1 3.3.16 Transportation / Traffic

<table>
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<tr>
<th>XVI. TRANSPORTATION / TRAFFIC: Would the Project:</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant with Mitigation</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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The following section discusses existing transportation routes within the Project area. This includes both onshore transportation and offshore marine vessel activity within the Project area as well as information on local ports.

3.3.16.1 Environmental Setting

**Onshore Transportation.** The onshore portion of the Project is located within the DCPP facility. Access to the facility is gained regionally from U.S. Highway 101 to Port San Luis via either Avila Beach Drive (access from the south) or San Luis Bay Drive (access from the north), which merges into Avila Beach Drive near Avila Beach. Access to the site is then gained by entering Diablo Canyon Road to the north, which then turns into Pecho Road. Pecho Road is a privately owned and gated roadway maintained by PG&E for the DCPP. Pecho Road continues for approximately 9.6 km (6 mi) through agricultural and grazing lands to the DCPP facility.

**Existing Traffic Volumes and Levels of Service.** Transportation conditions are often described in terms of level of service (LOS), which is a means of describing the existing...
amount of traffic on a roadway compared to the design capacity of the roadway. The
design capacity of a roadway is defined as the maximum rate of vehicle travel, e.g.,
vehicles per hour that can reasonably be expected along a section of roadway. Capacity
is dependent upon road classification and number of lanes, road condition, terrain,
weather, and driver characteristics. LOS is generally a function of the ratio of traffic
volume (V) to the capacity (C) of the roadway or intersection. The LOS rating uses
qualitative measures that characterize operational conditions within a traffic stream and
their perception by motorists. These measures include freedom of movement, speed
and travel time, traffic interruptions, types of vehicles, comfort, and convenience.

The County of San Luis Obispo has established level of service “C” as the acceptable
level of service for roadways in the Avila area including San Luis Bay Drive and Avila
Beach Drive. Previous studies have attempted to measure the wide range of traffic
volumes experienced in the area during the summer months, which lead to the
establishment of a level of service of “D” for the summertime weekends. U.S. Highway
101, however, is currently operating at a level of service “D” near Morro Bay and at LOS
“E” or worse near the Avila Beach exits, falling below the Caltrans LOS standard for
highways. Pecho Road has not been evaluated for LOS but, since this road primarily
serves the DCPP, traffic levels on the roadway are expected to be low except during
shift changes.

**Pedestrian and Bicycle Routes.** The Avila Beach area is a popular tourist/recreational
area with beach, marina, hot springs, golf, and other recreational attractions. Bicycle
and pedestrian routes currently exist along Avila Beach Drive from U.S. Highway 101 to
Avila Beach, and additional bike paths (Class I) and bike lanes (Class II) are proposed
along San Luis Bay Drive and Avila Beach Drive from the highway to the San Luis Pier
(San Luis Obispo County 2009).

**Offshore Transportation.** Marine traffic in the Project area includes commercial and
recreational vessels operating primarily from the Port of San Luis (to the south) and
Morro Bay Harbor (to the north).

**Morro Bay Harbor.** The City of Morro Bay currently owns and operates all facilities at
the Morro Bay Harbor. The City maintains and operates North & South T-Piers as well
as a floating dock and anchorage area for transient vessels. In addition, the City
maintains approximately 500 moorings, berths, and slips, of which 75 to 100 are used
by commercial fishing vessels (E. Endersby, pers. comm.).

**Port San Luis Harbor.** The Harbor District owns and controls both land and tideland
properties at San Luis Obispo Bay including Port San Luis Harbor. According to the
Harbor District 2004 Master Plan, the primary active use of San Luis Harbor area is for
navigation and mooring of commercial and recreational vessels and it serves a variety
of water-oriented recreational uses related to Olde Port Beach, Avila Beach, Pirate’s
Cove, and numerous sheltered inlets below the Sunset Palisades area of Pismo Beach.
Approximately 280 moorings are currently in use in the main harbor, divided among
recreational power and sailing vessels, commercial fishing, guest boats, and approximately one dozen recreational moorings are on the west side of Avila Pier.

3.3.16.2 Regulatory Setting

**Federal.** Federal regulations concerning marine navigation are codified in 33 CFR Parts 1 through 399 and are implemented by the USCG and the ACOE. Federal regulations for marine vessel shipping are codified in 46 CFR Parts 1 through 599 and are implemented by the USCG, Maritime Administration, and Federal Maritime Commission. California laws concerning marine navigation are codified in the Harbors and Navigation Code and are implemented by local city and county governments.

The entire marine vessel study area is within the 11th USCG District, which includes all of California and the offshore waters. Each USCG District publishes a weekly Local Notice to Mariners (LNTM), which is the primary means of disseminating information pertaining to navigational safety and other items of interest to mariners. Information contained in the LNTM includes reports of hazards to navigation, channel conditions, obstructions, dangers, anchorages, restricted areas, regattas, construction or modification of bridges, construction or removal of oil platforms, and laying of underwater cable. LNTMs are developed from information received from USCG field units, the general public, the ACOE, U.S. Merchant Fleet, National Ocean Service, and other sources, concerning the establishment of, changes to, and deficiencies in aids to navigation and any other information pertaining to the safety of the waterways.

Designated coastwise shipping traffic lanes have been established along two portions of the California coast: (1) in the vicinity of the entrance to San Francisco Bay, and (2) from Point Conception southeast to the vicinity of the entrance to the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. The shipping lanes are generally 7.4 to 37 km (4 to 20 nm) offshore. Where shipping lanes have not been established, such as the central coast, navigation practice has produced a pattern of traffic flow at various distances from shore based on transit direction, vessel type, and cargo. Members of the Western States Petroleum Association, whose tankers carry crude oil from Alaska, agreed in 1990 to voluntarily keep laden vessels a minimum of 93 km (50 nm) from shore along the California central coast. Slower-going ocean tank barges transit the central coast approximately 28 to 46 km (15 to 25 nm) from shore to minimize interaction with the offshore oil tankers and the inshore container ships. Given these practices, ocean tank barges and oil tankers would be approximately 7 km (4.2 nm) west of the proposed offshore project area.

**State.** Chapter 2, Article 3 of the California Vehicle Code defines the powers and duties of the California Highway Patrol, which has enforcement responsibilities for the operation of vehicles and highway use within the state. In addition to the California Vehicle Code, Caltrans is responsible for the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of the California State Highway System, as well as that portion of the Interstate Highway System within the state’s boundaries.
Local. The Project is located in San Luis Obispo County and is subject to the policies
and plans within the County General Plan Transportation Element (1979), the Avila
Beach Specific Plan (2001) and the San Luis Bay Specific Area (2009). In addition to
the area General Plan and Specific Plans, Project vessels using the Morro Bay Harbor
would be subject to the regulations and requirements of the Morro Bay Harbor
Administration.

3.3.16.3 Impact Analysis

Significance Criteria. In addition to State CEQA Guidelines criteria “a” through “f” listed
above, a significant transportation impact would result if the Project:

- Reduces the existing level of safety for vessels transiting the Project area; or
- Substantially increases the potential for vessel collisions.

Impact Discussion

a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures
of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into
account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-
motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system,
including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways,
pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?

See response below.

b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including but
not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or
other standards established by the county congestion management agency
for designated roads or highways?

Offshore Impacts. The Project consists of placing instruments and cable onto the
offshore the DCPP. As such, the Project is not located within or adjacent to any vessel
transportation facilities or corridors. The majority of Project activities would take place
offshore within the confines of a requested CSLC offshore lease area. OBS units would
be installed using the MV Michael Uhl, a 30 m- (100 ft) long, steel hulled work boat
owned and operated by Maritime Logistics of Morro Bay. In addition, a smaller diver
support vessel will be used in the area within the DCPP intake embayment. As such, it
is anticipated that most Project vessel traffic and personnel will be mobilized from Morro
Bay; an existing small boat dock will be used for the diver support vessel at DCPP.
Because local vessels (i.e., vessels with existing berthing) would be used for crew and
supply transport, no additional berthing for Project-related vessels within Morro Bay or
Avila will be needed.

The installation of the temporary OBS units is expected to take approximately 2 days,
followed by a period of data collection of approximately 2 weeks, prior to being moved
to two new locations for another 2 weeks of data collection. Long-term OBS units would
be installed concurrently with the installation of the first two temporary OBS units. Following the installation of each long-term OBS unit, the MV Michael Uhl will return to the Morro Bay Harbor to mobilize the next unit until all four units have been placed. Following installation, the long-term OBS units would remain in place for up to 10 years. Vessel traffic within Morro Bay Harbor may increase by up to two boat trips per day on days that OBS unit installation/recovery operations occur, except during data collection activities during which no vessels would be onsite (approximately 2 weeks during temporary OBS unit collection). This small increase in vessel traffic would not substantially reduce vessel safety conditions and would not result in a significant transportation impact.

Project-related vessels would travel from the Morro Bay Harbor south to the Project area. Vessels are expected to follow the most direct route avoiding shallow water areas and the surf zone, thus reducing the chance for vessel interactions during transit. PG&E has agreed to submit the required Notice to Mariners, which will specify vessel type, location, operation, and contact information prior to in-water operations. Notices of the proposed activities will also be posted at the harbormaster's offices at Morro Bay and Port San Luis. All Project vessels will use appropriate markings and/or lighting to designate the vessels as either towing equipment, conducting diver operations or operating with limited maneuverability. As such, the Project would not substantially increase the potential for vessel collisions and would not result in a significant transportation impact.

Onshore Traffic. Traffic that would be generated by proposed offshore operations would include activities such as MV Michael Uhl and support vessel crew commuting to and from the Morro Bay Harbor, and the transportation of Project-related equipment (cable and OBS units) to Morro Bay Harbor. It is expected that vessel crew would be from the local area, and that equipment delivery trips would be “one time” deliveries that would not substantially increase traffic on local roadways. Approximately 17 personnel would be required for offshore work, and those Project-related crew would commute to and from the Morro Bay Harbor intermittently during the one-month period that Project-related mobilization, demobilization and installation operations would occur. Installation of the permanent and first deployment of temporary OBS units and the cable is expected to take 2 weeks to complete. The addition of boat crew commute trips (approximately 30 vehicle trips on days that the vessel leaves or returns to the harbor) to roadways that provide access to the Morro Bay Harbor would be a temporary impact, and would not result in significant impacts to existing circulation system conditions or conflict with County and Caltrans standards for roadway operations. Temporary increases in vehicle traffic to the harbor would not conflict with a traffic-related policy or Congestion Management Plan.

c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?
The Project does not include any activities that would require the use or modification of existing air space. Furthermore, the Project is not located near any airstrips or airports. As such, no impacts to air traffic patterns or air traffic levels will result.

**d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?**

The Project consists of placing instruments and cable onto the seafloor within the state 3 nm limit. The proposed OBS units are approximately 0.3 m (1 ft) high and would not interfere with existing vessel traffic, nor would the units create any other hazards for vessels. The power/data transfer cable would be located along the seafloor of the intake cove prior to being strung through the existing conduit to the data collection building. By stringing the cable through the conduit system, the power/data cable will not cross any roads or streets and will not increase hazards along any roadways.

**e) Result in inadequate emergency access?**

Emergency access to the DCPP occurs via the private, gated access route along Pecho Road. Proposed Project activities would not change existing emergency access routes to the DCPP, and would not generate a substantial amount of traffic that would adversely affect emergency access to the Project area or other locations in the Project area. The only onshore Project component is the extension of an existing conduit that would house the power/data transfer cable, which does not occur at or near Pecho Road. As such, the Project would not interfere with Pecho Road or any of the access routes within the DCPP. Therefore, the Project would have no impact on existing emergency access conditions.

**f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?**

The only onshore component of the Project would occur within the existing DCPP facility and consist of extending an existing conduit that would house the power/data transfer cable prior to its entry into the building housing the equipment used for data collection. No public entry is allowed within the DCPP facility. No public transportation routes, bicycle routes or pedestrian walkways are located within or adjacent to the facility. Onshore personnel would be limited to existing DCPP employees and no additional vehicle trips would be necessary. As such, the onshore portion of the Project would have no impacts to existing circulation systems. The existing conduit is buried under the perimeter roadway and will not be excavated to install the cable. No traffic disruption would result from the onshore cable installation.

### 3.3.16.4 Mitigation and Residual Impacts

**Mitigation.** Traffic generated by the Project would not be substantial, would occur intermittently, and would occur over a short (one month) period of time. Therefore, the
Project’s transportation and traffic impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts. The proposed project would have less than significant traffic and transportation impacts. No mitigation is required, and no significant residual impacts would occur.