Chapter 2 – DRAFT
Environmental Baseline

Airport Master Plan | Salinas Municipal Airport

Draft
Prepared by:

centurion
PLANNING AND DESIGN

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2.1 Introduction

This document aims to offer a general overview of existing environmental conditions within the vicinity of Salinas Municipal Airport. This inventory of environmental resources will assist the Salinas Municipal Airport in implementing development alternatives to minimize potential environmental impacts. Coordination between the Sponsor, CALTRANS, FAA, environmental agencies, and the Consulting Team will be essential to bringing together all facts and data relevant to the project and developing a mutual agreement regarding the extent of the required future environmental documentation.

FAA has issued guidance documents to consider the environmental impacts of aviation-related actions under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and implement regulations. At the master planning level, FAA Advisory Circular 150/5070-6B, *Airport Master Plans*, states that environmental considerations should be incorporated into the master planning and alternative development processes. In addition, FAA Order 5050.4B, *NEPA Instructions for Airport Actions*, and FAA Order 1050.1F, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*, serve as a guide for the discussion below and identify those resources that will require an evaluation before commencing any project actions.

FAA Order 1050.1F Desk Reference identifies 14 environmental categories that require evaluation. The following pages describe each of those categories, as well as any known resources present within the project area:

- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Biological Resources
- Coastal Resources
- Department of Transportation Act Section 4(f)/Prime Farmlands
- Historical, Architectural, Archeological, and Cultural Resources
- Land Use Compatibility
- Noise
- Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, Pollution Prevention
- Water Resources
- Natural Resources and Energy Supply
- Socioeconomic, Environmental Justice
- Visual Effects/Light Emissions
- Cumulative Impacts

2.2 Air Quality

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has adopted air quality standards that specify the maximum permissible short-term and long-term concentrations of various air contaminants. The significance of a pollution concentration is determined by comparing it to the state and federal air quality standards. The National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) consist of primary and secondary standards for six criteria pollutants, which include: ozone (O_3), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$), and lead (Pb).

When compared to federal and state air quality standards, the above-referenced criteria pollutants and their thresholds establish "attainment," "maintenance," or "non-attainment" air quality standards for specific geographic areas. The threshold for non-attainment varies by pollutant. According to the NEPAssist tool (dated April 30, 2022), Monterey County is classified as an attainment area for all criteria pollutants under EPA's ambient air quality standards.

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has established its own ambient air quality standards. In addition, the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB) has designated the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD) as the regulatory agency for the area. According to the CARB's attainment and non-attainment maps, Monterey County is listed as a non-attainment area for PM_{10}.

Potential development projects at the Airport will require an air quality assessment to determine compliance with ambient air quality standards. However, it is anticipated that specific project-related emissions would not result in short or long-term impacts on regional air quality. Although airport construction typically results in temporary implications on air quality, these are limited to the duration of the construction period and minimized by appropriate control measures. **Appendix 2-A** provides maps of the area and air quality attainment or non-attainment.

2.3 Climate

Increased concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere affect the global climate by increasing the temperature of the earth's atmosphere and oceans and other climate changes such as wind, rainfall, and severe weather events. Although the incremental warming and cooling of the earth is considered a natural process, scientists have recently discovered that this rate increases due to human factors. As a result, scientific research has led most to believe that human activities have been the dominant cause of warming since the mid-twentieth century.

The California Air Resource Board (CARB) is the agency that sets standards and regulates air quality at the state and local levels. Although most projects do not generate large amounts of GHG emissions, cumulative impacts must be considered for past, present, and future projects.

Adherence to the State's GHG Reduction Plan will need to be implemented to ensure that the project does not cumulatively increase GHG emissions.

Under California's Global Warming Solutions Act, established through Assembly Bill 32, the City of Salinas adopted the U. N. Environmental Accords and the Mayors' Climate Action Plan that set a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The plan is still in development, but any necessary implementations that align with this plan will be utilized.

2.4 Biological Resources

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is charged with implementing Section 7 of the *Endangered Species Act* (ESA). Section 7 protects animal and plant species whose populations are threatened by human activities. The FAA and FWS review projects to determine if a significant impact on these protected species will result from implementing a proposed project. Significant effects occur when the proposed action could jeopardize a protected species' continued existence or result in the destruction or adverse modification of federally designated critical habitat in the area. In addition, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act protect birds from being impacted by development activities. Impacts on these species can be mitigated through various measures such as construction phasing to avoid nesting seasons.

The California Endangered Species Act also protects State-listed or proposed species as Rare, Threatened, or Endangered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Information, Planning, and Consultation System (IPaC) was consulted for federally listed species, and the California Fish and Wildlife BIOS database was consulted for state-listed species. According to the official federal species list, eight threatened, endangered, or candidate species that exist within the project's vicinity; an additional avian species was listed as threatened in ' 'California's Natural Diversity Database. **Appendix 2-B** provides the state and federal species report.

Before development, an Endangered and Threatened Species Study should be conducted. In addition, proposed projects and other new land development may require coordination with U.S. Fish and Wildlife and California Fish and Wildlife to determine if any field investigations for protected species will be needed.

Table 2.1 represents the federally and state-listed threatened and endangered species for Monterey County.

Table 2.1 - Threatened or Endangered Species

Common Name	Species	Federal Status	State Status	Habitat	Likely to Occur
California Condor	Gymnogyps californianus	E		Open space, high perches, cliffs, and large trees	Not likely to occur
Least Bell's Vireo	Vireo bellii pusillus	E		Low-elevation, riparian habitats near water, preferably with canopy and shrub layers	Not likely to occur
Tricolored Blackbird	Agelaius tricolor	-	T	Wetland and grassland habitats	
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	Empidonax traillii extimus	E		Nesting requires dense riparian habitats	Not likely to occur
California Red-legged Frog	Rana draytonii	T	T	Aquatic habitats	Not likely to occur
California Tiger Salamander	Ambystoma californiense	T	T	Annual grasslands and oak woodlands; ephemeral pools for breeding	
Monarch Butterfly	Danaus plexippus	C		Prairies, meadows, grasslands, and along roadsides	
Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp	Branchinecta lynchi	T		Vernal pools, seasonal wetlands, and stagnant ditches that fill with water during fall and winter rains and dry up in spring and summer	
Marsh Sandwort	Arenaria paludicola	E		Marshes, swamps, and areas that are wet year-round	Not likely to occur

Source: IPaC - Information for Planning and Consultation. Online Linkage: **https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/**

2.5 Department of Transportation Act, Section 4(f)/Prime Farmlands

Section 4(f) of the U.S. DOT Act of 1966 (now codified at 49 U.S.C. § 303) protects significant publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and public and private historic sites. Section 4(f) provides that the Secretary of Transportation may approve a transportation program or project requiring the use of publicly owned land or a public park, recreation area, or wildlife or waterfowl refuge of national, state, or local significance, or land of a historic site of federal, state, or local significance, only if there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the using that land and the program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm resulting from the use.

According to the USGS Protected Areas Database, no federally protected lands within the Airport environs exist. However, the Salinas Fairway Golf Course, located north of the Airport, is the closest municipal-owned property. Although not anticipated, consultation may be required if any proposed development would involve acquiring or altering Section 4(f) resources.

Under the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA), federal agencies are directed to identify and consider the adverse effects of federal programs on the preservation of farmland, to consider appropriate alternative actions that could lessen adverse effects, and to assume that such federal programs are, to the extent practicable, compatible with state or local government programs and policies to protect farmland. The FPPA guidelines developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) apply to farmland classified as prime or unique or of state or local importance as determined by the appropriate government agency, with concurrence by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Soil data provided by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service's (NRCS) Web Soil Survey shows some Prime farmland within the vicinity of the Airport but not within the airport environs. Furthermore, according to the California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Viewer, the airport property is designated as urban and built-up land exempt from FPPA. If any proposed development or project involves the acquisition or conversion of prime farmland or impact farmlands, additional coordination with the Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) may be necessary. A map of the area and its proximity to protected farmland can be found below in **Figure 2.1**; green areas denote farmland. The USDA Soil Report can be found in **Appendix 2-C**.

Figure 2.1 - Farmland

Source: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/

2.6 Historical, Architectural, Archeological, and Cultural Resources

Compliance with the *National Historic Preservation Act* (NHPA) *of 1966*, as amended for federal undertakings, requires proposed developments to assess the impacts on historical and cultural resources. Historic properties are defined as any prehistoric district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHA). According to the National Register of Historic Places viewer, the closest nationally registered historic place is approximately two miles from the Airport. **Table 2.2** provides a list of buildings on airport property that are 50 years or older. Based on the list of buildings with the potential for NRHP eligibility, future projects should be submitted to the State's Historic Preservation Office for review.

According to the Monterey County Archeological Sensitivity Map, the area is listed as a low archeological sensitive area. The California Native American Heritage Commission Digital Atlas was reviewed for potential Tribal lands of importance and cultural resource surveys. According to the database, the Airport lies within or near the Ohlone Costanoan tribal lands. Due to the proximity of sensitive archeological areas, the Tribal Historic Preservation office will need to be notified before the construction of proposed projects.

Table 2.2 - Potential Historic Building Inventory

Building Name	Year Built	Owner	Condition
Air Terminal Building	1957	City	Excellent
Building J-Shop/Office	1962	City	Good
Hangars A-F2	1962	City	Fair
Hangar F3	1961	City	Fair
Hangar G	1962	City	Good
Hangar H	1962	City	Poor
Hangars M-N	1962	City	Good
Hangar T-52	1962	City	Fair
Maintenance Hangar #1	1940's	City	Fair
Maintenance Hangar #2	1964	Private	Good
Pump House	1969	Private	Good
Tower	1967	FAA	Good
Utility Building	1962	City	Good

Source: Centurion Planning and Design

2.7 Land Use Compatibility

Compatibility of existing and planned land uses within an airport's vicinity typically pertains to noise. However, other effects relating to the adverse impacts on aircraft operations ensure surrounding land uses are compatible with aviation operations. Such non-compatible land uses include landfills, wetlands that attract wildlife hazardous to aviation, and other facilities.

Through Advisory Circular 150/5200-33A, Hazardous Wildlife Attractants on or Near Airports, the FAA guides locating certain land uses that can attract hazardous wildlife on or near public-use airports. For all airports, a minimum separation distance of 5 statute miles is recommended between the farthest edge of the airport's Airport Operations Area (AOA)and known hazardous wildlife attractant if the attractant could cause hazardous wildlife movement into or across the approach or departure airspace.

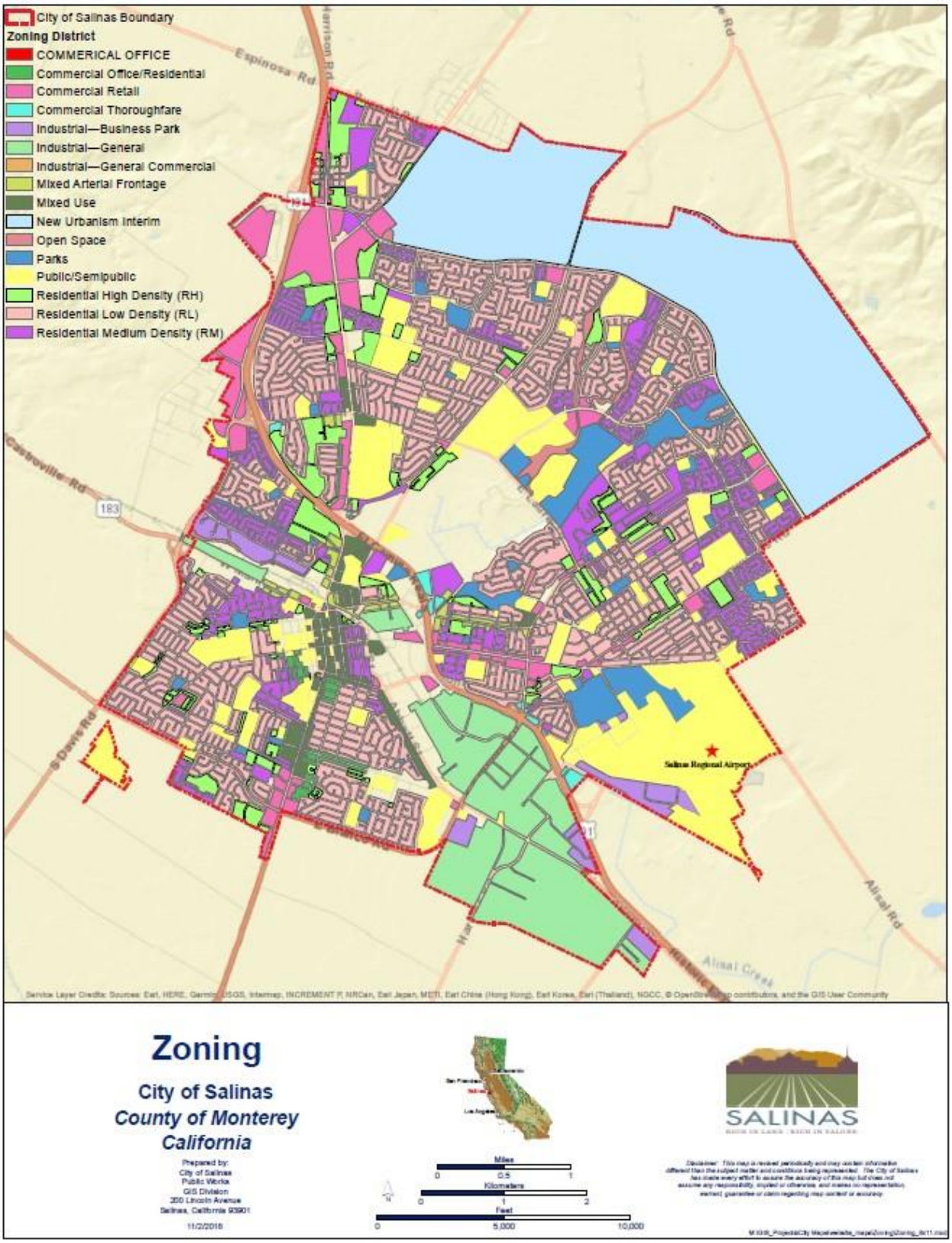
The Airport's property boundary lies within the City of Salinas and is zoned Public/Semi-Public. The airport is located approximately three miles southeast of Salinas City Hall. Except for the residential development north/northwest of the airport, the surrounding land use is primarily agriculture. Some industrial land uses can be found immediately south of the airport (south of Moffett Street) and southwest of the airport (across Highway 101). Recreational land use (Salinas Fairways Golf Course) can be found within airport property. A small area southwest of the airport is designated as commercial. The closest lake within the vicinity of the Airport is Espinosa Lake,

located approximately eight miles from the Airport. In addition, small creeks and unnamed ponds are located at least one mile from the Airport's property. The nearest solid waste facility is Sun Street Transfer Station, located approximately two miles from the Airport.

The Salinas Airport's Land Use Plan denotes that the continued development of the airport exclusively as a general aviation facility is the best option for the Airport and the surrounding property owners. The FAA recommends that an airport sponsor gain control over the land within the RPZs to ensure compatible land uses and activities. Incorporating land use controls and alerting potential real estate buyers to the location of the Airport can assist in facilitating land use compatibility.

Figure 2.2 shows the land uses surrounding Salinas Municipal Airport.

Figure 2.2 - City of Salinas Zoning



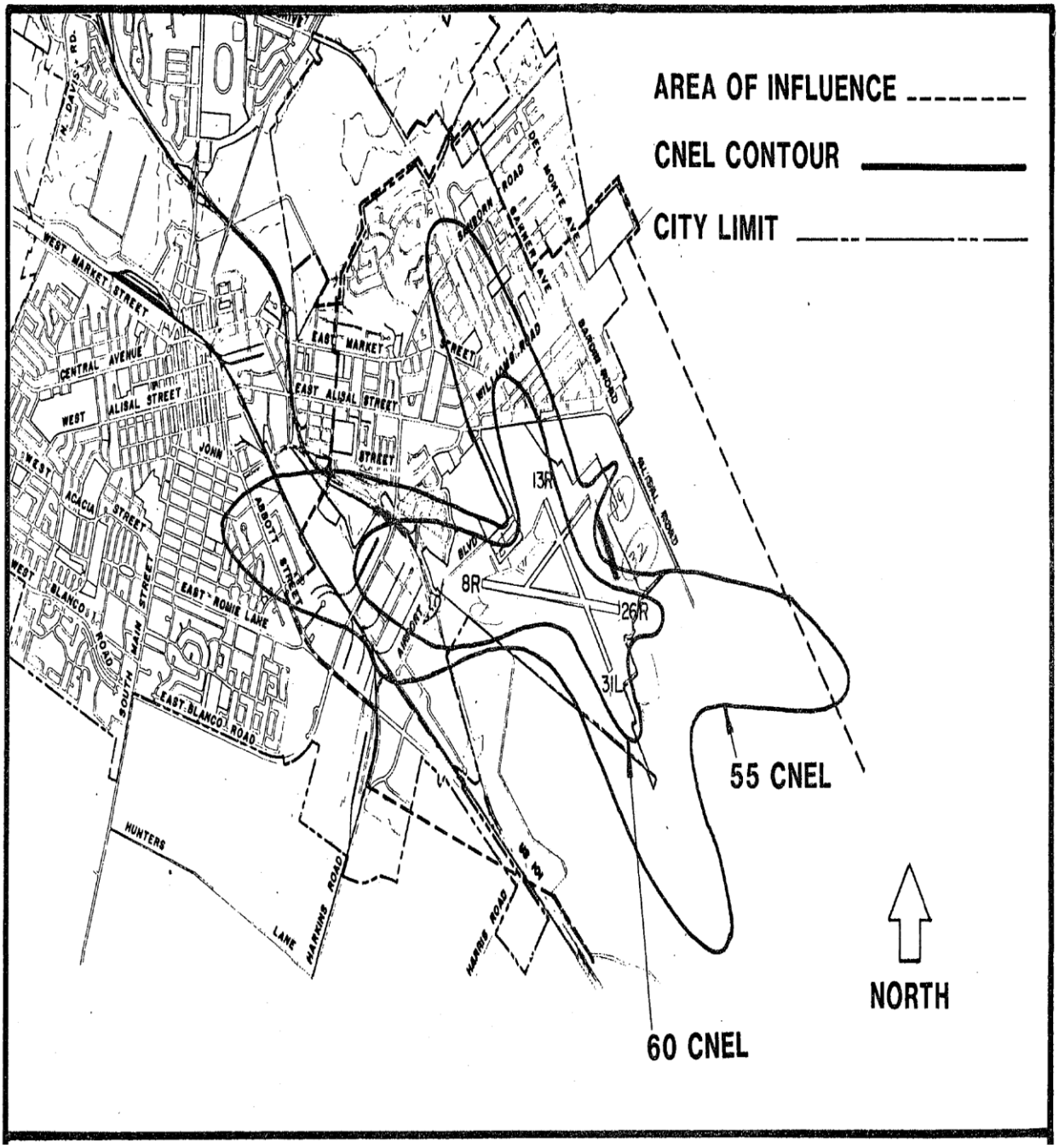
Source: City of Salinas

2.8 Noise

FAA established land use compatibility guidelines relative to certain Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL) noise levels in 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 150. In addition, the State of California requires the use of Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) metrics when determining noise impacts. Aviation noise primarily results from fixed and rotary-wing aircraft operations, such as departures, arrivals, overflights, taxiing, and engine run-ups. Noise is often the predominant aviation environmental concern of the public. Significant levels of aircraft noise in communities around airports generate the most issues. However, there are increasing concerns in areas of moderate noise exposure, and noise issues are raised by residents in suburban and rural areas where ambient noise is lower than in the more urbanized areas that tend to surround many commercial service airports.

Towards the northwest of the Airport property are two schools near the Airport, Hartnell College and Bardin Elementary School. The Airport has an existing noise abatement program that implements flight procedures to reduce noise pollution for Airport neighbors. Existing noise contours were developed with the Airport's Land Use Plan and are found below. Due to the existing sensitive noise receptors, a noise analysis will be conducted later as individual projects progress if needed. In **Figure 2.3**, you will find the existing CNEL Contours developed in 1980.

Figure 2.3 - 1980 CNEL Contours



Source: Airport Land Use Plan

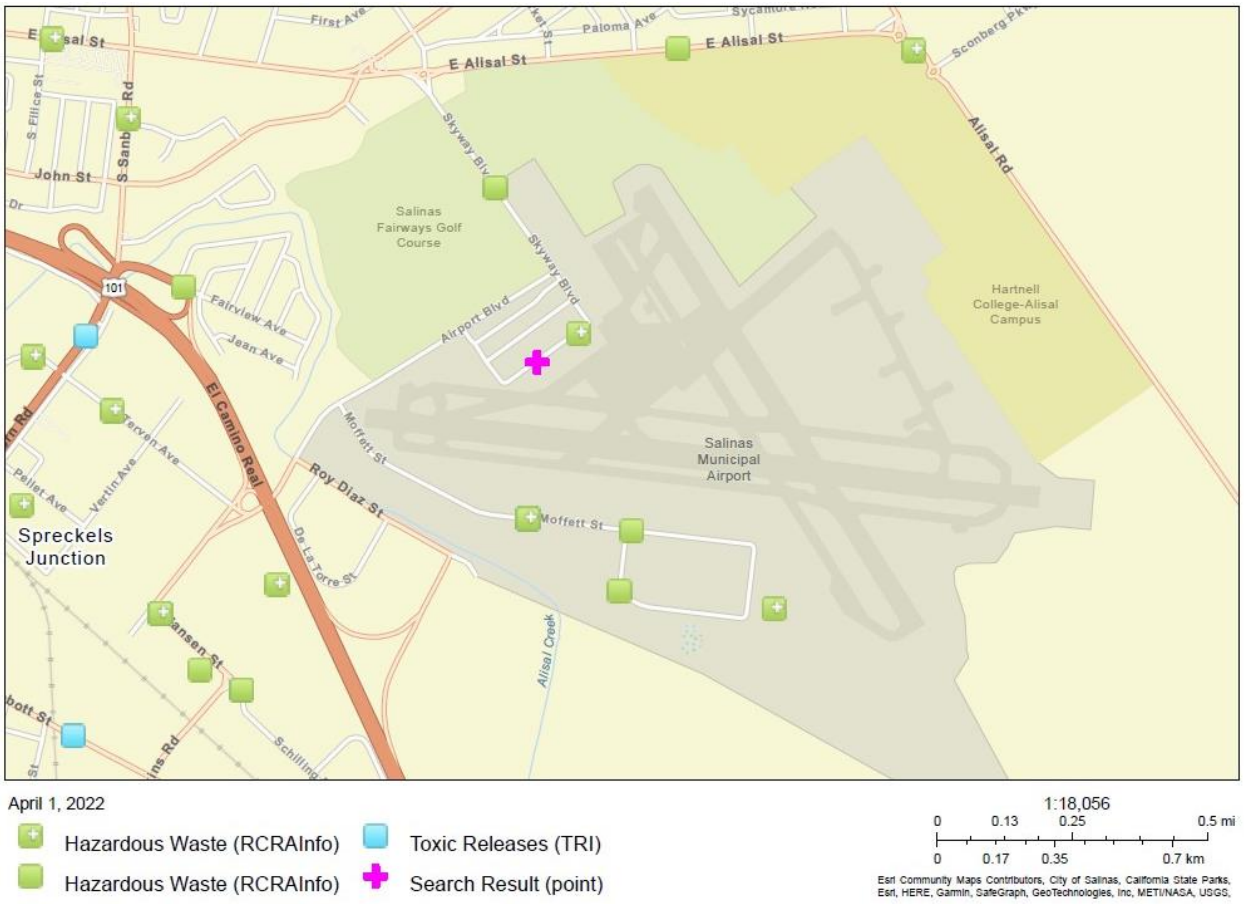
2.9 Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, Pollution Prevention

Hazardous materials, solid waste, and pollution impacts must evaluate waste streams, hazardous materials used for construction, existing contaminated sites, and ongoing remediation sites. Hazardous materials refer to industrial wastes, hazardous goods, petroleum products, and other contaminants.

Federal, state, and local laws regulate hazardous materials use, storage, transport, and disposal. In addition, regulations extend to past and future landowners of properties containing the above-referenced materials.

The EPA's Enviro-Facts portal was consulted to determine if there are any identified contamination sites and hazardous waste permitted facilities. According to the portal, there are 12 hazardous waste permitted facilities and one toxic release site that was considered compliant in 2000 within the Airport environs. If future development has the potential to affect these properties, an additional environmental assessment may be necessary. There are no listed Superfund or Brownfield sites within the Airport property. The Airport was previously used as the Salinas Army Field and was part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) program; the area's remediation was completed in 2013. **Figure 2.4** shows the location of the registered facilities within the Airport property.

Figure 2.4 – Registered Sites at Salinas Municipal Airport



Source: City of Salinas

2.10 Water Resources

Water resources are surface waters and groundwater vital to society; they provide drinking water and support recreation, transportation and commerce, industry, agriculture, and aquatic ecosystems. Surface water, groundwater, floodplains, and wetlands do not function as separate and isolated watershed components but rather as a single, integrated natural system. Because of these resources' close and integrated relationship, their analysis is conducted under the all-encompassing impact category of water resources. Wild and Scenic Rivers are included because impacts to these rivers can result from obstructing or altering the free-flowing characteristics of a designated river, an impact more closely resembling an effect on a water resource.

2.10.1 Surface Waters

The Clean Water Act (CWA) establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into waters of the U.S. and regulating quality standards for surface waters. The EPA is the agency that sets forth regulation and enforcement via the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination

System (NPDES). The USACE enforces the CWA by requiring a permit for any activity that results in the deposition or dredging of fill material within the "ordinary high-water mark" of the Waters of the U.S.

According to EPA's WATERS GeoViewer, Alisal Creek, located south of the Airport, has the following listed impairments: Ammonia, Chlorophyll-A, Fecal Coliform, Nitrate, Sodium, Toxicity, and Turbidity. Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) have not been established for sodium, toxicity, and turbidity. Compliance with NPDES for construction and industrial facilities will be required. Updates to the Airport's Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) plan will need to be implemented for new developments and facilities. A map showing the proximity of Alisal Creek can be found in **Appendix 2-E**.

2.10.2 Groundwater

The site lies within the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin (SVGB) East Side Aquifer Subbasin and is considered a high priority subbasin with declining groundwater levels. Therefore, the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan will need to be followed. The City of Salinas requires that runoff volume from an 85th percentile storm be retained on-site via retention basins or bioretention facilities. The Airport currently has swales, ditches, and channels that convey stormwater to storm sewer systems that direct runoff to the reclamation ditch and Heins Lake. Heins Lake, adjacent to the reclamation ditch, is subject to inundation during storm periods. If the proposed development increases impervious surfaces, stormwater infrastructure may need to be upgraded to account for the increased runoff.

2.10.3 Floodplain

Executive Order 11988 directs federal agencies to take action to reduce the risk of flood loss, minimize the impact of floods on human safety, health, and welfare, and restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by the floodplains.

According to NFIP Map number 06053C0236G Panel 236, the Airport is located within Zone X outside the special flood hazard area. However, to the south of the airport is a regulated floodplain. Future development that may infringe on the floodplain would need to assess the impact the development would have downstream and on the identified floodway/floodplain. Coordination with the City of Salinas Engineering Department would need to be conducted to determine if a complete flood study or cursory study would suffice to show no adverse impacts on the floodplain. A map of the floodplain and Airport is found in **Figure 2.5** below.

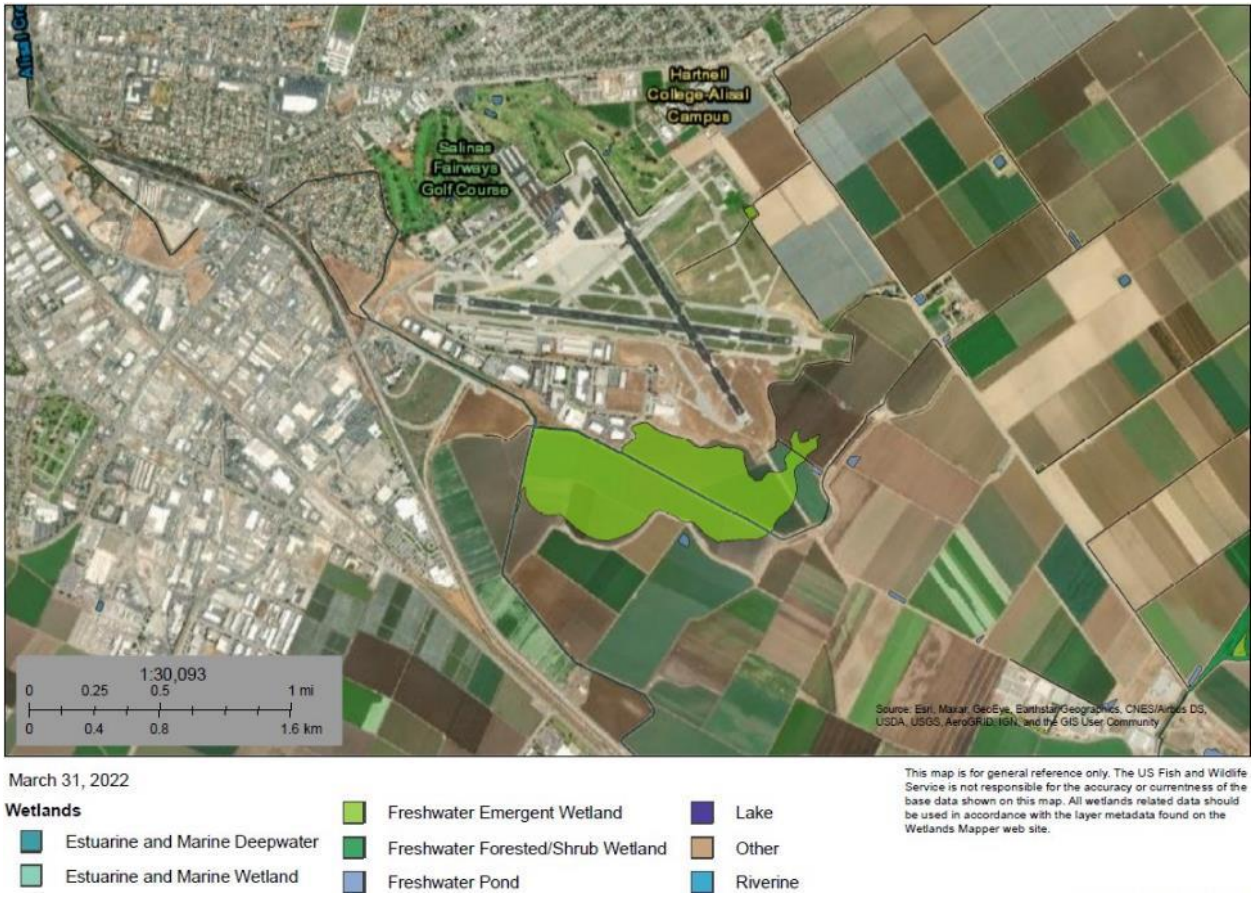
Figure 2.5 - Floodplain in Vicinity of SNS

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency, Nation Flood Insurance Program, 2009

2.10.4 Wetlands

Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Section 122.2 establishes the definition of "Waters of the U.S." (WOTUS). WOTUS jurisdiction can include rivers, streams, tributaries, interstate waters, and wetlands. Such areas are regulated and subject to permitting under the Clean Water Act (CWA) by the EPA and the USACE. Wetlands are ecosystems flooded by water, either permanently or seasonally, that support vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions under normal circumstances. According to the EPA's WATERS GeoViewer, there are freshwater emergent wetlands to the southeast of the airport but off existing Airport Property. Another identified wetland is found to the northeast of Runway 13-31 but is not on Airport property. **Figure 2.6** provides a map showing the nearby wetlands.

Figure 2.6 - Wetland in Vicinity of SNS



Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory, 2022

2.10.5 Wild and Scenic Rivers

Wild and Scenic Rivers are rivers having remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish, wildlife, historical, or cultural values as defined by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. If the FAA is taking an action that would physically impact resources covered by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, there may be consultation requirements under the Act. According to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers viewer, there are no Wild and Scenic Rivers near the Airport.

2.10.6 Coastal Resources

Coastal resources include all-natural resources occurring within coastal waters and their adjacent shorelands. Coastal resources include islands, transitional and intertidal areas, salt marshes, wetlands, floodplains, estuaries, beaches, dunes, barrier islands, coral reefs, and fish and wildlife and their respective habitats within these areas. Coastal resources include the coastlines of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, the Great Lakes, and the Gulf of Mexico.

Salinas Municipal Airport is not subject to any coastal restrictions; the nearest coastal zone boundary is approximately 12 miles west of the Airport.

2.11 Natural Resources and Energy Supply

As an impact category, natural resources and energy supply provide an evaluation of a project's consumption of natural resources (such as water, asphalt, aggregate, wood, etc.) and use of energy supplies (such as coal for electricity; natural gas for heating; and fuel for aircraft, commercial space launch vehicles, or other ground vehicles). Consumption of natural resources and energy supplies may result from the proposed action's construction, operation, and/or maintenance.

The Airport is served drinking water by the California Water Service Company via a 12" main on Airport Blvd. The existing system offers adequate water supply across the airport. The City of Salinas and the two private companies that serve potable water to the City are currently working with other local government agencies in response to saltwater intrusion.

The Airport's electrical needs are serviced by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) through overhead and underground power lines. Natural gas is also provided to the Airport by PG&E via a gas main that runs along Airport Boulevard and Skyway Boulevard.

The Airport's wastewater is serviced by the Monterey County Regional Water Pollution Control Agency. Wastewater is transported to the Salinas Main Pump Station. Republic Services provides solid waste removal weekly as well as recycling removal.

Potential impacts on natural resources and energy sources typically fall under two categories: 1) increased usage of local utilities to the point of a reduction in availability and 2) depleted or unavailable resources to develop, rehabilitate, or expand the property. Further coordination and analysis may be required if either scenario occurs from the proposed development.

2.12 Socioeconomic, Environmental Justice

Environmental justice analysis considers the potential of Federal actions to cause disproportionate and adverse effects on low-income or minority populations. Environmental justice ensures no low-income or minority population bears an unnecessary burden of impact resulting from Federal actions.

Socioeconomics is an umbrella term used to describe a project's social or economic aspects. A socioeconomic analysis evaluates how elements of the human environment such as population, employment, housing, and public services might be affected by the proposed action and alternative(s).

Two socioeconomic indicators exist to the northwest of the Airport, noting people of color within the 90th to 100th percentile and low-income in the 70th to 95th percentile. Therefore, these resources must be evaluated for potential impacts from proposed development projects completed with federal funds.

It is not anticipated that any proposed future development would harm the socioeconomics of the area, nor have any disproportionate impact on low-income or minority populations. In addition, thus far, no concerns have been raised about environmental health risks to children or the elderly within the Airport area.

2.13 Visual Effects/Light Emissions

Airport facilities and operations cause light emissions that can affect visually sensitive land uses in an airport area. Light emissions may emanate from the following sources associated with a proposed action: airfield and apron lighting, visual navigational aids (NAVAIDS), terminal lighting, employee/customer parking lighting, and both airborne and ground-based aircraft operations, and roadway lighting.

Visual effects deal broadly with the extent to which the proposed action contrasts with, or detracts from, the visual resources and/or the visual character of the existing environment. According to the FAA's 1050.1F Desk Reference, visual effects include light emissions, visual resources, and visual character. Light emissions can be produced by emanating light into the surrounding environment. Examples include airfield and apron floodlighting, navigational aids, parking facility lighting, and roadway lighting. Visual resources include buildings, cultural properties, and other visually important sites that can be visually impacted by airport development. Finally, visual character pertains to the overall visual landscape of the existing environment where the proposed development is located.

To assess the potential light emissions impacts, proposed airport lighting should be evaluated to determine if it would create an annoyance or interference to the surrounding community. A visual impact occurs when consultation with federal, state, or local agencies, tribes, or the public shows that these effects contrast with existing environments and are considered objectionable. Any proposed lighting would be installed entirely on airport property and would not differ drastically from existing installations. If proposed projects relating to this master plan include installing lighting on off-airport property or if proposed lighting differs from existing conditions, further analysis will need to occur.

2.14 Cumulative Impacts

The depth of a cumulative impacts analysis should be commensurate with the potential for significant impacts. The scope and extent of the analysis will vary by project type, geographic location, the potential to impact resources, and other factors such as the current condition of potentially affected impact categories. Cumulative impacts are affecting the proposed action would have on a particular resource when added to impacts on that resource due to past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions within a defined time and geographical area.