COUNTY of VENTURA

Learn more about the ISAGs:

Scan the QR code, or visit:
rma.venturacounty.gov/isags

What Changed?

Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAGs)

The ISAGs provide a framework that helps the County of Ventura determine whether a project could have a potentially significant effect on the environment. The County is conducting a comprehensive update of the ISAGs to better align with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which includes the key components below.

LOOK AND FEEL

- **Text Format**
- **Defined Terms**
- **Section Headings**

NEW FEATURES

- **Glossary**
- **Resources & References**
  In each topic section

60 topic sections were consolidated into 25 topic sections to more closely align with CEQA's policies and Appendix G.

Each section contains the following overall updates:

Technical Terms Have been updated and are found in the new Glossary

General Plan Consistency is now discussed in Section 16, Land Use & Planning

Thresholds of Significance have been updated to better align with CEQA

Analysis Guidelines have been updated to better align with thresholds

Oct. 2025

Overview of ISAG Topic Areas

The following County agencies/departments, as well as the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, will be responsible for reviewing specific sections of the ISAGs as marked below, making determinations of environmental significance on a project-by-project basis, and evaluating the technical adequacy of environmental documents for their assigned topic sections.

Environmental Issue / ISAG Section	County Agency/Department											
	Agriculture/Weights & Measures	County Executive Office Sustainability Division	Department of Airports	Fire Protection District	General Services Agency	Library Services	Public Works Agency	Watershed Protection District	RMA Environmental Health Division	RMA Planning Division	Sheriffs Office	Ventura County Air Pollution Control District
1. Introduction												
2. Agriculture & Forestry	●											
3. Air Quality												●
4. Greenhouse Gases												●
5. Energy		●										
6. Biological Resources										●		
7. Hydrology							●	●				
8. Beaches and Coastal Sand Dunes										●		
9. Water Resources							●					
10. Paleontological Resources										●		
11. Mineral Resources										●		
12. Aesthetics										●		
13. Historical Resources										●		
14. Archaeological Resources										●		
15. Tribal Cultural Resources										●		
16. Land Use & Planning			●							●		
17. Population & Housing										●		
18. Recreation					●							
19. Aviation Hazards			●									
20. Noise & Vibration										●		
21. Geologic Hazards							●					
22. Wildfire Hazards				●								
23. Hazardous Materials & Waste									●			
24. Public Services				●		●					●	
25. Utilities & Service Systems				●			●		●			
26. Transportation			●	●			●					

2. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Overview

This section provides significance thresholds and guidelines for impacts on agricultural and forestry resources in unincorporated Ventura County. The impact analysis focuses on potential loss of agricultural resources and forest lands, conversion of these resources to other uses, as well as conflicts with Williamson Act contract and zoning for agricultural uses, forest land, or timberland production.

This topic section is updated from the following section(s) from the existing ISAGs:

5a. Agricultural Resources - Soils

5b. Agricultural Resources – Land Use Compatibility

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") were updated accordingly to better align with the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

AGR-1 Result in the loss of Important Farmland exceeding the thresholds set forth below.

General Plan Land Use Designation	Important Farmland Category	Acres Lost
Agricultural	Prime/Statewide	5
	Unique	10
	Local	15
Open Space/Rural	Prime/Statewide	10
	Unique	15
	Local	20
All Other Land Use Designations	Prime/Statewide	20
	Unique	30
	Local	40

AGR-2 Result in a significant impact on agricultural resources based on land use incompatibility if it is located closer than the radius distances set forth below.

Proposed Project	Distance from Non-Agricultural Structure or Use to Important Farmland Within the Applicable Radius Distance
Without Vegetative Screening	300 feet
With Vegetative Screening	150 feet
New K-12 School	1,320 feet

AGR-3 a) Conflict with an existing Williamson Act Contract and b) result in a significant adverse environmental effect due to that conflict.

AGR-4 Involve changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in the loss of forest land, conversion of forest land to non-forest use, or causes the rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned T-P for non-forest use.

Legend:

Derived from standards specific to the County

Derived from Appendix G of CEQA

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

2. Agriculture and Forestry Resources (cont.)

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Agricultural conservation easement
- Forest land
- Restricted material
- Timberland
- Williamson Act contract
- Important Farmland
  - Farmland of Local Importance
  - Farmland of Statewide Importance
  - Prime Farmland
  - Unique Farmland

3. Air Quality

Overview

This section specifies significance thresholds for air quality impacts, including emission limits on reactive organic compounds and oxides of nitrogen, cumulative increases in criteria pollutants, and exposure of sensitive receptors to pollutants such as, but not limited to, toxic air contaminants, dust, and odors. It also provides guidelines for mitigating construction-related dust and emissions, managing carbon monoxide hotspots, and addressing odor impacts.

This topic section is updated from **Section 1, Air Quality** in the existing ISAGs.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") were updated accordingly to better align with the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

AIR-1 Exceed 2 pounds per day or greater for reactive organic compounds or oxides of nitrogen, as described in the Air Quality Assessment Guidelines, and cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Air Quality Management Plan.

AIR-2 Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of a *criteria pollutant* for which the region is in non-attainment of the applicable federal or state standard.

AIR-3 Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations such as, but not limited to, toxic air contaminants, dust, and odors.

Legend:

Derived from standards specific to the County

Derived from Appendix G of CEQA

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Air Quality Assessment Guidelines
- Air Quality Management Plan
- Criteria pollutants
- Mobile source
- Nonattainment area
- Oxides of nitrogen
- Ozone
- Ozone precursors
- Particulate matter
- Reactive organic compounds
- Sensitive receptors
- Stationary sources
- Toxic air contaminant

4. Greenhouse Gases

Overview

This section discusses greenhouse gases (GHGs) and their effects on Earth's climate. This section also outlines federal and state government initiatives aimed at reducing GHG emissions, as well as local efforts such as the Ventura County Regional Energy Alliance's community based GHG inventories. This section concludes with guidance on assessing the environmental impact of GHG emissions in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

This topic section is updated from **Section 24, Greenhouse Gases** in the existing ISAGs.

Impact Analysis

This section was updated to include guidelines for analyzing environmental impacts resulting from a project's greenhouse gas emissions using exceedance levels recommended by the South Coast Air Quality Management District pursuant to Section 15064.7(c) of CEQA. This regulation states that a lead agency may consider thresholds of significance adopted or recommended by other public agencies or recommended by experts, as long as the use of such thresholds is supported by substantial evidence.

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Greenhouse gases (GHGs)
- Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MTCO_2e$)

5. Energy

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential energy related impacts and ways to reduce unnecessary energy consumption. The impact analysis includes assessing the project's construction and operational energy consumption, as well as its consistency with state and local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

This is a **new topic section**, which is being included to more closely align with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

ENE-1 Result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during construction or operation.

ENE-2 a) conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency and b) result in a significant adverse environmental effect due to that conflict.

Legend:

Derived from Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Renewable energy

6. Biological Resources

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on sensitive biological resources. The impact analysis includes assessing the project's potential impacts on special-status species, ecological communities, waters and/or wetlands, landscape connectivity, and potential conflicts with the Ventura County General Plan and zoning ordinances.

This topic section is updated from **Section 4, Biological Resources** in the existing ISAGs.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if:

BIO-1 On a plant or animal species, result in one or more of the following:

a. Loss of one or more individuals, occupied habitat or critical habitat designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) of a species officially listed as endangered, rare, or threatened, a candidate species, or a fully protected species.

b. Impacts that would eliminate or threaten to eliminate one or more element occurrences of a special-status species not otherwise listed under the federal Endangered Species Act or California Endangered Species Act, or as a candidate species or fully protected species.

c. "Take" of birds protected under the California Fish and Game Code (Sections 3503.5, 3511, and 3513) and the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, as "take" is defined in the Fish and Game Code and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

d. Impacts severe enough to substantially reduce the habitat of a plant or animal species or cause a species population to drop below self-sustaining levels pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15065.

e. Threaten the viability of the habitat of a special-status species, or fragment a habitat and/or critical ecosystem process and functions of a special-status species population.

f. Isolate or restrict a special-status species from resources necessary for its reproductive capacity or survival.

g. Substantially increase human-wildlife conflicts, lighting, noise, and other indirect impacts, which would result in mortality or the reduced fitness of the affected species over time.

6. Biological Resources (cont.)

Thresholds of Significance (cont.)

A project may have a significant impact if:

BIO-2 On sensitive plant communities, it would result in one or more of the following:

a. Any project activities that would temporarily or permanently remove, or directly impact the health of sensitive plant communities.

b. Indirect impacts within the watershed that would substantially adversely affect the associated sensitive plant communities, including any locally important plant communities, or a water or wetland.

BIO-3 On waters and/or wetlands, it would result in one or more of the following:

a. Activities that result in the degradation or removal of habitat, including, but not limited to:

- Pre-construction, construction, operational, maintenance, demolition, decommissioning activities; or
- Grading, excavation, or vegetation removal;

b. Placement of fill and/or other substrates, structures, or other materials that include any gaseous, liquid, solid, or thermal waste;

c. Any disturbance of the substratum such as dredging, mining, or extraction of any materials;

d. Substantial changes in the hydrological conditions associated with water quality, water quantity, water input, and/or intensity of use; velocity, siltation and/or sediment (erosion), volume of flow, or runoff rate; and/or the obstruction or diversion of water flow; release of pollutants into the environment; or alteration of ambient water temperatures; or

e. Disruptions to *water or wetland* ecosystems that would isolate or substantially interrupt the ecosystem function between the aquatic and the associated terrestrial habitats.

BIO-4 On a habitat connectivity corridor or the landscape connectivity for a native resident and/or migratory species and the habitat needed for reproduction, result in one or more of the following:

a. Substantially block, inhibit, impede, interfere, isolate, remove, and/or degrade a habitat connectivity corridor, the Critical Wildlife Passage Area (CWPA), or regional landscape linkage within the project parcel and/or neighboring parcels, if applicable.

b. Create physical barriers that substantially block and/or impede the movement, migration, or long- term landscape connectivity of the species.

c. Intimidate the species due to a substantial increase in human and/or domestic animal access, noise, light, waste, wildlife attractants, or other human-wildlife conflicts, and/or the introduction of pests or exotic species that would substantially prevent, interfere, or alter the movements, and/or threaten the use of habitat needed for reproduction and survival.

d. Substantially isolate or fragment species habitat and/or disrupt critical ecosystem processes such as, but not limited to, food webs or species reproduction.

6. Biological Resources (cont.)

Thresholds of Significance (cont.)

A project may have a significant impact if:

BIO-5 Conflict with one or more of the following plans, policies or ordinance provisions and result in a significant adverse environmental effect due to that conflict:

a. The biological resources protection policies or standards in the Ventura County General Plan, Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance, and/or Coastal Zoning Ordinance; and

b. An approved local, regional, or state habitat or community conservation plan.

Legend:

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Candidate species
- Coastal Initial Study Biological Assessment
- Conservation easement
- Conservation instrument
- Critical Wildlife Passage Area
- Core habitat area
- Development envelope
- Element occurrence
- Endangered, rare, or threatened species
- Environmentally sensitive habitat areas
- Fully protected species
- Habitat connectivity corridor
- Habitat patch
- Human-wildlife conflict
- Initial Study Biological Assessment
- Landscape connectivity
- Locally important plant communities
- Locally important species
- No net loss
- Qualified biologist
- Regional landscape linkage
- Sensitive biological resources
- Sensitive plant communities
- Special-status species
- Stepping stones
- Waters and/or wetlands

7. Hydrology

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on flood control facilities, drainage patterns, and regulatory watercourses. The impact analysis includes assessing the project's effects on water runoff, drainage, flood risk, and compliance with local floodplain management policies to mitigate adverse hydrological impacts.

This topic section is updated from the following section(s) from the existing ISAGs:

17a. Hydraulic Hazards – Non-FEMA
17b. Hydraulic Hazards – FEMA
31a. Flood Control Facilities/Watercourses – WPD
31b. Flood Control Facilities/Watercourses – Other Facilities

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

HYD-1 Substantially obstruct, impair, divert, impede, or alter the characteristics of the flow of water within flood control facilities and watercourses, Special Flood Hazard Areas, and regulatory channels both on- and off-site; or if it would result in substantial deposition of sediment and debris materials within existing channels and allied obstruction of flow, overflow of channels during design storm conditions, substantial increased runoff, or other adverse effects, resulting in exposure of adjacent property and the community to an increased risk of flood hazards.

HYD-2 Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site, substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site, 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.

HYD-3 a) Conflict with the Ventura County Watershed Protection District's Comprehensive Plan for Flood Control, applicable building design and construction codes, ordinances, and standards regulating flow to and from natural and human-made drainage channels and facilities; and b) result in a significant adverse environmental effect due to that conflict.

Legend:

Derived from standards specific to the County

Derived from Appendix G of CEQA

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

7. Hydrology (cont.)

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Base flood elevation
- Flood Insurance Rate Map
- Flood Insurance Study
- Regulatory Floodway
- Special Flood Hazard Area

8. Beaches and Coastal Sand Dunes

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on beaches and coastal sand dunes, which serve as natural buffers, critical habitats, and recreational resources. The impact analysis includes assessing potential disturbances to sand flow, erosion, and sensitive coastal habitats, as well as evaluating compliance with local and state coastal policies to mitigate adverse effects. The guidelines also include requirements for preparing a wave runup and/or coastal engineering report.

This topic section is updated from **Section 9, Coastal Beaches and Sand Dunes** in the existing ISAGs.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated threshold.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

BEA-1 Cause a substantial adverse change to a beach or coastal sand dune.

Legend:

Derived from standards specific to the County

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Coastal sand dunes
- Littoral cell
- Shoreline protective device

9. Water Resources

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on water resources, including groundwater and surface water. The impact analysis includes evaluating the use and supply of groundwater, the use and supply of surface water, and compliance with water quality objectives and standards.

This topic section is updated from the following section(s) from the existing ISAGs:

- **2a. Water Resources – Groundwater Quality**
- **2b. Water Resources – Groundwater Quantity**
- **2c. Water Resources – Surface Water Quantity**
- **2d. Water Resources – Surface Water Quality**

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

WAT-1 Directly or indirectly decrease the net supply of groundwater in an overdrafted groundwater basin by one acre-foot or more per year.

WAT-2 Result in net groundwater extraction in groundwater basins that are not overdrafted, and/or not hydrologically or hydrogeologically continuous with an overdrafted basin, that could cause the basin to become overdrafted.

WAT-3 Result in a net increase in groundwater extraction of one acre-foot or more per year from groundwater basins, hydrologic units, and/or hydrogeologic units that are not well documented or show evidence of overdraft.

WAT-4 Degrade groundwater quality, or cause it to exceed groundwater quality objectives set by the Basin Plans and/or applicable Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

WAT-5 Increase surface water consumptive use (demand) in a fully appropriated stream reach as designated by the State Water Resources Control Board or where unappropriated surface water is unavailable, or by diverting or dewatering downstream reaches that would result in an adverse impact to one or more of the beneficial uses listed in the Basin Plans.

WAT-6 Directly or indirectly impact surface water quality or stormwater quality, causing it to exceed surface water quality objectives, water quality standards, and/or water quality-based effluent limitations of an applicable Basin Plan, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems Permit, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit, or result in failure to obtain coverage or comply with Waste Discharge Requirements.

Legend:

Derived from standards specific to the County

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

9. Water Resources (cont.)

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Acre-foot
- Basin Plans
- Constituent
- Groundwater basin
- Hydrogeologic unit
- Hydrologic unit
- MS4 Permit
- NPDES Permit
- Overdrafted basin
- Waste Discharge Requirements
- Water quality-based effluent limitations
- Water quality objectives
- Water quality standards

10. Paleontological Resources

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on unique paleontological resources (fossilized remains) in Ventura County. The impact analysis guidelines include assessing the geologic formations in which paleontological resources may be located, determining the importance of paleontological resources, and steps for evaluating potential impacts to those resources.

This topic section is updated from **Section 7, Paleontological Resources** in the existing ISAGs.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated threshold.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

PAL-1 Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site.

Legend:

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Fossils
- Paleontological importance
- Paleontological resources

11. Mineral Resources

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on mineral resources, including aggregate materials and petroleum reserves. The impact analysis involves assessing the project's location relative to known resource areas, its compliance with land use protections for resource extraction, and its effects on the availability of these regional resources.

This topic section is updated from the following section(s) from the existing ISAGs:

3a. Mineral Resources – Aggregate

3b. Mineral Resources – Petroleum

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

MIN-1 Result in the loss of availability of a) a known aggregate resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state, or b) a locally important aggregate resource recovery site.

MIN-2 Hamper or preclude extraction of, or access to, locally important petroleum resources, or would otherwise result in the loss of availability of a known petroleum resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state.

Legend:

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs)
- MRZ-2

12. Aesthetics

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential aesthetic impacts, including effects on scenic resources and glare. The impact analysis may include evaluating a project's visibility from public viewing points, its alignment with scenic resource protection policies, and its potential to generate glare for motorists traveling along roadways in the Regional Road Network.

This topic section is updated from the following section(s) from the existing ISAGs:

6. Scenic Resources

22. Daytime Glare

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

AES-1

a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
b. Substantially damage scenic resources; or
c. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of a public viewing location of the site and its surroundings.

AES-2 Include materials that would produce disability glare or discomfort glare for motorists traveling along one or more roadways within the Regional Road Network, which exceeds the glare source to the median of the background ratio of 3:1 in a luminance histogram.

Legend:

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Disability glare
- Discomfort glare
- Luminance histogram
- Public viewing location
- Regional Road Network
- Scenic vista
- Viewshed

13. Historical Resources

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on the significance of historical resources and outlines recommended measures to mitigate adverse effects. The impact analysis guidelines provide a framework for determining the significance of the historical resource, as well as evaluating potential impacts and mitigating adverse effects on those resources.

This topic section is updated from **Section 8b, Cultural Resources – Historic** in the existing ISAGs.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated threshold.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

HIS-1 Result in a substantial adverse change in the mandatory significance, presumptive significance, or discretionary significance of a historical resource pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.

Legend:

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical term related to this topic section has been updated or incorporated:

- Cultural heritage site

14. Archaeological Resources

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on archaeological resources and human remains. The impact analysis guidelines include requirements for consultation with Native American tribes, assessing the likelihood of encountering archaeological artifacts or remains, determining the significance of the resource, and determining measures to avoid or reduce significant impacts, including the use of archaeological and/or Native American monitors during project activities.

This topic section is updated from **Section 8a, Cultural Resources – Archaeological** in the existing ISAGs.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

ARC-1 Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource.

ARC-2 Result in the disturbance of human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

Legend:

Derived from Appendix G of CEQA

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Archaeological resources
- Nonunique archaeological resource
- Unique archaeological resource

15. Tribal Cultural Resources

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on tribal cultural resources and ensuring compliance with tribal consultation requirements pursuant to Public Resources Code Sections 21080.1, 21080.3.1 and 21080.3.2 (commonly referred to as AB 52 consultation). The impact analysis may involve consulting with Native American tribes on the significance of tribal cultural resources, as well as incorporating measures to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts through meaningful consultation with Native American tribes.

This **new topic section** is being included to closely align with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated threshold.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

TRI-1 Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource.

Legend:

Derived from Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical term related to this topic section has been updated or incorporated:

- Tribal cultural resources

16. Land Use and Planning

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on land use, including whether the project would physically divide an established community or conflict with land use plans, policies, or regulations. The impact analysis includes assessing consistency with the Ventura County General Plan, Area Plans, and zoning ordinances to ensure consistency with community character and land use policy objectives.

This topic section is updated from **Section 25, Community Character** in the existing ISAGs.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

LAN-1 a) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or development standard adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, such as the Ventura County General Plan, the applicable Area Plan, and applicable zoning ordinance, and b) result in a significant adverse environmental effect due to that conflict.

LAN-2 Introduce physical development that would physically divide an established community or is substantially incompatible with existing land uses, architectural form or style, site design/layout, or density/intensity within the established community in which the project is located.

Legend:

Derived from Appendix G of CEQA

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Area Plan
- Community character
- Established community
- Existing Community Designated Area

17. Population and Housing

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on population and housing. The impact analysis includes assessing the project's potential to induce unplanned population growth and whether the project would displace people or housing.

This topic section is updated from **Section 26, Housing** in the existing ISAGs.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

POP-1 Induce substantial unplanned population growth either directly or indirectly.

POP-2 Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Legend:

Derived from Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Dwelling unit
- Household
- Lower income
- Moderate income

18. Recreation

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on recreation facilities, including local parks, regional parks, and recreational trails. The impact analysis includes assessing whether the project would contribute to the physical deterioration of existing facilities, or impede or obstruct access to, use of, existing or future development of planned recreational resources. The guidelines also include recommendations for mitigating potentially significant impacts on recreational facilities.

This topic section is updated from **Section 35, Recreation Facilities** in the existing ISAGs.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated threshold.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

REC-1 Result in substantial physical deterioration due to increased use of existing recreation facilities, or otherwise remove, impede, or obstruct the use of existing recreation facilities or future development of recreation facilities.

Legend:

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

This section does not include any updates to technical terms.

19. Aviation Hazards

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts related to aviation hazards in areas near airports and airstrips. The impact analysis includes assessing land use compatibility, noise exposure levels, and safety hazards consistent with guidance and standards provided in the Ventura County Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Ventura County General Plan.

This topic section is updated from **Section 19, Aviation Hazards** in the existing ISAGs.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated threshold.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

AVI-1 Result in a potentially incompatible land use within the Airport Area of Influence of an airport, which would expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels or substantial safety hazards related to airport operations.

Legend:

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Airport Area of Influence
- Airport Land Use Commission
- Community Noise Equivalent Level

20. Noise and Vibration

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential noise and vibration impacts, including construction and operational noise levels as well as ground-borne vibrations. The impact analysis includes assessing compliance with the Ventura County Noise and Vibration Assessment Guidelines (which has been updated as part of this project) and the Federal Transit Administration's Transit Noise and Vibration Assessment Manual, to determine the level of impact and mitigate adverse effects on sensitive noise and vibration uses.

This topic section is updated from **Section 21, Noise and Vibration** in the existing ISAGs.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

NOI-1 Generate an increase in ambient noise levels in excess of the noise standards established in the Ventura County Noise and Vibration Assessment Guidelines, General Plan, Area Plan, and Zoning Ordinance applicable to the project.

NOI-2 Generate construction or other vibration in excess of vibration standards established in the Ventura County Noise and Vibration Assessment Guidelines.

Legend:

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Community Noise Equivalent Level
- Decibel (dB)
- Noise contours
- Noise sensitive uses
- Transit use
- Vibration sensitive uses
  - Vibration sensitive use category 1 (high sensitivity)
  - Vibration sensitive use category 2 (residential)
  - Vibration sensitive use category 3 (institutional)

21. Geological Hazards

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts related to geological hazards, including fault rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, subsidence, expansive soils, and tsunami or seiche risks. The impact analysis includes assessing the project's location relative to hazard zones, exposure risks to such hazards, compliance with geological safety standards, and determining measures to mitigate potentially significant exposure risks to public safety and property.

This topic section is updated from the following section(s) from the existing ISAGs:

10. Fault rupture
11. Ground Shaking
12. Liquefaction
13. Seiche and Tsunami Hazards
14. Landslides/Mudslides
15. Expansive Soils
16. Subsidence

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

GEO-1 Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, strong seismic ground shaking, or seismic-related ground failure.

GEO-2 Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable or cause the geologic unit or soil to become unstable as a result of the project, and directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving on- or off-site liquefaction, lateral spreading, landslide/debris flow, subsidence, or collapse.

GEO-3 Cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving soil expansion if the project is located within a soils expansive hazard zone or where soils with an expansion index greater than 130 are present.

GEO-4 Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving seiche hazard if the project is located within 20 feet of vertical elevation from an enclosed body of water, such as a lake or reservoir or within a tsunami inundation hazard zone.

Legend:

Derived from Appendix G of CEQA

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Technical terms related to this section have been incorporated and explained throughout the discussions in this section.

22. Wildfire Hazards

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts related to wildfire hazards in areas classified as Hazardous Fire Areas, which includes designated Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The impact analysis includes assessing wildfire risks due to terrain, vegetation, infrastructure requirements, and evacuation routes, as well as compliance with local and state fire protection regulations to mitigate potentially significant wildfire risks.

This topic section is updated from **Section 18, Fire Hazards** in the existing ISAGs.

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

If located in or adjacent to a Hazardous Fire Area, a project may have a significant impact if it would:

WIL-1 Exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

WIL-2 Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildfire, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

WIL-3 Require the installation or maintenance of infrastructure to accommodate the project (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in substantial temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.

WIL-4 Substantially impair or obstruct implementation of the Ventura County Emergency Operations Plan.

WIL-5 Substantially impair or obstruct primary or alternative evacuation routes.

Legend:

Derived from standards specific to the County

Derived from Appendix G of CEQA

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Fire hazard
- Fire Hazard Severity Zones
- Fire Protection Plan
- Hazardous Fire Areas

23. Hazardous Materials and Waste

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts related to hazardous materials and hazardous waste. The impact analysis includes assessing the routine transport, use, storage, or disposal of hazardous substances, potential accidental releases, proximity to schools, and whether the project site is listed as a hazardous materials site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

This topic section is updated from the following section(s) from the existing ISAGs:

20a. Hazardous Materials/Waste – Materials

20b. Hazardous Materials/Waste – Waste

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

HAZ-1 Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

HAZ-2 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.

HAZ-3 Generate substantial hazardous emissions or handle substantial amounts of hazardous or acutely hazardous waste, materials, or substances within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.

HAZ-4 Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

Legend:

Derived from Appendix G of CEQA

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Acutely hazardous waste
- Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA)
- Hazardous Materials Business Plan
- Risk Management Plan
- Underground storage tanks

24. Public Services

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on public services, including law enforcement, fire protection, emergency services, schools, and libraries. The impact analysis includes assessing response times, service capacity, and the potential need for new or expanded facilities to maintain acceptable service levels while minimizing environmental effects.

This topic section is updated from the following section(s) from the existing ISAGs:

- **32. Law Enforcement/Emergency Services**
- **33a. Fire Protection – Distance/Response Time**
- **33b. Fire Protection – Personnel/Equipment/Facilities**
- **34a. Education – Schools**
- **34a. Education – Libraries**

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated threshold.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

PUB-1 Substantially interfere with law enforcement/emergency services, fire protection, schools, libraries, or other public facilities; or result in the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain public services, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.

Legend:

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

This section does not include any updates to technical terms.

25. Utilities and Service Systems

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential impacts on utilities and service systems, including water supply, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, solid waste management, and pipelines. The impact analysis includes assessing demand and supply of resources and services, infrastructure capacity, consistency with state and local regulations, and the potential need for expanded facilities to ensure adequate service while minimizing environmental effects.

This topic section is updated from the following section(s) from the existing ISAGs:

2c. Water Resources – Surface Water Quantity

28a. Water Supply – Quality

28b. Water Supply – Quantity

28c. Water Supply – Fire Flow

29a. Waste Treatment/Disposal – Individual Sewage Disposal Systems

29b. Waste Treatment/Disposal – Sewage Collection/Treatment Facilities

29c. Waste Treatment/Disposal – Solid Waste Management

29d. Waste Treatment/Disposal – Solid Waste Facilities

30. Utilities

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

UTI-1 a. Conflict with applicable state or local requirements related to safe drinking water, water supply, and fire flow, and

b. Result in a significant adverse environmental effect due to that conflict.

UTI-2 It cannot be determined that the project would have sufficient water supplies during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry water years for a 20-year projection to serve the project.

25. Utilities and Service Systems (cont.)

Thresholds of Significance (cont.)

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

UTI-3
a. Conflict with applicable state or local requirements related to wastewater treatment and/or sewage collection/treatment, and result in a significant adverse environmental effect due to that conflict;
b. Increase demand to a level that would exceed a wastewater/sewer service provider's capacity; or
c. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment or sewage facilities, the construction or relocation of which would cause significant environmental effects.

UTI-4
a. Conflict with applicable state or local regulations related to solid waste, including generating solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure that would reduce the local infrastructure's useful life to less than 15 years, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals; and
b. Result in a significant adverse environmental effect due to that conflict.

UTI-5 Cause a substantial disruption or re-routing of an existing utility facility, or substantially increases demand to a level that would require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, telecommunications, or other types of utility facilities, which would cause significant environmental effects.

UTI-6 Substantially interfere with, compromise the integrity, or affect the operation of an existing pipeline that is currently in operation.

Legend:

Derived from standards specific to the County

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Basin Plans
- Individual water system
- Local Enforcement Agency
- Maximum contaminant level
- Onsite wastewater treatment system
- Public water system
- State small water system
- Water Availability Letter
- Water purveyor

26. Transportation

Overview

This section provides guidelines for evaluating a project's potential transportation impacts, including vehicle miles traveled (VMT), roadway design and safety, impacts on multimodal facilities, and emergency access. The impact analysis includes screening projects using VMT screening criteria, assessing compliance with VMT thresholds, roadway standards, and fire safety regulations to ensure consistency with state and local transportation policies.

This topic section is updated from the following Transportation and Circulation sections from the existing ISAGs:

27(a1). Roads and Highways - Level of Service

27(a2). Roads and Highways - Safety and Design of Public Roads

27(a3). Roads & Highways – Safety & Design of Private Access

27(a4). Roads & Highways – Tactical Access

27b. Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities

27c. Bus Transit

27d. Railroads

27e. Airports

27g. Pipelines

Thresholds of Significance

Impact analysis guidelines (formerly referred to as "Methodology") are provided accordingly for the following updated thresholds.

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

TRA-1 a. Residential uses: exceed a VMT per capita threshold of 15 percent below baseline VMT per capita levels.

b. Office and industrial uses: exceed a VMT per employee threshold of 15 percent below baseline VMT per employee levels.

c. Retail uses: result in a net increase in total VMT based on model data found in the Ventura County Transportation Model (VCTM).

d. Mixed uses: exceed a VMT threshold of 15 percent below baseline VMT per capita or VMT per employee levels.

e. Agricultural uses: result in a net increase in regional (unincorporated area) total VMT based on model data found in the VCTM.

f. Roadway improvement projects: result in a net increase in total VMT based on model data found in the VCTM.

TRA-2 Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).

26. Transportation (cont.)

Thresholds of Significance (cont.)

A project may have a significant impact if it would:

TRA-3 a) Conflict with the Ventura County Fire Protection District Access Ordinance, Ventura County Road Standards, and/or State Fire Safe Regulations addressing the circulation system, including public transit, roadway, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities; and b) result in a significant adverse environmental effect due to that conflict.

TRA-4 Result in substantial adverse physical barriers to the circulation system, including public transit, pedestrian, or bicycle facilities, substantially increase demand in the use of such facilities, or substantially decrease the performance or safety of such facilities.

TRA-5 Result in a substantial adverse physical interference with an existing railroad's facilities or operations.

TRA-6 Result in inadequate access during an emergency.

Legend:

Derived from standards specific to the County

Derived from Appendix G of CEQA

Derived from a combination of specific County standards and Appendix G of CEQA

Related Technical Terms

The following technical terms related to this topic section have been updated or incorporated:

- Affordable housing
- Low vehicle miles traveled area
- Traffic analysis zone
- Traffic Impact Study
- Ventura County Transportation Model
- Vehicle miles traveled