NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE ATMOSPHERIC RIVER CAPTURE PROJECT

RECEIVED
3/11/26
MARIN COUNTY
CLERK

March 13, 2026

Notice is hereby given that the Marin Municipal Water District (the District), as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Atmospheric River Capture Project (Project), located in the City of Novato and unincorporated Marin County, California.

Written comments on this Notice of Preparation (NOP) may be submitted during the NOP review period, which begins March 13**, 2026,** and ends at 12:00 pm on April **13, 2026**. Two public scoping meetings will be held to receive comments on the scope and content of the EIR. **The scoping meetings will be held on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm, and Thursday, March 26, 2026, from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm.**

The District invites responsible and trustee agencies, as well as federal agencies involved in reviewing the Project, to provide input on the scope and content of the environmental information relevant to each agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project. The District also invites comments from Native American tribes and members of the public regarding the scope and content of the EIR, including suggested alternatives to the Project that may be considered in the EIR.

INTRODUCTION

CEQA requires a public agency to prepare an EIR for any discretionary project that the agency proposes to carry out or approve that may have a significant direct or indirect effect on the physical environment. As the Lead Agency, the District will prepare an EIR to evaluate the potential significant environmental effects of the Project.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15063, the District has prepared an Initial Study (IS) to identify environmental effects of the Project determined not to be significant and to focus the EIR on potentially significant impacts. The Project description, location, and potential environmental effects are summarized below. The IS Checklist is available at marinwater.org/ARCproject.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Project is located in the City of Novato and unincorporated Marin County, California. The Project would deliver winter water consisting of naturally occurring flows from precipitation events in the Russian River that exceed minimum instream flow requirements. This water would be delivered to Nicasio Reservoir for use during dry conditions (**Figure 1**).

POSTED 3/13/26 TO 4/13/26

The Project includes the following components, as shown in **Figure 2**:

- Tie-in to the North Marin Aqueduct in the City of Novato
- Wood Hollow Pump Station near the North Marin Aqueduct tie-in in the City of Novato
- Stafford Lake Pump Station and dechlorination facility
- Point of delivery near Stafford Lake in unincorporated Marin County
- Point of delivery at Nicasio Reservoir in unincorporated Marin County
- 13.2-mile-long, up to 36-inch diameter water transmission pipeline between the North Marin Aqueduct and Nicasio Reservoir, referred to as the Nicasio Aqueduct, located within City of Novato and unincorporated Marin County road rights-of-way

The Wood Hollow Pump Station, located at 7701 Redwood Boulevard in the City of Novato, is shown in **Figure 3**. The Stafford Lake Pump Station and dechlorination facility would be located east of Stafford Lake, as shown in **Figure 4.** The Nicasio Aqueduct would be installed beneath Wood Hollow Drive, Redwood Boulevard, San Marin Drive, Novato Boulevard, Point Reyes–Petaluma Road, and Nicasio Valley Road. (see **Figure 3**, **Figure 4**, and **Figure 5**).

PROJECT PURPOSE

The District's primary water supply is local surface water. Approximately 75 percent of the District's water supply comes from seven local reservoirs: Alpine Lake, Bon Tempe Lake, Kent Lake, Lake Lagunitas, Phoenix Lake, Nicasio Reservoir and Soulajule Reservoir. Water from these reservoirs is treated and delivered to customers through the District's potable water distribution system.

The District also contracts with the Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) to supplement local supplies with water from the Russian River Project. Under an existing agreement, Sonoma Water may provide up to 14,300 acre-feet per year (AFY) to the District, with a minimum take-or-pay requirement of 5,300 acre-feet (AF) annually. Over the past 30 years, the District has purchased an average of approximately 6,800 AF annually from Sonoma Water. Purchases have typically increased during dry conditions and decreased during wetter periods. The District currently does not have the ability to store for extended periods the water obtained from Sonoma Water. The Project would provide the ability to store contract water in a local reservoir.

Historically, the District has successfully met water demands during periods of extended dry conditions through intensified conservation measures and supplemental supplies from Sonoma Water. As part of its water shortage contingency planning, the District conducts drought risk assessments to evaluate water supply shortfalls under multi-year and extreme drought scenarios. The most recent assessment indicates that, even with full implementation of the District's water shortage contingency plan, a water supply shortage would occur during periods of extreme dry conditions (EKI Environment & Water, Inc. 2024). The Project would help address this projected shortage by enabling the District to store water obtained from Sonoma Water, thereby increasing available water reserves during dry conditions.

Figure 1 Project Location

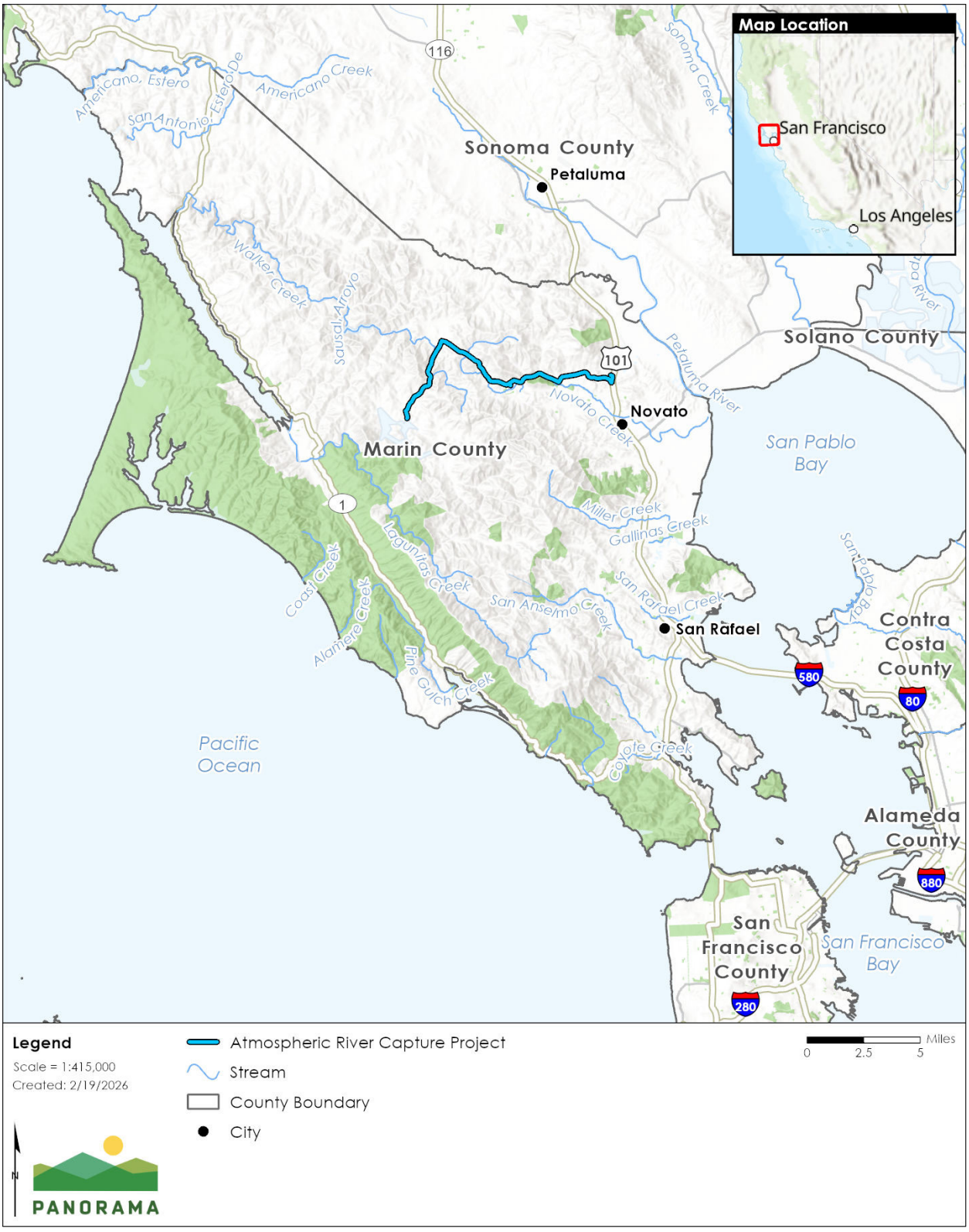


Figure 2 Nicasio Aqueduct Overview

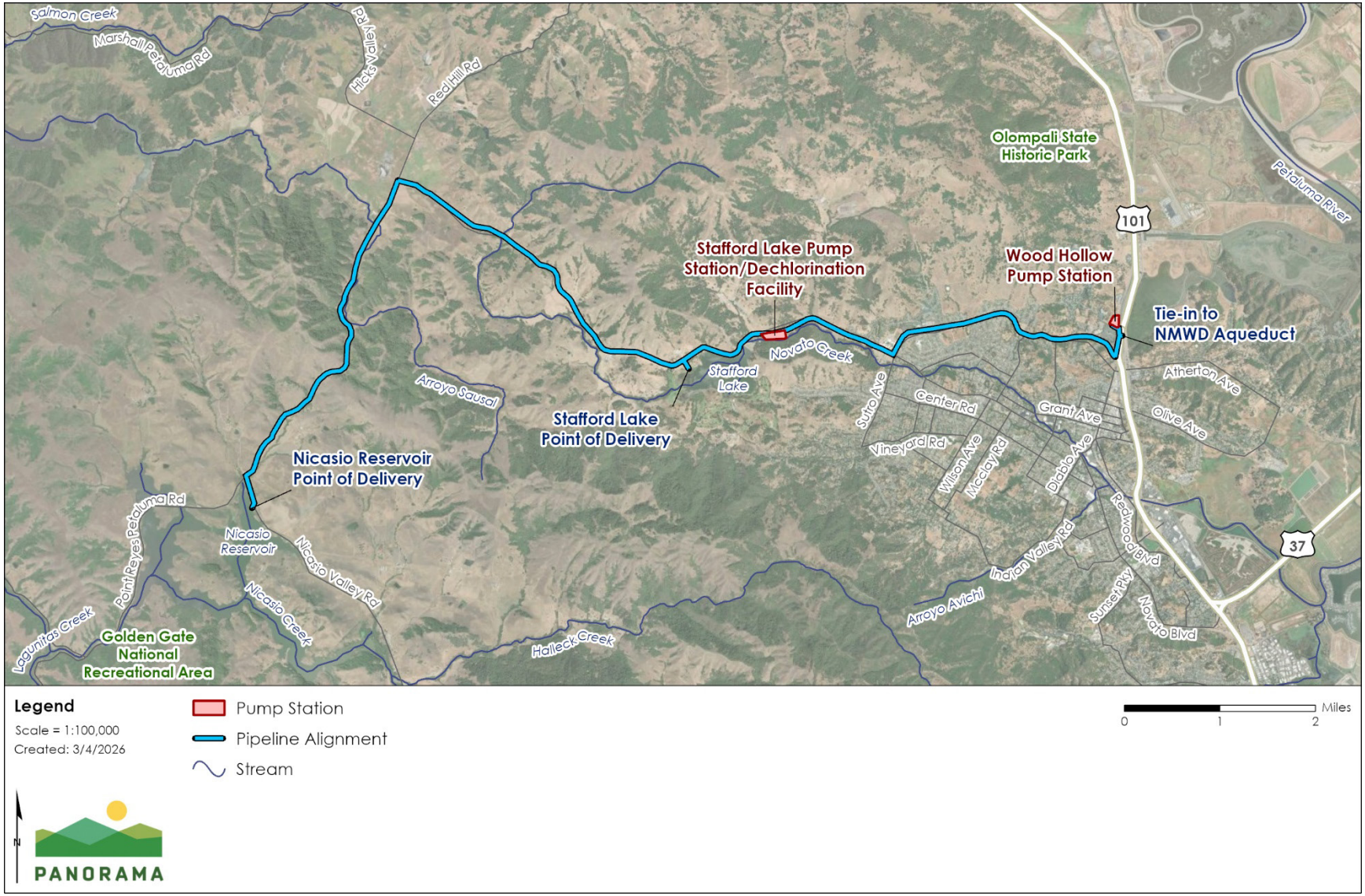
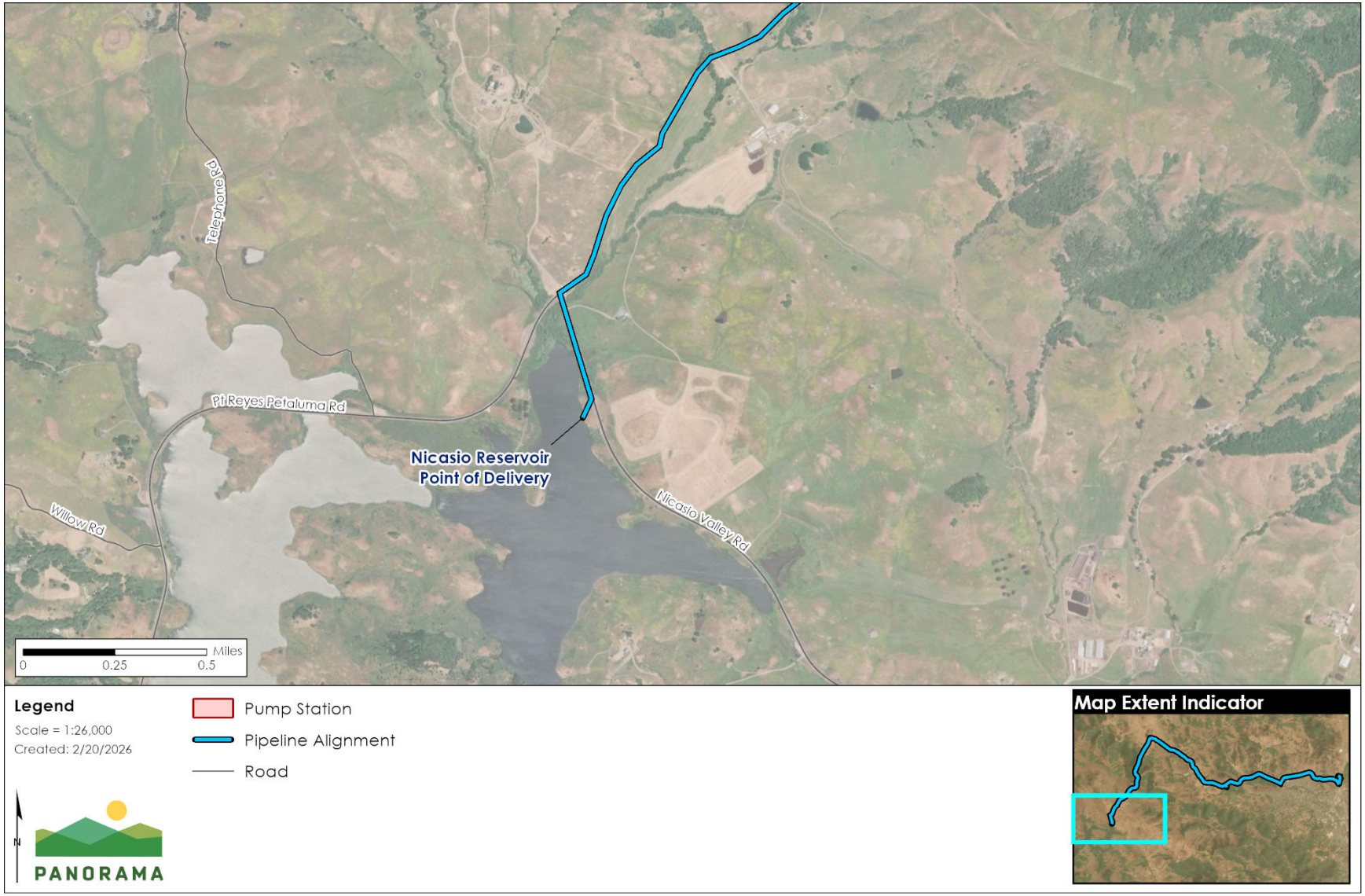


Figure 3 Wood Hollow Pump Station Location

Figure 4 Stafford Lake Pump Station and Point of Delivery Location

Figure 5 Nicasio Reservoir Point of Delivery Location



PERMITS AND APPROVALS

The Project may require permits or other approvals from the following agencies:

Federal

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

State

- California Office of Historic Preservation
- State Water Resources Control Board
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Local

- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Marin County
- City of Novato
- North Marin Water District
- Marin Municipal Water District

ALTERNATIVES

The EIR will evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives to the Project, including the No Project Alternative, to avoid or reduce any significant environmental effects, in accordance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The environmental analysis will evaluate the Project's potential environmental impacts and identify feasible measures and alternatives that may be implemented to avoid, minimize, rectify, reduce, or compensate for significant impacts.

Based on the IS prepared for the Project, the Draft EIR will analyze the following environmental topic areas for potentially significant impacts: Aesthetics; Agriculture and Forestry Resources; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology and Soils; Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Noise; Recreation; Transportation and Traffic; Tribal Cultural Resources; and Wildfire.

The Draft EIR will also address potential cumulative impacts and growth-inducing impacts. A reasonable range of alternatives, including the No Project Alternative, will be evaluated. The IS Checklist is available at marinwater.org/ARCproject.

SCOPING MEETINGS

Two public scoping meetings to obtain public input on the scope and content of the EIR are scheduled. Meeting dates, times, and locations are provided below:

- **Wednesday, March 25, 2026, from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm**
  Novato Recreation Center
  950 7th Street
  Novato, CA 94945

- **Thursday, March 26, 2026, from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm**
  San Ramon Elementary School, Multipurpose Room
  45 San Ramon Way
  Novato, CA 94945

The purpose of the scoping meetings is to provide information about the Project and to solicit input from agency representatives, interested parties, Native American tribes, and members of the public regarding the scope and content of the EIR. Input may include identification of potentially significant environmental impacts, as well as suggestions for alternatives or mitigation measures to avoid or reduce significant impacts associated with the Project.

COMMENTS

This NOP is being circulated to solicit suggestions and information from agencies, Native American tribes, members of the public, and other interested parties regarding the scope and content of the EIR. The primary purpose of the scoping process is to identify issues related to the Project's potential environmental impacts, issuance of regulatory permits and approvals, and protection of natural resources. Written comments are encouraged to help ensure that the full range of potential environmental issues associated with implementation of the Project is identified.

The NOP review period begins on March 13, 2026, and ends at 12:00 pm on April 13, 2026. Written comments on the scope and content of the EIR must be received by the District no later than 12:00 pm on April 13, 2026. Written comments may be submitted as follows:

- **By mail:**
  Marin Municipal Water District, c/o Lucy Croy
  220 Nellen Avenue
  Corte Madera, CA 94925
  Letter subject heading: "RE: Atmospheric River Capture Project Public Comment"

- **By email:**
  arcproject@marinwater.org
  Subject line: "RE: Atmospheric River Capture Project Public Comment"

PLEASE NOTE: The District's practice is to make all comments received part of the public record. Therefore, names, home addresses, home telephone numbers, and email addresses of commenters, if included in responses to this NOP, will be made available for public review. Individual commenters may request that the District withhold their name and/or home address or other personal information. If a commenter wishes the District to consider withholding such information, the request must be stated prominently at the beginning of the written comments. In the absence of a written request, the information will be made part of the public record.

All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Individuals who submit written comments on this NOP will be added to the distribution list for future notices and information related to the environmental review process for the Project. Individuals who do not wish to submit comments but would like to be added to the mailing list may provide contact information, including an email address, to the District contact listed above, along with a request to be added to the mailing list.

Interested parties may also provide oral comments regarding the content and scope of the EIR at the public scoping meetings listed above. Additional information about the Project is available on the District's website at marinwater.org/ARCproject.

APPENDIX NOP-1

Initial Study Checklist for the Atmospheric River Capture Project

This appendix includes the Initial Study Checklist, which identifies potentially significant environmental effects of the Project that will be addressed in the EIR, as well as impacts determined not to be significant and therefore not addressed in the EIR.

Marin Municipal Water District

Atmospheric River Capture Project

Initial Study Checklist

March 2026

717 Market Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103
650-373-1200
www.panoramaenv.com

PANORAMA ENVIRONMENTAL, INC.

Marin Municipal Water District

Atmospheric River Capture Project
Initial Study Checklist

March 2026

Prepared for:
Marin Municipal Water District
220 Nellen Avenue
Corte Madera, CA 94925

Prepared by:
Panorama Environmental, Inc.
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San Francisco, CA 94103
650-373-1200
susanne.heim@panoramaenv.com

PANORAMA ENVIRONMENTAL, INC.

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1 Environmental Checklist

1. **Project Title:** Atmospheric River Capture Project

2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:** Marin Municipal Water District
220 Nellen Avenue
Corte Madera, CA 94925

3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:** Lucy Croy, Project Manager
Marin Municipal Water District
220 Nellen Avenue
Corte Madera, CA 94925
415-945-1590
lcroy@marinwater.org
https://marinwater.org/yourwater/atmospheric-river-capture-arc-project/

4. **Project Locations:** The Project is located in the City of Novato and unincorporated Marin County (Figure 1). The Project would deliver winter water consisting of naturally occurring flows from precipitation events in the Russian River that exceed minimum instream flow requirements. The proposed Nicasio Aqueduct would be constructed within County and City of Novato roadway rights-of-way (ROW) along Wood Hollow Drive, Redwood Boulevard, San Marin Drive, Novato Boulevard, Point Reyes–Petaluma Road, and Nicasio Valley Road.

   One pump station (Wood Hollow Pump Station) would be constructed within the City of Novato on Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 125-202-13 and 125-202-14.

   A second pump station (Stafford Lake Pump Station) would be constructed near Stafford Lake on APNs 125-100-13 and 125-100-14. A dechlorination facility would be located at the Stafford Lake Pump Station site. The location of each Project element is shown in Figure 2.

5. **Project Sponsor's Name and Address:** Marin Municipal Water District
220 Nellen Avenue
Corte Madera, CA 94925

6.	**General Plan Designation:**	Business and Professional Office, Commercial/Industrial, Single-Family Residential, Low-Density Residential (R1), Rural, and Tax-Exempt
7.	**Zoning:**	Planned District, Commercial/Industrial, Agricultural and Conservation (A-60), Agriculture Limited (A2-B4), Agriculture Residential Planned (ARP-60), and Open Area

8. **Project Description:** The Marin Municipal Water District (District) is proposing the Atmospheric River Capture Project (Project) to deliver water under the District's existing agreement with the Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) to Nicasio Reservoir for storage to improve water supply reliability under dry conditions.

   The Project would include construction and operation of a 13.2-mile-long, 36-inch diameter water transmission pipeline within Wood Hollow Drive, Redwood Boulevard, San Marin Drive, Novato Boulevard, Point Reyes–Petaluma Road, and Nicasio Valley Road. The pipeline, referred to as the Nicasio Aqueduct, would convey water from the existing North Marin Aqueduct to Nicasio Reservoir. In addition, the Project would include two pump stations and a dechlorination facility.

   The Project would not increase the existing storage capacity of Nicasio Reservoir and would not modify the District's existing agreement with Sonoma Water. The Project would deliver contract water from Sonoma Water for storage in Nicasio Reservoir during periods of high-flow events (i.e., atmospheric river events) for use by the District during dry conditions to improve water supply reliability.

   Pump Stations

   The District would construct the Wood Hollow Pump Station within the City of Novato (APNs 125-202-13 and 125-202-14) north of Wood Hollow Drive (Figure 3). The Stafford Lake Pump Station would be located in unincorporated Marin County near Stafford Lake (Figure 4; APNs 125-100-13 and 125-100-14).

   The Wood Hollow Pump Station would include the following components:

   - A 30-million-gallon per day pump station with a pump mechanical room, electrical room, control room, and storage room
   - A 5-million-gallon water storage tank
   - Surge tanks, flow meter, and yard piping
   - A detention basin
   - An entrance gate, security fencing, and lighting
   - Access roads and parking

The Stafford Lake Pump Station would include the same pump station facilities, security and lighting, access and parking facilities as the Wood Hollow Pump Station but would not include a 1-million-gallon water storage tank or a detention basin.

Dechlorination and Points of Delivery

The Nicasio Aqueduct would serve as the point of delivery to Stafford Lake and Nicasio Reservoir. The point of delivery to Stafford Lake is shown in Figure 4, and the point of delivery to Nicasio Reservoir is shown in Figure 5. Water received from Sonoma Water would be chlorinated to meet public drinking water safety requirements. Prior to storage in Stafford Lake or Nicasio Reservoir, the water would be dechlorinated. A dechlorination facility would be located adjacent to the Stafford Lake Pump Station.

9. **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:** The Project is located within the City of Novato and unincorporated Marin County. No construction activities would occur in Sonoma County; however, the Project would deliver contract water from Sonoma Water to Nicasio Reservoir.

   The area surrounding the Project consists primarily of single-family residential, commercial, agricultural/farmland, and open space uses. Land uses around the Wood Hollow Pump Station within the City of Novato consist of planned districts.

   Land uses surrounding the Stafford Lake Pump Station, dechlorination facility, and the Stafford Lake point of delivery location include agriculture, open space, and recreation, including Stafford Lake Park.

   Land uses surrounding the Nicasio Reservoir point of delivery include open space, farmland, and residential development.

   The Nicasio Aqueduct would be constructed within existing streets, including Wood Hollow Drive, Redwood Boulevard, San Marin Drive, Novato Boulevard, Point Reyes–Petaluma Road, and Nicasio Valley Road. Land uses adjacent to these streets include residential, commercial, agricultural/farmland, and open space uses. San Marin High School is located adjacent to the aqueduct alignment along San Marin Drive and Novato Boulevard.

10. **Other Public Agencies and Private Companies Whose Approval Is Potentially Required and/or with Which Coordination Is Necessary (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):**

    Potential permits and agency approvals may include, but would not be limited to, the following:

    - **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**: Clean Water Act Section 404 permit for the discharge of fill material into waters of the United States

- **Federal consultation requirements**: Completion of applicable federal consultation requirements, including consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the State Historic Preservation Office
- **California Department of Fish and Wildlife**: Streambed Alteration Agreement for impacts on waters of the State
- **State Water Resources Control Board**: Notice of Intent (NOI) for coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit)
- **Regional Water Quality Control Board**: Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification or waiver, and potential coverage of dewatering discharges under the General Low-Threat Discharge Permit
- **City of Novato**: Encroachment Permit
- **Marin County:** Encroachment Permit
- **North Marin Water District:** Right of Entry

11. **Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 2180.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?**

    To date, the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria have expressed interest in the Project but have not formally requested consultation with the District. The District sent letters regarding the opportunity to consult on the Project to California Native American tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission as traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Project area.

Figure 1 Project Location

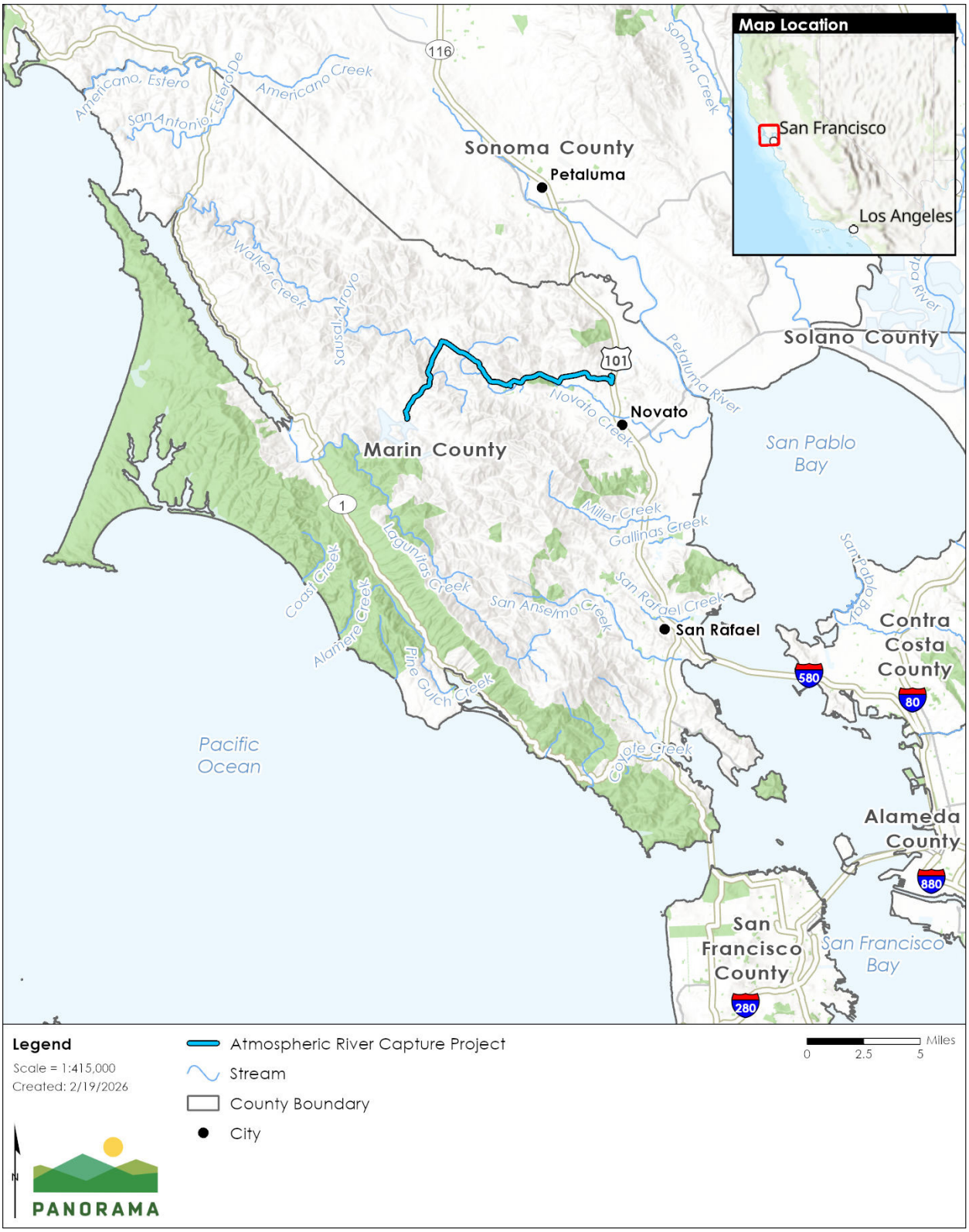


Figure 2 Nicasio Aqueduct Overview

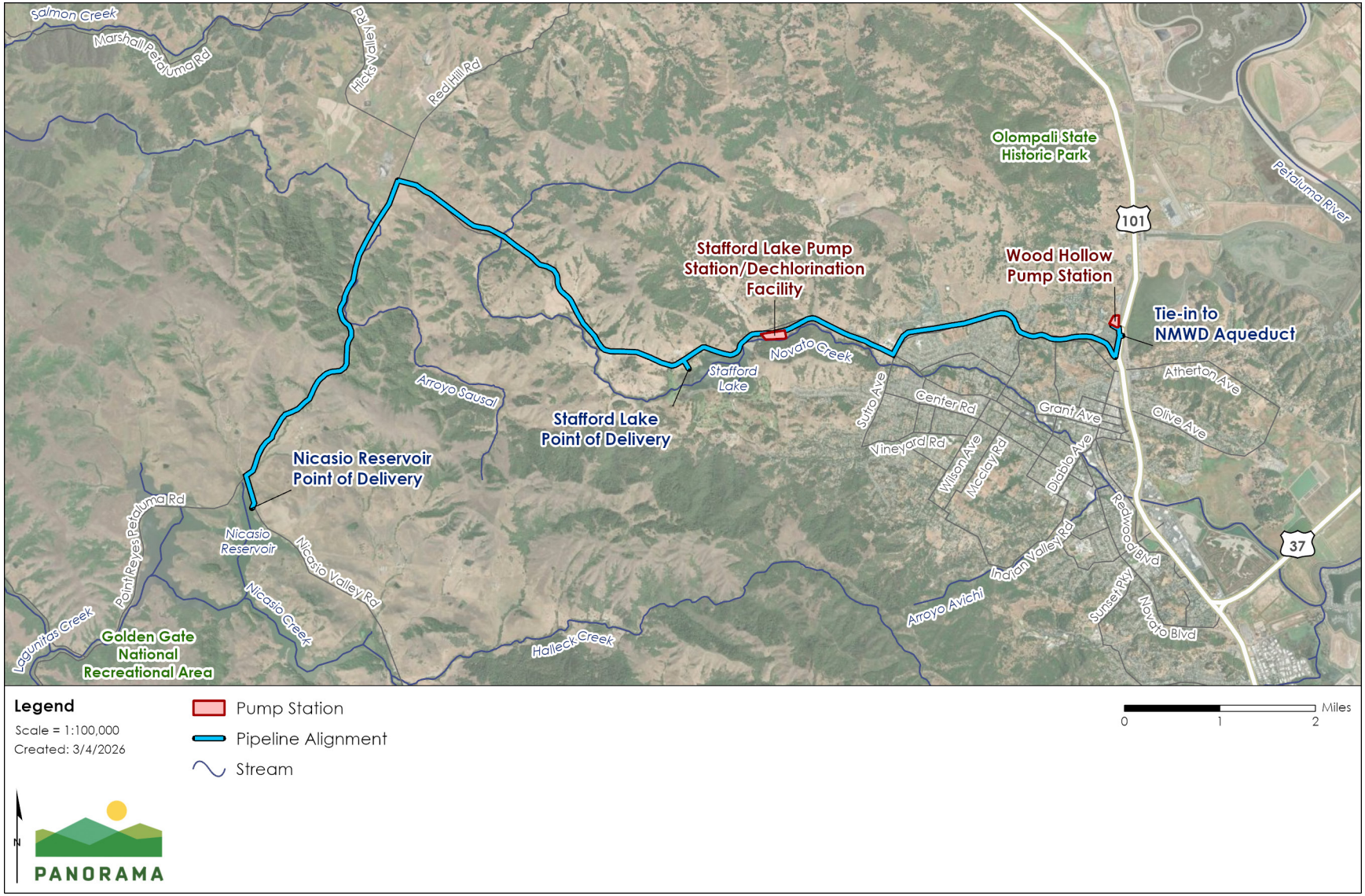
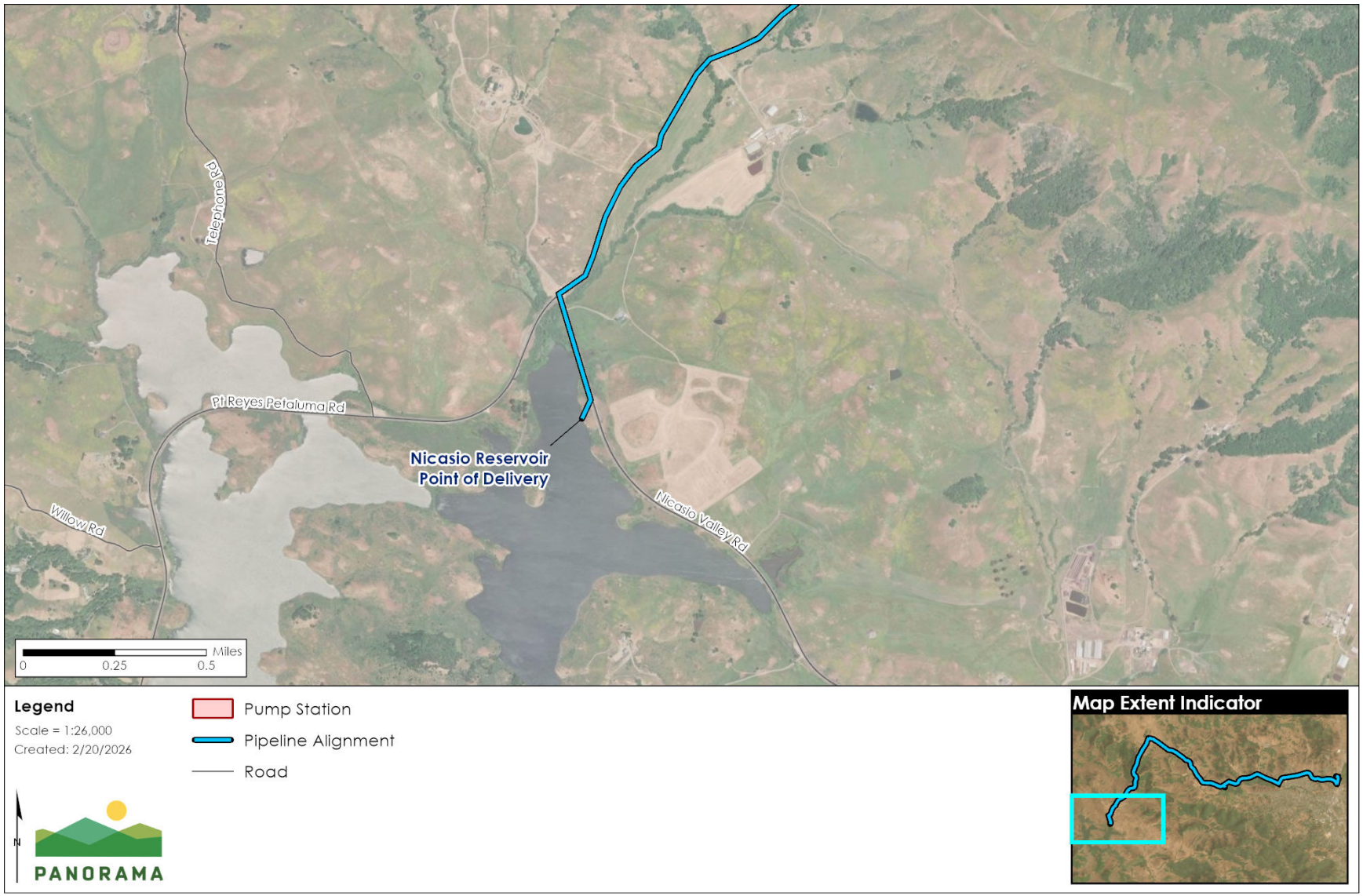


Figure 3 Wood Hollow Pump Station Location

Figure 4 Stafford Lake Pump Station and Point of Delivery Location

Figure 5 Nicasio Reservoir Point of Delivery Location



2 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

2.1 Introduction

The following checked environmental factors potentially would be affected by the Project, involving at least one potentially significant impact, as shown in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) checklist on the following pages.

X	Aesthetics	X	Agriculture and Forestry Resources	X	Air Quality
X	Biological Resources	X	Cultural Resources		Energy Use
X	Geology and Soils	X	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	X	Hazards and Hazardous Materials
X	Hydrology and Water Quality		Land Use and Planning		Mineral Resources
X	Noise		Population and Housing		Public Services
X	Recreation	X	Transportation and Traffic	X	Tribal Cultural Resources
	Utilities and Service Systems	X	Wildfire	X	Mandatory Findings of Significance

2.2 Environmental Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

	I find that the proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
	I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
x	I find that the proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
	I find that the proposed Project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
	I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature

3-10-26

Date

3 Environmental Impact Checklist

3.1 Aesthetics

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c) In nonurbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	X			
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	X			

a. No Impact. The Project would not modify an existing designated scenic vista, and Project elements would not be visible from designated scenic vistas. Therefore, no impact would occur.

b. No Impact. No state scenic highways are located in or near the Project area (Caltrans 2025). The nearest state scenic highway is a portion of U.S. Route 101 at postmile R20.9, located approximately 1 mile south of the Project area (Caltrans 2025). The Project would not be visible from the designated scenic highway segment; therefore, no impact would occur.

c. Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed pump stations and dechlorination facility would include aboveground features that would be visible from surrounding areas. These visible features could degrade the quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. This impact will be evaluated further in the EIR.

d. Potentially Significant Impact. New exterior lighting would be required for the proposed facilities to provide safe site access and security. This lighting could affect nighttime views. Although the proposed pump stations and dechlorination facility would not include materials that would create glare, lighting-related impacts during Project operation could be potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	X			
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	X			
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resource Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104 (g))?				X
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X

a. Potentially Significant Impact. The Stafford Lake point of delivery and dechlorination facility and the point of delivery at Nicasio Reservoir would be potentially located within Farmland of Statewide Importance, and the Stafford Lake Pump Station would be located within Prime Farmland if Irrigated (USA SSURGO 2024). The pipeline would be constructed

entirely within public roadways. The Project could convert Farmland to non-agricultural use. This impact will be described further in the EIR.

b. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project would be located within an urban/suburban environment in the City of Novato and a rural environment in unincorporated Marin County. Within unincorporated Marin County, the Stafford Lake Pump Station site is zoned A-60 (Agriculture and Conservation; Marin County Community Development Agency 2025b). The point of delivery at Stafford Lake is zoned A2-B4 (Agriculture Limited), and the point of delivery at Nicasio Reservoir is zoned Open Area and ARP-60 (Agriculture Residential Planned; Marin County Community Development Agency 2025b). The point of delivery at Nicasio Reservoir could intersect APN 121-04-008, which was enrolled in a Williamson Act contract in 2024 and is subject to a 20-year contract pursuant to Government Code Section 51296 (California Department of Conservation 2025). This impact will be described further in the EIR.

c and d. No Impact. The Project is not located within forest land or timberland-zoned areas; therefore, no impact on forestry resources would occur.

e. No Impact. No active agricultural operations or forest lands are located within the Project area. No agricultural or forest lands would be converted to nonagricultural or nonforest uses by the Project. Therefore, no impact would occur.

3.3 Air Quality

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	X			
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	X			
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	X			
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?			X	

a, b, and c. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project would require the use of construction vehicles and equipment, which could result in temporary but potentially significant emissions

of criteria pollutants. These emissions could expose nearby receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, particularly at pump station locations where construction activities would last for more than 6 months. Operation of the pump stations would also require energy use, which would indirectly result in air pollutant emissions. The EIR will include a detailed analysis, including air quality modeling of construction- and operational-related emissions, to assess potential impacts.

d. Less than Significant Impact. The Project would generate temporary odors from diesel exhaust emissions during Project construction activities. These odors would dissipate quickly and would be temporary in nature. Operation of the Project is not anticipated to involve the use of chemicals that would generate odors. As a result, odor-related impacts would be less than significant.

3.4 Biological Resources

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	X			

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	X			
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	X			
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X

a. Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed locations of the pump stations, points of delivery, and dechlorination facility are currently undeveloped and provide habitat that could be suitable for special-status plants or wildlife. Construction of the pump stations and dechlorination facility could affect special-status species through modification or removal of habitat and through the potential to harm or kill individuals. These impacts are potentially significant and will be analyzed further in the EIR.

b. Potentially Significant Impact. Riparian habitat is present within or adjacent to the proposed Stafford Lake Pump Station site. Oak woodland habitat occurs within or adjacent to the proposed Wood Hollow Drive Pump Station site. The Project could have a potentially significant adverse effect on riparian or sensitive natural communities. This impact will be discussed further in the EIR.

c. Potentially Significant Impact. According to the National Wetland Inventory, the Project is located in or near several wetland areas in the vicinity of the Wood Hollow Pump Station, Stafford Lake, and Nicasio Reservoir. Therefore, construction of the Project, including the Wood Hollow Pump Station and points of delivery to Stafford Lake and Nicasio Reservoir, could have potentially significant impacts on protected wetlands. This impact will be analyzed further in the EIR.

d. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project would not impact fish or wildlife movement corridors. The Project is located in sensitive habitats and open space areas and would disturb habitat that could serve as native wildlife nursery sites. Therefore, the Project could have a potentially significant impact on wildlife nursery sites. This impact will be discussed further in the EIR.

e. Potentially Significant Impact. Local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources that would apply to the Project area include those within the Marin Countywide Plan (Marin County Community Development Agency 2023) and the City of Novato General Plan (City of Novato 2024). Both plans include environmental protection policies, including tree protection ordinances. Construction of the pump stations and dechlorination facility could involve trimming or removal of trees and could conflict with tree protection ordinances. Both plans also include ordinances protecting wetlands and sensitive vegetation communities. The Project could conflict with local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources, which is a potentially significant impact. This impact will be described further in the EIR.

f. No Impact. There are no adopted Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs), Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCPs), or other local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans within the Project area. Therefore, no impacts related to conflicts with HCPs or NCCPs would occur.

3.5 Cultural Resources

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	X			
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	X			
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	X			

a and b. Potentially Significant Impact. Construction of Project facilities could disturb or damage archaeological or historic resources, if present within areas of ground disturbance. This impact is potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

c. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project would require excavation to construct the pump stations and buried pipeline. Ground-disturbing activities could result in the inadvertent discovery of human remains during construction. Impacts on human remains would be considered potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

3.6 Energy Use

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?			X	
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?			X	

a and b. Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would require energy for construction activities and operation of the proposed facilities. Construction equipment would be modern and would not result in inefficient or unnecessary energy consumption. Operation of the facilities would require electrical power supplied by the existing electrical grid. Use of grid-supplied electricity to operate the pump stations would not be inefficient or unnecessary and would not conflict with state or local renewable energy plans. Project-related buildings, including the pump stations and dechlorination facility, would be designed to meet current energy standards adopted in the California Building Code and would not conflict with applicable energy efficiency standards. Therefore, impacts related to energy use and consistency with energy efficiency requirements would be less than significant, and further analysis is not required.

3.7 Geology and Soils

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				X

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
ii) Strong seismic ground-shaking?				X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				X
iv) Landslides?	X			
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	X			
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	X			
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?				X
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	X			
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	X			

ai, aii, and aiii. No Impact. According to the California Geological Survey, Department of Conservation Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation online map resource, the Project would not be located within a fault zone, liquefaction zone, or landslide zone (California Geological Survey n.d.). The Marin Countywide Plan also confirms that the Project area would not be located within any fault zones subject to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act of 1973 (Marin County Community Development Agency 2023), which restricts construction of structures for human occupancy across faults that have been active during the Holocene epoch (the last 11,700 years; California Geological Society 2018). Therefore, the Project would not cause adverse impacts associated with earthquake fault rupture, seismic groundshaking, liquefaction, or other seismic ground failure.

aiv and c. Potentially Significant Impact. The Marin County Natural Hazards Map identifies very high landslide susceptibility classes (VIII through X) in the Project area (Marin County,

n.d.). Construction of the pipeline within existing roads would not have the potential to cause a landslide. However, steep terrain around the proposed Wood Hollow Pump Station site could increase the potential for landslides if the Project involved excessive soil removal or excavation of steep slopes. This impact will be discussed further in the EIR.

b. Potentially Significant Impact. Grading associated with construction of the pump stations and dechlorination facility would require removal of vegetation and topsoil, which could cause erosion. This impact will be discussed further in the EIR.

d. No Impact. Marin County's Expansive Soil Map identifies expansive soils within portions of the Project area (Marin County 2023). Pipeline trenches would be backfilled in accordance with applicable engineering standards, and backfill requirements would be reviewed and approved by the City of Novato and Marin County. As a result, pipeline construction would not pose a risk to life or property from collapsible soils. The pump stations would be designed to meet applicable California Building Code requirements and would not affect off-site properties. Therefore, the Project would not result in a substantial risk to life or property due to soil collapse.

e. Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed pump stations may include restroom facilities. The Wood Hollow Pump Station would connect to the existing sewer system in Novato. Wastewater disposal at the Stafford Lake Pump Station may require use of a septic tank, resulting in a potentially significant impact if soils at the site are not capable of supporting the septic system. This impact will be discussed further in the EIR.

f. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project involves ground disturbance and subsurface excavation, which could damage or destroy unique paleontological resources, if present. Such impacts would be potentially significant and will be described further in the EIR.

3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	X			
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				X

a. Potentially Significant Impact. Project construction and operational energy use would result in emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs). This impact will be evaluated further in the EIR, which will include a detailed analysis of construction- and operation-related GHG emissions.

b. No Impact. The Project would not conflict with any plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. The Project would use energy supplied by the electrical grid and would not conflict with applicable policies related to GHG emission reductions.

3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	X			
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	X			
d) Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	X			
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?			X	

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	X			
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	X			

a. Less Than Significant Impact. Construction of the Project would require the use of equipment containing diesel fuel and hydraulic fluids and would involve equipment refueling. The storage, transport, and use of hazardous materials would comply with applicable state and federal regulations. Therefore, impacts related to hazardous material use during construction would be less than significant.

b. Potentially Significant Impact. Soils within the Project area could contain hazardous materials due to historic land uses. The proposed Project would involve excavation and could include dewatering activities, which could result in the release of contaminated soil and/or groundwater, if encountered. In addition, damage to or rupture of a subsurface gas pipeline during trenching could pose a significant hazard. This impact will be described further in the EIR.

c. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project is located within 0.25 mile of San Marin High School and San Ramon Elementary School. Hazardous emissions or the handling of hazardous materials within this distance could result in a potentially significant impact. This impact will be described further in the EIR.

d. Potentially Significant Impact. An active cleanup site listed in the GeoTracker website (State Water Resources Control Board 2025) is located at a shopping center off San Marin Drive. Fairfax French Cleaners has an open case file with the State Water Resources Control Board, with active verification monitoring for tetrachloroethylene. Because portions of the pipeline are located near a listed hazardous materials site, excavation of soils and handling of groundwater along the pipeline alignment on San Marin Drive could result in potentially significant impacts. These impacts will be described further in the EIR.

e. Less Than Significant Impact. The nearest airport, Gnoss Field Airport (Marin County), is located approximately 1.3 miles northeast of the Project area. The airport is operated by Marin County Public Works and serves as a reliever airport for the greater San Francisco Bay Area. The Project would not involve the use of aeronautical equipment or the construction of tall structures that could pose a hazard to aircraft. The Project would not interfere with airport operations or airspace. None of the Project activities would create a significant hazard or

excessive noise for people residing or working in or near an airport. Therefore, impacts related to proximity to an airport would be less than significant.

f. Potentially Significant Impact. Operation of the Project would not impair or physically interfere with adopted emergency response or evacuation plans. However, construction of the pipeline within existing roadways would require temporary lane and roadway closures, which could affect emergency response or evacuation during construction. Impacts on emergency response and evacuation during construction could be potentially significant and will be described further in the EIR.

g. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project is located primarily within a high fire hazard severity zone, according to the Marin County Natural Hazards Map (Marin County, n.d.). Construction equipment can generate fires from hot exhaust gases or from contact with hot exhaust systems surfaces. Therefore, Project construction could expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. Operation and maintenance of the Project could increase wildfire risk as a result of new overhead power line connections to supply electricity to the pump stations. Because the increased risk of wildfire during construction and operation could be potentially significant, this impact will be described further in the EIR.

3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	X			
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?			X	
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i) result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	X			

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	X			
iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	X			
iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	X			
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	X			
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	X			

a, c, d, and e. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project would require construction of impervious surfaces at road crossings and in proximity to waterways at the pump stations, dechlorination facility, and points of delivery. These surfaces could result in indirect impacts on surface waters from contaminated runoff or sedimentation. Shallow groundwater could be encountered during construction and would require proper management. A small portion of the Stafford Lake Pump Station and dechlorination facility site is located within a 100-year floodplain (Marin County, n.d.). Flooding could cause the release of oils or chemicals stored at the pump stations or dechlorination facility if not properly contained. The EIR will provide a detailed evaluation of potential impacts related to contaminated runoff, sedimentation, flood hazard potential, and management of shallow groundwater encountered during construction.

The Project would deliver water to Nicasio Reservoir for storage during dry conditions. Although the Project would not increase the storage capacity of the reservoir, water levels in the reservoir could be higher than they would be in the absence of the Project. Higher water levels could contribute to longer periods during which the reservoir is spilling; however, there would be no significant effect to the existing upstream conditions.

b. Less Than Significant Impact. The pipeline would be constructed primarily within existing roadways. Water for the Project would be surface water delivered from the Russian River by Sonoma Water using existing facilities. The pump stations and dechlorination facility would add impervious surfaces. High groundwater is anticipated in several areas, and dewatering

may be necessary. Although these factors could affect groundwater recharge, the Project design would comply with applicable regulations to balance pre- and post-Project runoff, and impacts on groundwater supplies would be less than significant.

3.11 Land Use and Planning

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X

a. No Impact. The pipeline would be constructed beneath existing roadways and would not physically divide any established communities. Therefore, no impacts related to the division of an established community would occur.

b. No Impact. The Project would traverse areas designed as Planned District, Commercial/Industrial, Agricultural and Conservation, Agriculture Limited, Agricultural Residential Planned**,** and Open Area (Marin County Community Development Agency 2025a) and would be located within existing roadway ROW or on privately owned land. The Project would not change existing land uses within the Project area or within the public ROW. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations, and no impact would occur.

3.12 Mineral Resources

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?				X

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X

a and b. No Impact. According to the Marin Countywide Plan, no mineral resource preservation sites are located within the Project area (Marin County Community Development Agency 2023). The Project would be developed primarily within existing roadways or on privately owned land where mineral resources are not present. Therefore, the Project would not result in the loss of availability of known mineral resources or locally important mineral resource recovery sites. No impact would occur.

3.13 Noise

Would the Project Result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	X			
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	X			
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X

a and b. Potentially Significant Impact. Construction of the Project would require the use of machinery and equipment that would generate short-term noise and vibration. The majority of San Marin Drive and portions of Novato Boulevard are in close proximity to housing, and a school is located adjacent to the pipeline route. Noise and vibration impacts associated with pipeline construction would be temporary and would move along the pipeline alignment as

construction progresses. Pump station construction would last several months. In addition, operation of the pump stations would generate noise during the Project. The EIR will include a detailed analysis of noise and vibration impacts. A technical noise study will be conducted to identify existing noise levels and sensitive receptors and to assess future noise levels during construction and operation, including the duration of impacts.

c. No Impact. The eastern portion of the Project is located approximately 1.3 miles from Gnoss Field Airport. The Project would not create housing or employment within the Project area that would result in long-term exposure of people to excessive airport noise. The 1991 Airport Land Use Plan for Gnoss Field Airport identifies noise contours around the airport, and none of these contours overlap the Project area (Cortright & Seibold 1999). Therefore, no impact would occur.

3.14 Population and Housing

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X

a and b. No Impact. The Project would not create infrastructure that would induce unanticipated population growth. The Project would provide water supplies for use during dry conditions to improve public water service reliability and resiliency. The Project would not result in population growth or the displacement of housing or people. Therefore, no impacts related to population and housing would occur.

3.15 Public Services

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
i) Fire protection?				X
ii) Police protection?				X
iii) Schools?				X
iv) Parks?				X
v) Other public facilities?				X

ai, aii, aiii, aiv, and av. No Impact. Construction, operation, and maintenance of the Project would not increase demand for public services or require the construction of new or altered fire protection facilities, police protection facilities, schools, parks, or other public facilities.

Construction of the Project would result in a temporary increase in wildfire risk and temporary road or lane closures that could affect emergency response access. These potential effects will be addressed in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials and Transportation sections of the EIR.

3.16 Recreation

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	X			

a. No Impact. The Project would not increase population (see Section 3.14: Population and Housing); therefore, the Project would not increase use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities.

b. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project would not require construction or expansion of recreational facilities; however, Project elements would be constructed within existing recreational facilities. The Project pipeline would be constructed within roadways used by bicyclists for recreational purposes, and construction activities could affect bicyclist use due to temporary bicycle lane closures or detours. In addition, Project facilities at Stafford Lake would be located within Stafford Lake Park and could result in temporary closure of park facilities during construction. Therefore, impacts on existing recreational facilities could be potentially significant and will be addressed in the EIR.

3.17 Transportation and Traffic

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	X			
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?			X	
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	X			
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	X			

a. Potentially Significant Impact. Project construction would generate traffic associated with material deliveries and removal of trench spoils. Construction traffic is anticipated between U.S. Highway 101 and Nicasio Reservoir along Redwood Boulevard, Wood Hollow Drive, San Marin Drive, Novato Boulevard, Point Reyes–Petaluma Road, and Nicasio Valley Road. Most construction traffic is anticipated to occur during daytime hours; however, nighttime construction traffic could be required to support pipeline installation along Novato Boulevard and Point Reyes–Petaluma Road. Construction of the Project is anticipated to require temporary lane closures and potentially short-term roadway closures along Redwood Boulevard, Wood Hollow Drive, San Marin Drive, Novato Boulevard, Point Reyes–Petaluma Road, and Nicasio

Valley Road. Temporary lane and short-term roadway closures, combined with increased construction traffic, could conflict with applicable traffic circulation plans, policies, or ordinances and would constitute a potentially significant impact. The EIR will include a detailed analysis of traffic impacts, supported by a traffic study that evaluates construction-related traffic, land and roadway closures, and associated traffic impacts.

b. Less Than Significant Impact. Project construction would not represent a permanent source of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The Project would be remotely operated and would not generate significant VMT. Because the Project does not involve a land use that would generate VMT, impacts related to VMT would be less than significant.

c. Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed Nicasio Aqueduct pipeline would be constructed within existing roadways and would require temporary lane closures during trenching and pipeline installation, as described in Impact a, above. The Project would also temporarily increase truck traffic on local roadways, including Redwood Boulevard, Wood Hollow Drive, San Marin Drive, Novato Boulevard, Point Reyes–Petaluma Road, and Nicasio Valley Road. Temporary lane closures, roadway restoration activities, and increased truck traffic could create safety hazards. Therefore, impacts related to traffic safety would be potentially significant and will be described further in the EIR.

d. Potentially Significant Impact. Construction of the Nicasio Aqueduct pipeline would require in-road construction activities and temporary lane closures. These temporary closures could affect emergency access during construction. Therefore, impacts related to emergency access would be potentially significant and will be discussed further in the EIR.

3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is				
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	X			

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	X			

ai and aii. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project is located in an area that may be sensitive for tribal cultural resources. Project construction could disturb or damage tribal cultural resources, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074. Impacts on tribal cultural resources could be potentially significant and will be described further in the EIR, or, if appropriate, in a confidential appendix to the EIR. Identification and analysis of tribal cultural resources, and development of feasible culturally appropriate mitigation measures, will be determined by the District and informed by consultation with any California Native American tribes that participate in government-to-government consultation regarding the Project.

3.19 Utilities and Service Systems

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?				X

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Result in a determination by the waste water treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?			X	
d) Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?			X	
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X

a. No Impact. The Project would not require or result in construction of new or expanded utilities, including water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, other than Project infrastructure that is part of the Project and is the subject of this environmental review, including extension of electrical power to the Project site. During final design, the location of the Nicasio Aqueduct pipeline would be adjusted as necessary to avoid conflicts with existing utilities and to minimize the need for relocation. Because other public service utilities would not be affected, no impact would occur.

b. No Impact. The Project would obtain water from Sonoma Water under the District's existing agreement. The purpose of the Project is to improve water supply during dry conditions by allowing the District to store winter water that is natural flow in the Russian River from precipitation events above minimum instream flow requirements and supplied by Sonoma Water. Therefore, no impact would occur.

c. Less than Significant. The Project would generate limited wastewater from restroom facilities at the pump stations. Wastewater generated at the Stafford Lake Pump Station and dechlorination facility would be treated by an on-site septic system. The Wood Hollow Pump Station would connect to the Novato sewer system, and wastewater from that facility would be treated by the Novato Sanitary District. The pump stations would not be regularly staffed, and wastewater generated at each station would be minimal. Therefore, impacts on local wastewater treatment providers would be less than significant.

d. Less Than Significant Impact. Project construction would generate solid waste that would require disposal at a landfill. The Redwood Landfill, the closest available solid waste facility to the Project site, has a permitted capacity of approximately 2,300 tons per day and, as of December 2008 (the most recent assessment date), a remaining permitted capacity of

approximately 26 million cubic yards (CalRecycle 2025). Adequate landfill capacity exists in the Project area and would be available to accommodate Project-related construction debris. Therefore, the Project would not impair attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

The 2019 California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen) requires that at least 65 percent of job site debris generated by most building projects be recycled, reused, or otherwise diverted from landfill disposal (Zero Waste Marin 2025). CalGreen also requires submission of plans and documentation to verify compliance and identifies approved processing facilities. Because the Project would comply with CalGreen requirements and because adequate landfill capacity exists to accommodate residual Project waste, the Project would not generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards or impair attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Impacts related to solid waste would therefore be less than significant.

e. No Impact. The Project would comply with all applicable regulations related to solid waste management. Therefore, no impact would occur.

3.20 Wildfire

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	X			
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	X			
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	X			
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	X			

a. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project area is partially within a Local Responsibility Area and partially within a State Responsibility Area (Marin County Community Development Agency 2023). The Project would involve construction within roadways that serve as evacuation routes for the Novato area, including San Marin Drive, Novato Boulevard, and Redwood Boulevard (Fire Safe Marin, n.d.), as well as roadways that support evacuation from west Marin, where limited alternative evacuation routes are available, including Novato Boulevard and Point Reyes–Petaluma Road. Construction activities would require lane closures, which could impede traffic flow during an emergency. Therefore, the Project could impair Marin County's emergency evacuation plans. This will be described further in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

b. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project is located within moderate and high fire hazard severity zones, according to the Marin County Natural Hazards Map (Marin County, n.d.) and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE, n.d.). Construction equipment could generate ignition sources from hot exhaust gases or from contact with heated exhaust components. Environmental conditions, such as steep slopes and prevailing winds, could increase the potential for wildfire ignition and rapid spread, thereby exposing construction personnel to fire-related hazards and pollutants. These risks would be limited to the construction period, when personnel and equipment would be present on site. Although operation and maintenance of the Project would not increase wildfire risk, construction-related wildfire risk would be potentially significant and will be described further in the EIR.

c. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project would require installation of new power lines to supply electricity to the proposed pump stations. New overhead power lines could increase wildfire risk; therefore, this impact would be potentially significant and will be described further in the EIR.

d. Potentially Significant Impact. As discussed in Impact b, the Project area is located within high fire hazard severity zones, and construction activities could result in wildfire ignition that could spread rapidly under adverse environmental conditions, such as high winds. Wildfire-related conditions could exacerbate secondary hazards, such as flooding or landslides. The Project area includes areas of very high landslide susceptibility (Classes VIII through X), especially outside the City of Novato where slopes are steeper (Marin County, n.d.). Therefore, Project construction could expose people or structures to wildfire-related and secondary geologic hazards. This impact would be potentially significant and will be described further in the EIR.

3.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	X			
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable "means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	X			
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	X			

a. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project would involve ground disturbance in areas of natural habitat, which could result in potentially significant impacts on natural communities and conflicts with local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources. Project ground disturbance and excavation could also cause a substantial adverse change in historical and/or archaeological resources or disturb human remains. These impacts would be potentially significant and will be addressed further in the EIR.

b. Potentially Significant Impact. During preparation of the EIR, Marin County, the City of Novato, and other relevant agencies, such as Caltrans, will be consulted to identify other planned projects in the Project vicinity. The Project's impacts, when considered together with impacts from other projects, could be cumulatively considerable. Therefore, cumulative impacts would be potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

c. Potentially Significant Impact. The Project could result in direct and/or indirect adverse effects on human beings related to air quality, hazardous materials use, noise generation, emergency evacuation and access, traffic safety, and wildfire risk. Because these impacts on human beings could be potentially significant, they will be evaluated further in the EIR.

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