

## 4.11 Recreation

This section describes the existing recreation conditions of the project site and vicinity, identifies associated regulatory requirements, evaluates potential project and cumulative impacts, and identifies mitigation measures for any significant or potentially significant impacts related to implementation of the of the Santa Cruz Water Rights Project (Proposed Project).

A summary of the comments received during the scoping period for this environmental impact report (EIR) is provided in Table 2-1 in Chapter 2, Introduction, and a complete list of comments is provided in Appendix A. A comment related to recreation was received from the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). Issues identified in public comments related to potentially significant effects on the environment according to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and/or issues raised by responsible and trustee agencies are identified and addressed in this EIR.

### 4.11.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.11.1.1 Study Area

The study area for the evaluation of impacts on recreation includes the same boundary used for the biological study area as described in Section 4.3, Biological Resources, which includes the expanded place of use boundary, all of the City of Santa Cruz's (City's) water system infrastructure, surface water and groundwater sources, and proposed project and programmatic infrastructure component sites associated with the Proposed Project. Figure 4.11-1 shows the location of all recreation areas and parks located in immediate proximity to the surface water sources used by the City, including the San Lorenzo River, Newell Creek and Loch Lomond Reservoir, and North Coast streams. Section 4.11.1.2, Regional and Project Setting, provides a description of recreation areas and parks that are located along the City's surface water sources or in the immediate vicinity (within 0.25 miles) of project and programmatic infrastructure component sites. Other recreation areas and parks elsewhere in the County are not described.

#### 4.11.1.2 Regional and Project Setting

##### Parks and Recreation Areas near the City's Surface Water Sources

**Loch Lomond Recreation Area.** Loch Lomond Reservoir is located in the Santa Cruz Mountains and owned and operated by the City. Loch Lomond Recreation Area is approximately 355 acres, stretches 3 miles long, and is located at 100 Loch Lomond Way near Ben Lomond, California, in unincorporated Santa Cruz County (see Figure 4.11-2). The main entrance on Loch Lomond Way provides access to parking areas, picnic areas, a park store, and boat dock and launch ramp area.

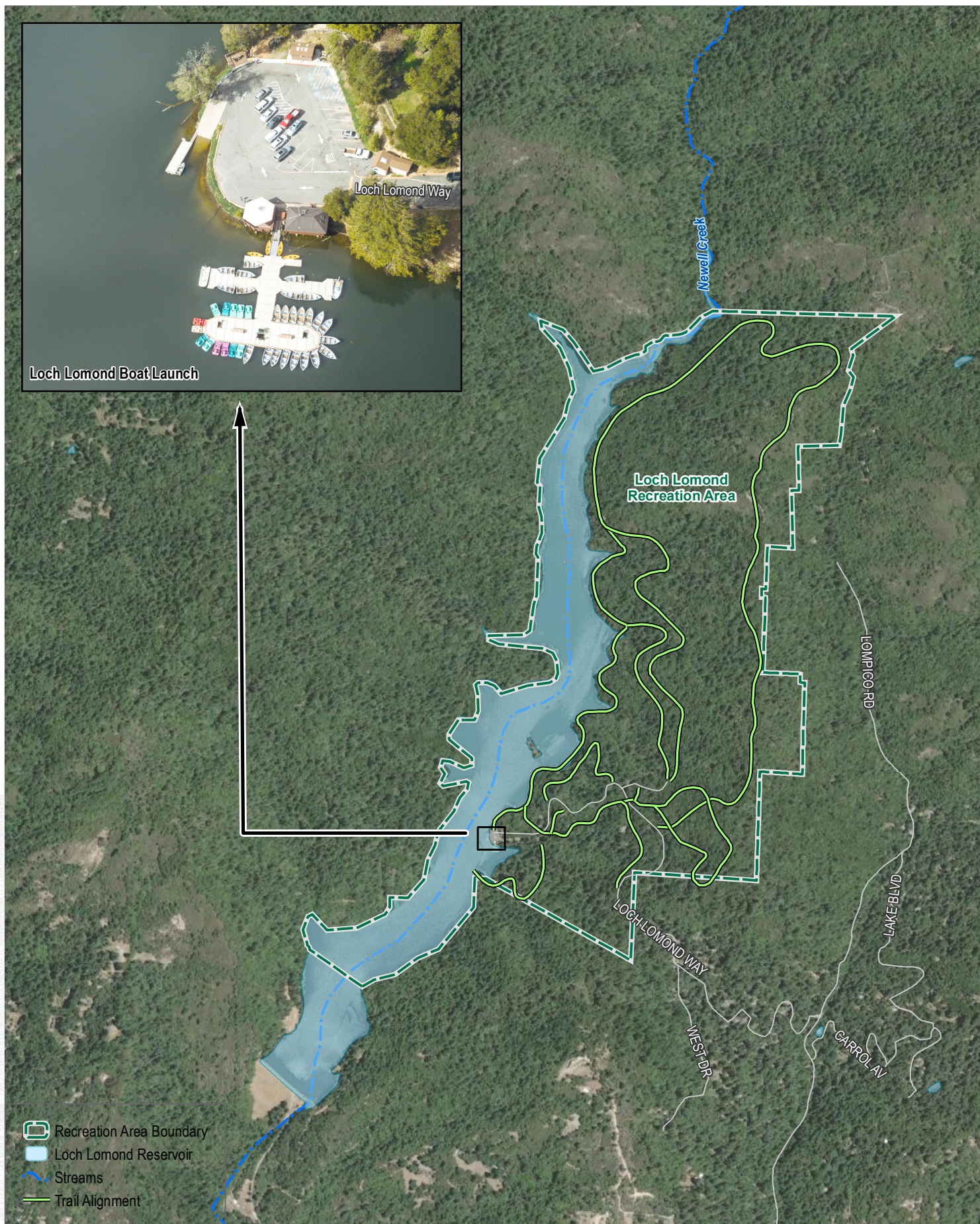
Loch Lomond Reservoir's primary function is water storage for Santa Cruz residents. The reservoir exists above the Newell Creek Dam, which spans across Newell Creek; a major tributary of the San Lorenzo River. The Newell Creek Dam holds water from the Newell Creek watershed, which impounds the Loch Lomond Reservoir. Newell Creek directly supports the recreation activities at the reservoir, including boating and fishing, and flows from near Bear Creek Road at the Summit southerly to its junction with the San Lorenzo River near Highland County Park (City of Santa Cruz 2020d).



SOURCE: ESRI 2020, City of Santa Cruz 2020

FIGURE 4.11-1





SOURCE: ESRI 2020, City of Santa Cruz 2020



The Loch Lomond Recreation Area is open from March to September for limited recreational use, which includes boat rentals, picnicking, fishing, hiking, and natural resource interpretive programs. Recreational use of the reservoir is prohibited during the winter (City of Santa Cruz 2013). There are seven main picnic areas include located on the hillside overlooking the reservoir. Smaller picnic areas are located along the eastern shoreline and on a small island. Developed restrooms and portable toilets are located near the picnic areas. No campground facilities are provided at the recreation area. Due to concerns about contamination of the City's water supply in the reservoir, swimming and wading are prohibited and private boat launching is restricted to only allow boats that are stored at the Loch Lomond Recreation Area. Space is limited to approximately 100 boats (City of Santa Cruz 2020a); however, most of the boats at the recreation area are paddle and row boats available for rent.

The reservoir supports a warm water fishery primarily composed of introduced non-native game species including largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), green sunfish (*Lepomis cyanellus*), channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*), and bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*) (City of Santa Cruz 2013). In addition, one other non-native species, golden shiner (*Notemigonus crysoleucas*) and three native species, Sacramento sucker (*Catostomus occidentalis*), prickly sculpin (*Cottus asper*) and rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) are known to occur in the reservoir, though golden shiner and Sacramento sucker have not been observed since 1992. CDFW has planted hatchery-raised rainbow trout in Loch Lomond as part of an annual stocking program, with stocking occurring in Loch Lomond as recently as March and April 2021 (CDFW 2021). Therefore, all rainbow trout currently within the reservoir are assumed to be hatchery-raised fish.

When full, Loch Lomond Reservoir provides 180 surface acres of water that are accessible by rental paddle boats and row boats, and private boats that are stored at Loch Lomond (City of Santa Cruz 2013). Loch Lomond Reservoir is kept as full as possible as it serves as the primary water supply during drought conditions (City of Santa Cruz 2013). However, the water surface elevation in the reservoir is highly variable and is influenced by natural inflow from Newell Creek, pumping to the Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant, pumping from the Felton Diversion, evapotranspiration, and instream flow releases for fisheries downstream of the dam (City of Santa Cruz 2013). While the reservoir is typically open to the public from March 1 to mid-October, boats and related infrastructure can only operate safely throughout the full recreational season when the lake level is approximately 564 feet above mean sea level (amsl) or higher at the beginning of the season, which allows for current marina infrastructure to function safely (City of Santa Cruz 2014). When the lake level is below approximately 564 feet amsl at the beginning of the season (March 1) the City either, depending on actual lake levels, does not allow for boating at all that season or discontinues boating mid-season when boat launching is no longer possible.

Table 4.11-1 indicates the percentage of days at the reservoir that fall below approximately 564 feet amsl, based on an average of all years in the historic hydrologic record (1936 to 2015). During the recreational use period from March 1 to mid-October, on average there are approximately 12% of days under existing conditions where a full recreational season of boating would not occur because lake levels fall below approximately 564 feet amsl in March, at the beginning of the season.



**Table 4.11-1. Percentage of Days that Loch Lomond Reservoir Falls Below Approximately 564 Feet (amsl)**

Month	2018 Existing Conditions
Jan	22.2%
Feb	15.9%
Mar	12.0%
Apr	10.9%
May	9.5%
Jun	10.8%
Jul	11.6%
Aug	14.0%
Sep	21.8%
Oct	29.0%
Nov	30.4%
Dec	26.1%

**Source:** Gary Fiske and Associates 2021.

**Note:** amsl = above mean sea level.

**Highlands Park.** Highlands Park is owned and operated by the Santa Cruz County Department of Park, Open Space, and Cultural Services. The park is 26 acres and is located at 8500 Highway 9 (State Route 9), Ben Lomond, California, in unincorporated Santa Cruz County (see Figure 4.11-1). The park is located just south of the confluence of the San Lorenzo River<sup>1</sup> and Newell Creek. The park features softball and baseball fields, soccer field, skate park, volleyball court, tennis courts, group picnic areas and a house used for events, such as weddings, parties, etc. (County of Santa Cruz 2020b). The park also provides informal access to the San Lorenzo River. Fishing is permitted with a license, but no recreational facilities are located along the river's edge.

**Felton Covered Bridge Park.** The Felton Covered Bridge Park is owned and operated by the County of Santa Cruz's Department of Parks, Open Space, and Cultural Services. The park is located at on Graham Hill Road at the intersections of Mount Hermon Road, in Felton. The park features a covered wooden bridge, picnic areas, playground and grassy areas (County of Santa Cruz 2020a). The park also provides informal access to the San Lorenzo River. Fishing is permitted with a license, but no recreational facilities are located along the river's edge.

**Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park.** Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park is owned and operated by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park is located in the Santa Cruz Mountains, on 101 North Big Trees Road, Felton, California. Henry Cowell's primary attraction for visitors is the 40-acre grove of old-growth redwoods. Visitors can enjoy hiking, horseback riding, bicycling, picnicking, swimming, and camping on more than 4,600 acres of forested and open land. The park also provides informal access to and along the San Lorenzo River, including to a popular swimming hole called the Garden of Eden (California Department of Parks and Recreation 2020a).

**Pogonip.** Pogonip is part of the City of Santa Cruz' open space properties, located at 333 Golf Club Drive, and is operated by the City's Parks and Recreation Department. Pogonip has approximately 8 miles of hiking trails and

<sup>1</sup> The San Lorenzo River is 29 miles long and the watershed is approximately 137 square miles and includes the cities of Santa Cruz and Scotts Valley and the communities of Boulder Creek, Ben Lomond, and Felton (City of Santa Cruz 2020g).



3 miles of multi-use (hiking, biking and horseback riding) trails. In the northernmost portion of Pogonip, a multi-use trail provides a connection between Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, Pogonip, and the upper UCSC campus. Along the eastern boundary of Pogonip is the Emma McCrary Trail, which is accessed from Golf Club Drive. There is also an entrance on State Route 9 to the Sycamore Grove, which is located adjacent to the San Lorenzo River (City of Santa Cruz 2020e).

**San Lorenzo Park.** The San Lorenzo Park is owned and operated by the City of Santa Cruz. The park is located at 137 Dakota Street, in the City of Santa Cruz, California. The park is approximately 11 acres and features a duck pond, 9-hole disc golf course, large playground, artificial-turf lawn bowling green, and an area called the benchlands greenbelt. The park provides informal access to the San Lorenzo River and a pedestrian bridge connects the park to downtown and Pacific Avenue (City of Santa Cruz 2020f), and to the River Walk, described below.

**Santa Cruz Riverwalk.** The Santa Cruz Riverwalk is a multi-use pedestrian and bicycle pathway on the top of the San Lorenzo River levee that is maintained by the City of Santa Cruz. The Riverwalk runs from just the north of the State Route 1 Bridge over the river at the Tannery Arts Center and continues south through downtown Santa Cruz ending at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. Features of the Riverwalk include mile markers, exercise equipment, educational interpretive signage, and park benches (City of Santa Cruz 2020h). As the Riverwalk is located on the levee, it does not provide direct access to the river and does not provide recreational facilities along the river's edge.

**Ken Wormhoudt Skate Park at Mike Fox Park.** The Ken Wormhoudt Skate Park at Mike Fox Park is owned and operated by the City of Santa Cruz. The park is located at 225 San Lorenzo Boulevard at Riverside Avenue adjacent to the Santa Cruz Riverwalk. The 1.25-acre park includes an approximate 15,000-square foot skate park, pickleball courts and basketball courts (City of Santa Cruz 2020c). The skate park is fenced and does not provide direct access to the river and does not provide recreational facilities along the river's edge.

**Main Beach.** Main Beach, owned and operated by the City of Santa Cruz, is located west of the San Lorenzo River mouth and is approximately 26 acres. Main Beach offers public bathrooms, lifeguard services, surf rentals, volleyball courts, and close proximity to Santa Cruz Boardwalk, restaurants, hotels, Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf, and public transit. Beach activities include surfing, sunbathing, swimming, various water activities, and walking distance to Santa Cruz Wharf, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, and West Cliff walking trail (City of Santa Cruz 2020b).

**North Coast Beaches.** The streams that feed into the City's North Coast system include Laguna Creek, Liddell Spring, and Majors Creek. Of these streams, Laguna Creek flows through the Cotoni-Coast Dairies unit of the California Coastal National Monument and Coast Dairies State Park/Laguna Creek Beach; Liddell Spring flows through Bonny Doon Beach; and Majors Creek flows through Red, White, and Blue Beach. Recreational access along the North Coast streams is likely focused near these beaches, all of which are located in the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County.

#### Parks and Recreation Areas near Infrastructure Component Sites

There are no designated parks and recreation areas located on the proposed project and programmatic infrastructure component sites. While the Felton Diversion and Tait Diversion and Coast Pump Station are located on the banks of the San Lorenzo River, they are not located in a designated park or recreation area. New Brighton State Beach is located immediately adjacent to a proposed McGregor Drive pump station upgrade site. New Brighton State Beach is owned and operated by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. The park is located on Park Avenue off State Route 1 in Capitola, California. New Brighton State Beach is a 93-acre beach that offers beach access, fishing, bonfires, and camping (California Department of Parks and Recreation 2020b).



## 4.11.2 Regulatory Framework

### 4.11.2.1 Federal

#### Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act (CWA) is aimed at restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the nation's waters (see Section 4.3, Biological Resources for additional information). The act requires that due regard be given to improvements necessary to conserve waters for public water supplies, propagation of fish and aquatic life, agricultural and industrial uses and recreational purposes, including recreation in and on the water. Within the study area evaluated, recreational contact and non-contact beneficial uses are designated for the San Lorenzo River, Newell Creek, Loch Lomond Reservoir and the North Coast streams (see Section 4.11.2.2, State).

#### National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was established in 1968 (16 United States Code 1271 et seq.). Under this system, rivers possessing “outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values” may be designated as wild, scenic, or recreational. However, the San Lorenzo River, Newell Creek and the North Coast streams are not designated rivers under this system.

#### Cotoni-Coast Dairies California Coastal National Monument Resource Management Plan Amendment

The Cotoni-Coast Dairies California Coastal National Monument Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA) was prepared by the BLM in consultation with various government agencies and organizations. The RMPA specifies goals and objectives for natural and cultural resource protection on the Cotoni-Coast Dairies property, as well as a range of allowable uses for recreation, livestock grazing, and vegetation management actions, including project design features that would be applied to protect resources. The decisions resulting from this planning effort would affect approximately 5,800 acres of federal lands (surface-only) managed by the BLM Central Coast Field Office in Santa Cruz County. The RMPA also describes implementation-level decisions regarding development of public parking facilities and recreational trails for visitor use and enjoyment on the north coast of Santa Cruz County. The California Coastal Commission approved the RMPA in December 2020.

### 4.11.2.2 State

#### Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1969 is California’s statutory authority for the protection of water quality. Under the Act, the State must adopt water quality policies, plans, and objectives that protect the State’s waters for the use and enjoyment of the people. The Act sets forth the obligations of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) to adopt and periodically update water quality control plans for all the waters of an area. The water quality control plan is defined as having three components: beneficial uses which are to be protected, water quality objectives which protect those uses, and an implementation plan which accomplishes those objectives.

The September 2017 Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin (Basin Plan) is the Central Coast RWQCB’s current master water quality control planning document. The Basin Plan establishes beneficial uses, and



water quality objectives for each of the water bodies in the Central Coast Region. As indicated in Section 4.8, Hydrology and Water Quality, the following beneficial uses related to recreation apply to the San Lorenzo River, Newell Creek, Loch Lomond Reservoir and the North Coast streams: water contact recreation; non-contact water recreation; and commercial and sport fishing. However, water contact recreation is not permitted at the Loch Lomond Recreational Area. Loch Lomond Reservoir also has the beneficial use of navigation.

#### State Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

The California Legislature passed the State Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 1972 (Public Resources Code Section 5093.50 et seq.). The Legislature declared that it was the state's intent that "certain rivers which possess extraordinary scenic, recreation, fishery, or wildlife values shall be preserved in their free-flowing state, together with their immediate environments, for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the state." However, the San Lorenzo River, Newell Creek, and the North Coast streams are not designated rivers under this system.

#### 4.11.2.3 Local

The study area for the Proposed Project includes the jurisdictions of the City of Santa Cruz, City of Capitola, City of Scotts Valley, and County of Santa Cruz. The general plans and, where relevant, the local coastal programs of these jurisdictions include policies and programs related to parks and recreation areas. Section 4.9, Land Use, Agriculture and Forestry, and Mineral Resources, discusses applicable general plan and local coastal program policies related to parks and recreation areas, as relevant to the Proposed Project.

### 4.11.3 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section contains the evaluation of potential environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Project related to recreation. The section identifies the standards of significance used in evaluating the impacts, describes the methods used in conducting the analysis, and evaluates the Proposed Project's impacts and contribution to significant cumulative impacts, if any are identified.

#### 4.11.3.1 Standards of Significance

The standards of significance used to evaluate the impacts of the Proposed Project related to recreation are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City of Santa Cruz CEQA Guidelines, as listed below. A significant impact would occur if the Proposed Project would:

- A. Conflict with established recreational uses of the area.
- B. 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.
- C. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

#### 4.11.3.2 Analytical Methods

This section evaluates the potential recreation impacts associated with construction and operation of the Proposed Project. The analysis of potential impacts addresses the various project and programmatic components listed in Table 4.11-2, which are described in detail in Chapter 3, Project Description.

Table 4.11-2. Project and Programmatic Components

Proposed Project Components	Project Components	Programmatic Components
<b>WATER RIGHTS MODIFICATIONS</b>		
Place of Use	✓	
Points of Diversion	✓	
Underground Storage and Purpose of Use	✓	
Method of Diversion	✓	
Extension of Time	✓	
Bypass Requirement (Agreed Flows)	✓	
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE COMPONENTS</b>		
<b><i>Water Supply Augmentation</i></b>		
Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR)		✓
New ASR Facilities at Unidentified Locations		✓
Beltz ASR Facilities at Existing Beltz Well Facilities	✓	
Water Transfers and Exchanges and Intertie Improvements		✓
<b><i>Surface Water Diversion Improvements</i></b>		
Felton Diversion Fish Passage Improvements		✓
Tait Diversion and Coast Pump Station Improvements		✓

To address Significance Standard A, the analysis considers potential effects of the Proposed Project on formal and informal recreation along the City's surface water sources including Loch Lomond Reservoir, Newell Creek, San Lorenzo River, and the North Coast streams. This analysis is based on hydrologic and water supply modeling performed for the Proposed Project (see Appendix D) and presented in this section in a tabular format (see Table 4.11-1 and Table 4.11-3). If the Proposed Project would result in decreasing water levels that would reduce boating or other recreational opportunities, this would be considered a conflict with established recreational uses along the City's surface water sources and a significant impact would be identified for Significance Standard A.

To address Significance Standards B and C, the evaluation also considers whether new staff associated with the Proposed Project could result in an increase in the demand for park and recreation areas such that substantial physical deterioration of such facilities would occur or be accelerated or such that construction or expansion of recreational or park facilities would be required. As indicated in Chapter 3, Project Description, it is anticipated that up to three new staff would be needed to operate under Proposed Project conditions: one for the Agreed Flows implementation and two for the new Santa Cruz aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) facilities maintenance.

#### Application of Relevant Standard Practices

The Proposed Project does not include any standard operational or construction practices that are relevant to recreation.



### 4.11.3.3 Project Impact Analysis

#### Areas of No Impact

The Proposed Project includes water rights modifications and infrastructure components. The Proposed Project does not include new recreational or park facilities and would not **require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities (Significance Standard C)**, given the nominal staff increase that would result from Proposed Project implementation. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have no impact related to construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

#### Impacts

This section provides a detailed evaluation of recreation impacts associated with the Proposed Project.

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**Impact REC-1: Conflicts with Existing Recreational Uses (Significance Standard A).** Operation of the Proposed Project would not change or conflict with existing recreational uses. *(Beneficial)*

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Potential changes to recreational uses due to Proposed Project implementation at Loch Lomond Reservoir and along the City's flowing surface water sources, including Newell Creek, San Lorenzo River and the North Coast streams, are described below, based on hydrologic and water supply modeling performed for the Proposed Project in Appendix D and provided in this section in a tabular format.

#### Loch Lomond Reservoir/Loch Lomond Recreation Area

As indicated in Section 4.11.1.2, Regional and Project Setting, Loch Lomond Reservoir is kept as full as possible as it serves as the primary water supply during drought conditions. Under existing conditions, the water surface elevation in the reservoir is highly variable and is influenced by natural inflow from Newell Creek, pumping to the Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant, pumping from the Felton Diversion, evapotranspiration, and instream flow releases for fisheries downstream of the dam. Under Proposed Project conditions with the implementation of all project and programmatic components, additional variables would apply. In particular, with the implementation of ASR facilities in the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Basin and the Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin, the City would have additional storage that could be used during dry and drought conditions, which would reduce the City's reliance on Loch Lomond Reservoir.

As indicated in Section 4.11.1.2, Regional and Project Setting, boats and related infrastructure can only operate safely throughout the full recreational season (March 1 to mid-October) when the lake level is approximately 564 feet amsl or higher at the beginning of the season, which allows for current marina infrastructure to function safely. When the lake level is below approximately 564 feet amsl at the beginning of the season (March 1) the City either, depending on actual lake levels, does not allow for boating at all that season or discontinues boating mid-season when boat launching is no longer possible. Table 4.11-3 compares the percentage of days in each calendar month at the reservoir that fall below approximately 564 feet amsl under existing and Proposed Project conditions, based on an average for each of those months in all years in the historic hydrologic record (1936 to 2015). During the recreational use period from March 1 to mid-October, on average there are approximately 12% of days under existing conditions where a full season of boating and related operations do not occur because lake levels fall below approximately 564 feet amsl in March, at the beginning of the season. In comparison, under Proposed Project conditions, on average there would be approximately 4.5% of days where a full season of boating and related operations would not occur because lake levels fall below approximately 564 feet amsl in March, an improvement

over existing conditions. Given that lake levels would improve, the Proposed Project would also not degrade the recreational experience of boaters and other recreationalists at the Loch Lomond Recreation Area, such as might occur with aesthetic impacts at the reservoir. Such aesthetic impacts could occur with the Proposed Project if a drop in lake levels and associated appearance of a “bath tub ring” were to result. (A bath tub ring is an area of unvegetated land adjacent to a lake or reservoir that can occur with a substantial decrease in lake levels and is most commonly associated with drought conditions.)

Therefore, the Proposed Project would have a beneficial effect on boating in Loch Lomond Reservoir, given that it would improve conditions for boating compared to existing conditions by increasing lake levels, which would allow for a full season of boating more frequently. Given this beneficial effect, the Proposed Project would not conflict with existing recreational uses at Loch Lomond Reservoir.

**Table 4.11-3. Percentage of Days that Loch Lomond Reservoir Falls Below Approximately 564 Feet (amsl)**

Month	2018 Existing Conditions	Proposed Project Conditions
Jan	22.2%	9.4%
Feb	15.9%	6.6%
Mar	12.0%	4.5%
Apr	10.9%	2.7%
May	9.5%	3.5%
Jun	10.8%	4.6%
Jul	11.6%	7.1%
Aug	14.0%	8.9%
Sep	21.8%	11.9%
Oct	29.0%	14.8%
Nov	30.4%	13.7%
Dec	26.1%	11.6%

**Source:** Gary Fiske and Associates 2021.

**Note:** amsl = above mean sea level.

#### Newell Creek, San Lorenzo River and the North Coast Streams

As indicated in Section 4.11.1.2, Regional and Project Setting, there is some known informal access and related recreation along Newell Creek, at or near Loch Lomond Reservoir; along the San Lorenzo River, at various park locations; and at North Coast streams, where the streams flow through North Coast beaches (see Figure 4.11-1 and Figure 4.11-2). As indicated in Section 4.8, Hydrology and Water Quality, based on an average of all years in the historical record (1936 to 2015), the difference in residual flows below the City’s points of diversion would be minimal relative to 2018 baseline conditions, with the exception of critical year residual flows in Newell Creek. In that case, the Proposed Project would result in an increase in residual flows of approximately 1 cfs relative to the baseline. Therefore, the changes in residual flows with the Proposed Project would have no impact on informal access and recreational uses along Newell Creek, San Lorenzo River, and the North Coast Streams.



### Mitigation Measures

As described above, the Proposed Project would not result in significant impacts related to conflicts with existing recreational uses, and therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

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**Impact REC-2: Increased Use of Existing Parks or Recreational Facilities (Significance Standard B).** Operation of the Proposed Project would not increase the use of parks or recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated. *(Less than Significant)*

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The Proposed Project includes water rights modifications and project and programmatic infrastructure components, as shown in Table 4.11-2. As indicated in Chapter 3, Project Description, it is anticipated that up to three new staff would be needed to operate under Proposed Project conditions: one for the Agreed Flows implementation and two for the new ASR facilities maintenance. These staff could be hired from within the County, or from outside the region, which would require relocation. Even if it is conservatively assumed that the three new staff would relocate from outside the area, this population increase is nominal and would not be expected to increase the use of parks or recreational facilities in the County such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

### Mitigation Measures

As described above, the Proposed Project would not result in significant impacts related to increased use of existing park and recreational facilities, and therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.11.3.4 Cumulative Impacts Analysis

This section provides an evaluation of cumulative recreation impacts associated with the Proposed Project and past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, as identified in Table 4.0-2 in Section 4.0, Introduction to Analyses, and as relevant to this topic. The geographic area considered in the cumulative analysis for this topic is the study area identified in Section 4.11.1.1, Study Area, and includes the expanded place of use boundary shown on Figure 3-3 in Chapter 3, Project Description.

The Proposed Project would not contribute to cumulative impacts related to **construction or expansion of new recreational facilities (Significance Standard C)**, given the nominal staff increase that would result from Proposed Project implementation. Therefore, this topic is not further evaluated as the Proposed Project would not have the potential to have a considerable contribution to cumulative recreation impacts related to such construction or expansion of new recreational facilities.

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**Impact REC-3: Cumulative Recreation Impacts (Significance Standards A and B).** Operation of the Proposed Project, in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future development, would not change or conflict with existing recreational uses, but could increase the use of parks or recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated. However, the Proposed Project's contribution would not be cumulative considerable. *(Less than Significant)*

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### Conflicts with Existing Recreational Uses

As indicated in Impact REC-1, the Proposed Project would have a beneficial effect on boating in Loch Lomond Reservoir given that there would be fewer days during the recreational use period from March to September when

boating would not be allowed. This conclusion also incorporates other City water infrastructure projects listed as cumulative projects in Table 4.0-2, where relevant. As indicated in Chapter 3, Project Description, because approval of the proposed water rights modifications would result in changed conditions that extend into the future, City modeling included in Appendix D assumed implementation of all upgrades to existing infrastructure currently being planned. These upgrades include the surface water diversion improvements at the Felton Diversion and Tait Diversion/Coast Pump Station, as part of the Proposed Project. Additionally, other planned infrastructure upgrades that are not part of the Proposed Project are included in the project modeling as those planned upgrades are being pursued independently of the Proposed Project, but would be a component of the future conditions that would exist with the Proposed Project. These cumulative projects include improvements to the Newell Creek Pipeline, the North Coast Pipeline, and the Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant.

There are two additional cumulative projects in Table 4.0-2 that have the potential to affect water levels in Loch Lomond Reservoir or residual flows in the Newell Creek and the San Lorenzo River. These cumulative projects include: (1) the Conjunctive Use Plan for the San Lorenzo River Watershed, which is aiming to increase stream baseflow for fish and water supply reliability, by allowing for conjunctive use of the SLVWD's service areas and with the Scotts Valley Water District, and use of SLVWD's Loch Lomond Reservoir water right; and (2) the City's River Bank Filtration Study, which could potentially result in the installation of vertical or horizontal wells along the San Lorenzo River near the Tait and Felton Diversions. Given that neither of these cumulative projects have been specifically defined to date or evaluated in a CEQA document, it is speculative to determine what cumulative effect if any these projects would have on the formal and informal recreational activities in Loch Lomond Reservoir and along the Newell Creek and the San Lorenzo River. However, the City's hydrologic and water supply modeling for the Proposed Project that are the basis for Table 4.11-3 in Impact REC-1 account for SLVWD's access to 313 acre-feet per year of water from Loch Lomond Reservoir and that allotment is assumed in this EIR.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, cumulative impacts related to conflicts with existing recreational uses would be less than significant.

### **Physical Deterioration of the Recreational Facilities**

As indicated in Impact REC-2, the population increase associated with the Proposed Project would be nominal and would not be expected to increase the use of parks or recreational facilities in the County such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated. Table 4.0-2 in Section 4.0, Introduction to Analyses, includes numerous cumulative projects that could result in population increases in the County and an associated increase in the use of parks and recreational facilities. As such, cumulative projects have the potential to result in an increase in the use of parks or recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated. Therefore, implementation of cumulative projects could have a potentially significant cumulative impact. However, the Proposed Project's contribution to this impact would not be cumulatively considerable as the population increase is nominal and would not be expected to increase the use of parks or recreational facilities in the County such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur. Therefore, the cumulative impact of the Proposed Project of the would be less than significant.

<sup>2</sup> SLVWD is entitled by contract to receive a 313 acre-feet per year of the water stored in Loch Lomond Reservoir that has not been used since 1977.



## 4.11.4 References

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