

1 **3.3.16 Transportation / Traffic**

XVI. TRANSPORTATION / TRAFFIC: Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

2 The following section discusses existing transportation routes within the Project area.
 3 This includes both onshore transportation and offshore marine vessel activity within the
 4 Project area as well as information on local ports.

5 **3.3.16.1 Environmental Setting**

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

14 **Existing Traffic Volumes and Levels of Service.** Transportation conditions are often
 15 described in terms of level of service (LOS), which is a means of describing the existing

1 amount of traffic on a roadway compared to the design capacity of the roadway. The
2 design capacity of a roadway is defined as the maximum rate of vehicle travel, e.g.,
3 vehicles per hour that can reasonably be expected along a section of roadway. Capacity
4 is dependent upon road classification and number of lanes, road condition, terrain,
5 weather, and driver characteristics. LOS is generally a function of the ratio of traffic
6 volume (V) to the capacity (C) of the roadway or intersection. The LOS rating uses
7 qualitative measures that characterize operational conditions within a traffic stream and
8 their perception by motorists. These measures include freedom of movement, speed
9 and travel time, traffic interruptions, types of vehicles, comfort, and convenience.

10 The County of San Luis Obispo has established level of service “C” as the acceptable
11 level of service for roadways in the Avila area including San Luis Bay Drive and Avila
12 Beach Drive. Previous studies have attempted to measure the wide range of traffic
13 volumes experienced in the area during the summer months, which lead to the
14 establishment of a level of service of “D” for the summertime weekends. U.S. Highway
15 101, however, is currently operating at a level of service “D” near Morro Bay and at LOS
16 “E” or worse near the Avila Beach exits, falling below the Caltrans LOS standard for
17 highways. Pecho Road has not been evaluated for LOS but, since this road primarily
18 serves the DCP, traffic levels on the roadway are expected to be low except during
19 shift changes.

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

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

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

34 **Port San Luis Harbor.** The Harbor District owns and controls both land and tideland
35 properties at San Luis Obispo Bay including Port San Luis Harbor. According to the
36 Harbor District 2004 Master Plan, the primary active use of San Luis Harbor area is for
37 navigation and mooring of commercial and recreational vessels and it serves a variety
38 of water-oriented recreational uses related to Olde Port Beach, Avila Beach, Pirate’s
39 Cove, and numerous sheltered inlets below the Sunset Palisades area of Pismo Beach.
40 Approximately 280 moorings are currently in use in the main harbor, divided among

1 recreational power and sailing vessels, commercial fishing, guest boats, and
2 approximately one dozen recreational moorings are on the west side of Avila Pier.

3 3.3.16.2 Regulatory Setting

4 **Federal.** Federal regulations concerning marine navigation are codified in 33 CFR Parts
5 1 through 399 and are implemented by the USCG and the ACOE. Federal regulations
6 for marine vessel shipping are codified in 46 CFR Parts 1 through 599 and are
7 implemented by the USCG, Maritime Administration, and Federal Maritime Commission.
8 California laws concerning marine navigation are codified in the Harbors and Navigation
9 Code and are implemented by local city and county governments.

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

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

35 **State.** Chapter 2, Article 3 of the California Vehicle Code defines the powers and duties
36 of the California Highway Patrol, which has enforcement responsibilities for the
37 operation of vehicles and highway use within the state. In addition to the California
38 Vehicle Code, Caltrans is responsible for the design, construction, maintenance, and
39 operation of the California State Highway System, as well as that portion of the
40 Interstate Highway System within the state's boundaries.

1 **Local.** The Project is located in San Luis Obispo County and is subject to the policies
2 and plans within the County General Plan Transportation Element (1979), the Avila
3 Beach Specific Plan (2001) and the San Luis Bay Specific Area (2009). In addition to
4 the area General Plan and Specific Plans, Project vessels using the Morro Bay Harbor
5 would be subject to the regulations and requirements of the Morro Bay Harbor
6 Administration.

7 3.3.16.3 Impact Analysis

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

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

12 **Impact Discussion**

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

19 See response below.

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

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

36 The installation of the temporary OBS units is expected to take approximately 2 days,
37 followed by a period of data collection of approximately 2 weeks, prior to being moved
38 to two new locations for another 2 weeks of data collection. Long-term OBS units would

1 be installed concurrently with the installation of the first two temporary OBS units.
2 Following the installation of each long-term OBS unit, the *MV Michael Uhl* will return to
3 the Morro Bay Harbor to mobilize the next unit until all four units have been placed.
4 Following installation, the long-term OBS units would remain in place for up to 10 years.

5 Vessel traffic within Morro Bay Harbor may increase by up to two boat trips per day on
6 days that OBS unit installation/recovery operations occur, except during data collection
7 activities during which no vessels would be onsite (approximately 2 weeks during
8 temporary OBS unit collection). This small increase in vessel traffic would not
9 substantially reduce vessel safety conditions and would not result in a significant
10 transportation impact.

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

22 **Onshore Traffic.** Traffic that would be generated by proposed offshore operations
23 would include activities such as *MV Michael Uhl* and support vessel crew commuting to
24 and from the Morro Bay Harbor, and the transportation of Project-related equipment
25 (cable and OBS units) to Morro Bay Harbor. It is expected that vessel crew would be
26 from the local area, and that equipment delivery trips would be "one time" deliveries that
27 would not substantially increase traffic on local roadways.

28 Approximately 17 personnel would be required for offshore work, and those Project-
29 related crew would commute to and from the Morro Bay Harbor intermittently during the
30 one-month period that Project-related mobilization, demobilization and installation
31 operations would occur. Installation of the permanent and first deployment of temporary
32 OBS units and the cable is expected to take 2 weeks to complete. The addition of boat
33 crew commute trips (approximately 30 vehicle trips on days that the vessel leaves or
34 returns to the harbor) to roadways that provide access to the Morro Bay Harbor would
35 be a temporary impact, and would not result in significant impacts to existing circulation
36 system conditions or conflict with County and Caltrans standards for roadway
37 operations. Temporary increases in vehicle traffic to the harbor would not conflict with a
38 traffic-related policy or Congestion Management Plan.

39 **c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in**
40 **traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?**

1 The Project does not include any activities that would require the use or modification of
2 existing air space. Furthermore, the Project is not located near any airstrips or airports.
3 As such, no impacts to air traffic patterns or air traffic levels will result.

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

6 The Project consists of placing instruments and cable onto the seafloor within the state
7 3 nm limit. The proposed OBS units are approximately 0.3 m (1 ft) high and would not
8 interfere with existing vessel traffic, nor would the units create any other hazards for
9 vessels. The power/data transfer cable would be located along the seafloor of the intake
10 cove prior to being strung through the existing conduit to the data collection building. By
11 stringing the cable through the conduit system, the power/data cable will not cross any
12 roads or streets and will not increase hazards along any roadways.

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

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

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

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

36 3.3.16.4 Mitigation and Residual Impacts

37 **Mitigation.** Traffic generated by the Project would not be substantial, would occur
38 intermittently, and would occur over a short (one month) period of time. Therefore, the

- 1 Project's transportation and traffic impacts would be less than significant and no
- 2 mitigation measures are required.
- 3 **Residual Impacts**. The proposed project would have less than significant traffic and
- 4 transportation impacts. No mitigation is required, and no significant residual impacts
- 5 would occur.