

Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final Program Environmental Impact Report

SCH # 2002021113

August 2002

Prepared for:

City of Rancho Santa Margarita
Kathleen Haton, Planning Director
30211 Avenida De Las Banderas
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Prepared by:

Cotton/Bridges/Associates
Urban Planning and Environmental Consulting
747 E. Green Street, Suite 300
Pasadena, CA 91101

1317.00

Pasadena



Sacramento



San Diego

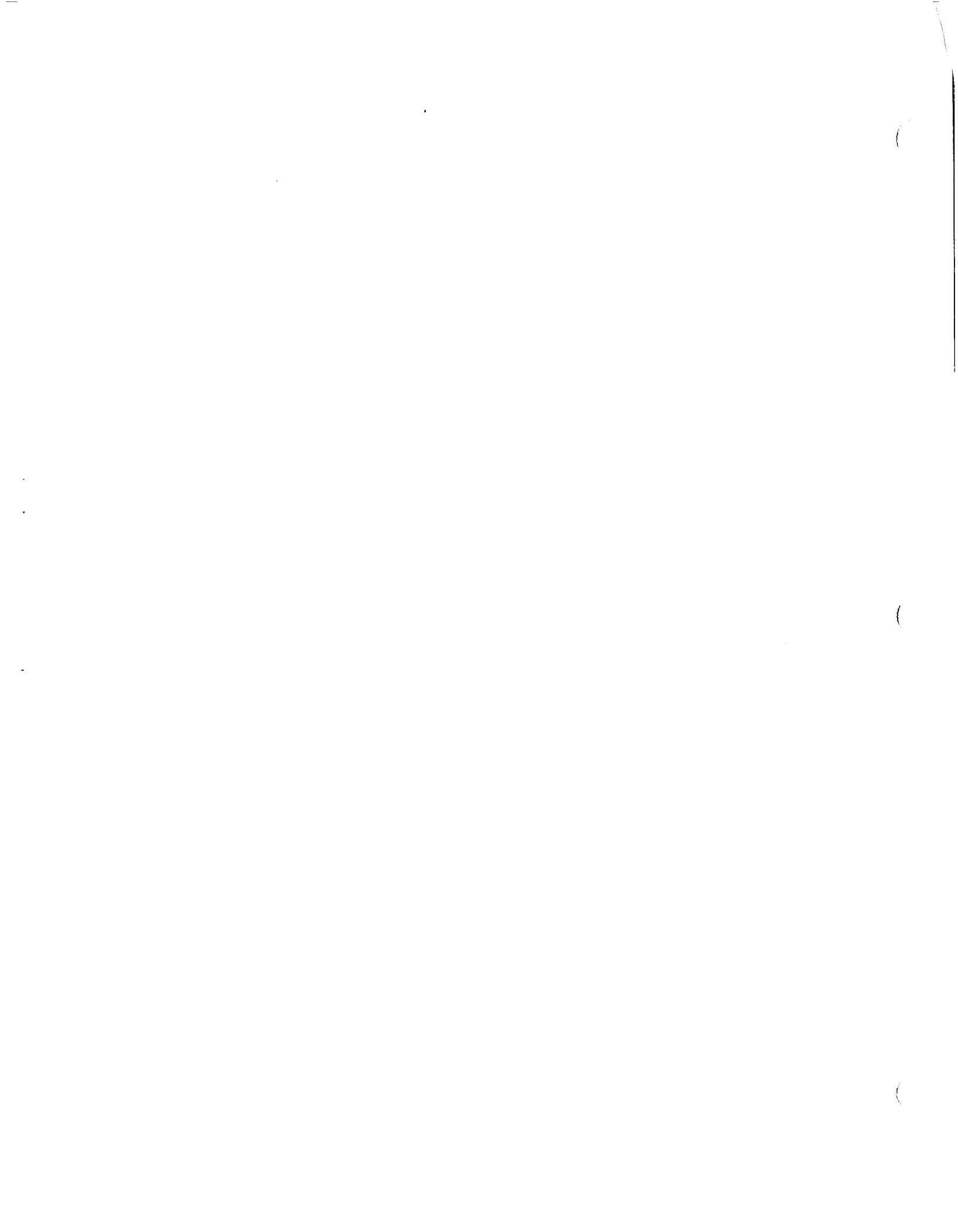


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
INTRODUCTION	xxv
1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION.....	1
2.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING	13
3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES.....	17
3.1 Land Use/Planning.....	19
3.2 Population/Housing.....	23
3.3 Aesthetics.....	27
3.4 Transportation/Traffic.....	33
3.5 Air Quality	47
3.6 Noise	57
3.7 Biological Resources	67
3.8 Cultural Resources.....	79
3.9 Geology/Soils.....	85
3.10 Hydrology/Water Quality	97
3.11 Hazards & Hazardous Materials	109
3.12 Public Services.....	113
3.13 Utilities/Service Systems	125
3.14 Recreation	149
4.0 ALTERNATIVES.....	159
4.1 No Project	160
4.2 Northeast Future Planned Community Developed as a Resort Area.....	166
4.3 Northeast Future Planned Community Remains in Open Space	172
4.4 Environmentally Preferred Alternative.....	178
5.0 ANALYSIS OF LONG-TERM EFFECTS	181
5.1 Cumulative Impacts	181
5.2 Growth Inducing Impacts	186
5.3 Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes	187
5.4 Unavoidable Significant Environmental Impacts	187
5.5 Areas of No Significant Impact	187

TABLE OF CONTENTS
(Continued)

6.0 REFERENCES189

7.0 RESPONSES TO COMMENTS ON DRAFT EIR195

APPENDICES (Under Separate Cover)

- A Notice of Preparation and Initial Study
- B Responses to the Initial Study
- C Traffic Memorandums
- D Air Quality Worksheets
- E Noise Analysis
- F Biological Resources
- G Safety Element Technical Background Report
- H Cultural Resources

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
ES-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures	xv
1 Comparison of Existing Land Uses and General Plan Land Uses in 2020.....	8
2 Orange County Projections - 2000 and Modified Projections for Rancho Santa Margarita	24
3 Existing Segment Conditions.....	34
4 Year 2025 Segment Conditions	38
5 Air Pollution Sources, Effects, and Standards	49
6 Ambient Air Quality Summary, Saddleback Valley and Central Orange County Monitoring Stations	50
7 SCAQMD Thresholds for Significant Contribution to Regional Air Pollution	51
8 Estimated Air Pollutant Emissions Associated with Existing Land Use and General Plan Land Use.....	53
9 Sensitive Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the General Plan Project Area.....	69
10 Sensitive Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the General Plan Project Area.....	71
11 Future Student Generation	119
12 TCWD Current and Projected Water Supplies (Acre-Feet/Year).....	127
13 Population Projections for the Trabuco Canyon Water District	129
14 TCWD Past, Current and Projected Water End-Use (Acre-Feet/Year).....	129
15 TCWD Additional Water Uses (Acre-Feet/Year).....	129
16 TCWD Projected Supply and Demand Comparison (Acre-Feet/Year).....	131
17 TCWD Supply Reliability and Demand Comparison (Acre-Feet/Year)	131
18 SMWD Current and Projected Water Supplies in Acre-Feet	133
19 SMWD Historic Domestic Water Purchases	134
20 Population Projections for the Trabuco Canyon Water District	134
21 SMWD Projected Supply and Demand Comparison (Acre-Feet/Year)	135
22 Future Electricity Demand	144
23 Future Natural Gas Demand	144
24 Existing Parks and Facilities in Rancho Santa Margarita.....	152
25 Active and Passive Parkland in Rancho Santa Margarita.....	154
26 Comparison of Alternatives' Impacts to Project Impacts	179

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Regional Location.....	2
2	Rancho Santa Margarita Project Area.....	3
3	Land Use Policy Map.....	7
4	Vacant Sites	9
5	Scenic Highways.....	28
6	Existing Average Daily Traffic (Year 2001)	35
7	Future Average Daily Traffic (Year 2025)	39
8	Northeast Future Planned Community Conceptual Roadway System	40
9a	Typical Arterial Roadway Cross-Sections.....	41
9b	Typical Collector Roadway Cross-Sections	41
10	Noise/Land Use Compatibility Criteria	59
11	Existing CNEL Contours	60
12	Construction Equipment Noise Ranges	62
13	Future CNEL Contours	64
14	Vegetation Communities	68
15	Seismic Hazards.....	88
16	Seismic Induced Geologic Hazards	89
17	Slope Instability in the Project Area	91
18	Surface Water Bodies	100
19	Flood Hazards	102
20	Wildfire Hazard Areas	110
21	School Sites.....	115
22	Water District Service Areas	126
23	Park Sites	150