting: Cal Poly will host a public scoping meeting on **Tuesday, September 27, 2022, 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.** to inform interested parties about the project, and to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the EIR.

The scoping meeting will be held virtually via Zoom webinar. **Participants must register in advance at the following link:** https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_RoMcyj7LdS_uDLozpYyZD_g. After registering, participants will receive the meeting link via email to log into the webinar on September 27, 2022.