SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 - Overview of the CEQA Process

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) is prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the Eagle Ranch Specific Plan (State Clearinghouse No. 2013051039). This document is prepared in conformance with CEQA (California Public Resources Code, Section 21000, et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000, et seq.). This Draft EIR is intended to serve as an informational document for the public agency decision makers and the public regarding the proposed project.

1.1.1 - Project Overview

The proposed project consists of developing the existing Eagle Ranch property into a combination of single family residential, multi-family residential, resort hotel, commercial, and open space land uses. Approximately 75 percent of the 3,457-acre development would remain open space. The project site was subdivided into 452 lots of record as part of the establishment of the original Atascadero Colony in 1913 and the subsequent Peabody deed line (refer to Section 2.2, Project History for further discussion), and is already located within the City of Atascadero’s Sphere of Influence. Section 2, Project Description provides a complete description of the project.

1.1.2 - Purpose and Authority

This Draft EIR provides a project-level analysis of the environmental effects of the Eagle Ranch Specific Plan. The environmental impacts of the proposed project are analyzed in the EIR to the degree of specificity appropriate, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15146. This document addresses the potentially significant adverse environmental impacts that may be associated with the planning, construction, or operation of the project. It also identifies appropriate and feasible mitigation measures and alternatives that may be adopted to significantly reduce or avoid these impacts.

CEQA requires that an EIR contain, at a minimum, certain specific elements. These elements are contained in this Draft EIR and include:

- Table of Contents
- Introduction
- Executive Summary
- Project Description
- Environmental Setting, Significant Environmental Impacts, and Mitigation Measures
- Cumulative Impacts
- Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts
- Alternatives to the Proposed Project
- Growth-Inducing Impacts
- Effects Found Not To Be Significant
- Areas of Known Controversy
1.1.3 - Lead Agency Determination

The City of Atascadero is the lead agency for the project. CEQA Guidelines Section 15367 defines the lead agency as “... the public agency, which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project.” Other public agencies may use this Draft EIR in the decision-making or permit process and consider the information in this Draft EIR along with other information that may be presented during the CEQA process.

This Draft EIR was prepared by FirstCarbon Solutions (FCS), an environmental consultant under contract to the City of Atascadero. Prior to public review, it was extensively reviewed and evaluated by the City of Atascadero. This Draft EIR reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the City of Atascadero as required by CEQA. Lists of organizations and persons consulted and the report preparation personnel are provided in Section 8 of this Draft EIR.

1.2 - Scope of the EIR

This Draft EIR addresses the potential environmental effects of the proposed project. The City of Atascadero issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed project on May 16, 2013, which circulated between May 16, 2013 and June 14, 2013 for the statutory 30-day public review period. The scope of this Draft EIR includes the potential environmental impacts identified in the NOP and issues raised by agencies and the public in response to the NOP. The NOP is contained in Appendix A of this Draft EIR.

Forty-two comment letters were received in response to the NOP. They are listed in Table 1-1 and provided in Appendix A of this Draft EIR.

Table 1-1: NOP Comment Letters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Signatory</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Agencies</td>
<td>California Department of Transportation, District 5</td>
<td>Adam Fukushima, Development Review</td>
<td>June 14, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>San Luis Obispo Local Agency Formation Commission</td>
<td>David Church, Executive Officer</td>
<td>June 14, 2013</td>
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<td></td>
<td>San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District</td>
<td>Andy Mutziger, Air Quality Specialist</td>
<td>June 14, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit</td>
<td>Scott Morgan, Director</td>
<td>May 16, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 8</td>
<td>Diane Noda, Field Supervisor</td>
<td>June 13, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private Individuals</td>
<td>George Bentley and Marily Bentley</td>
<td>June 11, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Julie Clark</td>
<td>June 13, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Geoff Conoon</td>
<td>June 13, 2013</td>
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Table 1-1 (cont.): NOP Comment Letters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Signatory</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Kathleen Daly</td>
<td>June 13, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Patti Davis</td>
<td>June 11, 2013</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individuals</td>
<td>Dennis Derickson and Sara Derickson</td>
<td>June 4, 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Dave Evers</td>
<td>June 9, 2013</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Dave Evers</td>
<td>June 14, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Robert Fuller</td>
<td>May 26, 2013</td>
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<td>Private Individuals</td>
<td>Terry Granvold and Cynthia Granvold</td>
<td>June 13, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Terrance Grebel</td>
<td>June 10, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individuals</td>
<td>Karen Harper and Mike Harper</td>
<td>June 12, 2013,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individuals</td>
<td>Steve Harrison and Nina Harrison</td>
<td>June 13, 2013</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Nancy Hyman</td>
<td>June 13, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Paul Hyman</td>
<td>undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individuals</td>
<td>Nancy Spitzer, June Cunningham, and Pamela Kressley</td>
<td>June 13, 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KVC</td>
<td>Keith Crowe, Consulting Engineer</td>
<td>April 18, 2012</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Los Padres National Forest Watch</td>
<td>Jeff Kuyper, Executive Director</td>
<td>June 14, 2013</td>
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<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Twila Martin</td>
<td>June 9, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individuals</td>
<td>Jack McCabe and Renee McCabe</td>
<td>June 11, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Michael Morin</td>
<td>May 28, 2013</td>
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<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Mimi Naish</td>
<td>May 13, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Vincent Pacific</td>
<td>May 17, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>John Rinaldi</td>
<td>June 13, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Christopher Smith</td>
<td>June 2, 2013</td>
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<td>Private Individuals</td>
<td>O.W. Smith and Nancy Smith</td>
<td>April 8, 2013</td>
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<td>Private Individuals</td>
<td>O.W. Smith and Nancy Smith</td>
<td>June 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Adele Sommers</td>
<td>June 13, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>Straith Smith-Zarnatu</td>
<td>June 14, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Individuals</td>
<td>David Tissue and Susan Tissue</td>
<td>June 1, 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Individual</td>
<td>(unsigned)</td>
<td>June 10, 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City of Atascadero, 2013.
1.2.1 - Scoping Meeting

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(c)(1), the City of Atascadero held a public scoping meeting for the proposed project on Thursday, June 13, 2013 in the Atascadero City Council Chambers. Six individuals provided oral comments and are listed below:

- Twila Martin
- Nancy Hyman
- Paul Hyman
- David Evers
- John Rinaldi
- Nancy Spitzer

1.2.2 - Environmental Issues Determined Not To Be Significant

The NOP identified a topical area that was determined Not To Be significant. An explanation of why this area is determined Not To Be significant is provided in Section 7, Effects Found Not To Be Significant. This topical area is as follows:

- Mineral Resources

In addition, certain subjects with various topical areas were determined Not To Be significant. Other potentially significant issues are analyzed in these topical areas; however, the following issues are not analyzed:

- State Scenic Highways (Section 3.1, Aesthetics, Light, and Glare)
- Forest Land Zoning (Section 3.2, Agricultural Resources)
- Conversion of Forest Land (Section 3.2, Agricultural Resources)
- Conservation Plans (Section 3.4, Biological Resources)
- Exposure of Schools to Hazardous Materials (Section 3.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials)
- Airports (Section 3.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials)
- Private Airstrips (Section 3.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials)
- Levee or Dam Failure (Section 3.8, Hydrology and Water Quality)
- Seiches, Tsunamis, or Mudflows (Section 3.8, Hydrology and Water Quality)
- Conservation Plans (Section 3.9, Land Use)
- Aviation Noise (Section 3.10, Noise)
- Air Traffic Patterns (Section 3.12, Transportation)

An explanation of why each issue is determined Not To Be significant is provided in Section 7, Effects Found Not To Be Significant.

1.2.3 - Potentially Significant Environmental Issues

The NOP found that the following topical areas may contain potentially significant environmental issues that will require further analysis in the EIR. These sections are as follows:

- Aesthetics, Light, and Glare
- Agriculture Resources
- Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use
- Noise
1.3 - Organization of the EIR

ThisDraft EIR is organized into the following main sections:

- **Section ES: Executive Summary.** This section includes a summary of the proposed project and alternatives to be addressed in the Draft EIR. A brief description of the areas of controversy and issues to be resolved, and overview of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, in addition to a table that summarizes the impacts, mitigation measures, and level of significance after mitigation, are also included in this section.

- **Section 1: Introduction.** This section provides an introduction and overview describing the purpose of this Draft EIR, its scope and components, and its review and certification process.

- **Section 2: Project Description.** This section includes a detailed description of the proposed project, including its location, site, and project characteristics. A discussion of the project objectives, intended uses of the Draft EIR, responsible agencies, and approvals that are needed for the proposed project are also provided.

- **Section 3: Environmental Impact Analysis.** This section analyzes the environmental impacts of the proposed project. Impacts are organized into major topic areas. Each topic area includes a description of the environmental setting, methodology, significance criteria, impacts, mitigation measures, and significance after mitigation. The specific environmental topics that are addressed within Section 3 are as follows:
  - **Section 3.1 - Aesthetics, Light, and Glare:** Addresses the potential visual impacts of development intensification and the overall increase in illumination produced by the project.
  - **Section 3.2 - Agricultural Resources:** Addresses the existing agricultural setting and potential effects from project implementation on agricultural resources on the site and its surroundings.
  - **Section 3.3 - Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Addresses the potential air quality impacts associated with project implementation, as well as consistency with the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District Clean Air Plan. In addition, the section evaluates project emissions of greenhouse gases.
  - **Section 3.4 - Biological Resources:** Addresses the project’s potential impacts on habitat, vegetation, and wildlife; the potential degradation or elimination of important habitat; and impacts on listed, proposed, and candidate threatened and endangered species.
  - **Section 3.5 - Cultural Resources:** Addresses potential impacts on historical, archaeological, and paleontological resources, and burial sites.
  - **Section 3.6 - Geology, Soils, and Seismicity:** Addresses the potential impacts the project may have on soils and assesses the effects of project development in relation to geologic
and seismic conditions. Additionally, the suitability of on-site soils to support septic systems is assessed.

- **Section 3.7 - Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** Addresses the potential for the presence of hazardous materials or conditions on the project site and in the project area that may have the potential to impact human health. Additionally, emergency response and wildland fire hazards are assessed.

- **Section 3.8 - Hydrology and Water Quality:** Addresses the potential impacts of the project on local hydrological conditions, including water quality, groundwater, drainage areas, and 100-year flood hazard areas.

- **Section 3.9 - Land Use:** Addresses the potential land use impacts associated with division of an established community and consistency with the City of Atascadero General Plan and Atascadero Municipal Code, as well as the potential for division of an established community.

- **Section 3.10 - Noise:** Addresses the potential noise impacts during construction and at project buildout from mobile and stationary sources. The section also addresses the impact of noise generation on neighboring uses.

- **Section 3.11 – Population and Housing:** Addresses the existing population and housing and potential effects from project implementation.

- **Section 3.12 – Public Services and Recreation:** Addresses the potential impacts upon public services and recreation setting and potential effects from project implementation.

- **Section 3.13 - Transportation:** Addresses the impacts on the local and regional roadway system, public transportation, bicycle, and pedestrian access.

- **Section 3.14 – Utility Systems:** Addresses the existing utility systems setting and potential effects from project implementation on the site and its surrounding area.

- **Section 4: Cumulative Effects.** This section discusses the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed project, including the impacts of past, present, and probable future projects.

- **Section 5: Alternatives to the Proposed Project.** This section compares the impacts of the proposed project with four land-use project alternatives: the No Project/No Development Alternative, the No Project/Existing Entitlements Alternative, the Reduced Project Size Alternative, and the Middle School Alternative. An environmentally superior alternative is identified. In addition, alternatives initially considered but rejected from further consideration are discussed.

- **Section 6: Other CEQA Considerations.** This section provides a summary of significant environmental impacts, including unavoidable and growth-inducing impacts. This section discusses the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed project, including the impacts of past, present, and probable future projects. In addition, the proposed project’s energy demand is discussed.

- **Section 7: Effects Found Not To Be Significant.** This section contains analysis of the topical sections not addressed in Section 3.
- **Section 8: Organizations and Persons Consulted/List of Preparers.** This section contains a full list of organizations and persons who were consulted during the preparation of this Draft EIR, as well as the authors who assisted in the preparation of the Draft EIR, by name and affiliation.

- **Section 9: References.** This section contains a full list of references that were used in the preparation of this Draft EIR.

- **Appendices:** This section includes all notices and other procedural documents pertinent to the Draft EIR, as well as all technical material prepared to support the analysis.

### 1.4 - Documents Incorporated by Reference

As permitted by CEQA Guidelines Section 15150, this Draft EIR has referenced several technical studies, analyses, and previously certified environmental documentation. Information from the documents, which have been incorporated by reference, has been briefly summarized in the appropriate section(s). The relationship between the incorporated part of the referenced document and the Draft EIR has also been described. The documents and other sources that have been used in the preparation of this Draft EIR include but are not limited to:

- City of Atascadero General Plan 2025
- City of Atascadero Municipal Code
- Atascadero Mutual Water Company 2015 Urban Water Management Plan
- City of Atascadero Storm Water Management Program
- City of Atascadero Sewer System Management Plan

These documents are specifically identified in Section 9, References, of this Draft EIR. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15150(b), the General Plan, the Municipal Code, and the referenced documents and other sources used in the preparation of the Draft EIR are available for review at the City of Atascadero at the address shown in Section 1.6 below. The Atascadero Mutual Water Company 2015 Urban Water Management Plan is available for review at the Atascadero Mutual Water Company located at 6575 Sycamore Road, Atascadero, CA 93422.

### 1.5 - Documents Prepared for the Project

The following technical studies and analyses were prepared for the proposed project:

- Air Quality Analysis, prepared by FirstCarbon Solutions. (The analysis is wholly contained in Section 3.2, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases; modeling data is provided in Appendix B.1)
- Type B Health Risk Assessment, prepared by FirstCarbon Solutions (Appendix B.2)
- Biological Resources Study, prepared by FirstCarbon Solutions. (Appendix C.1)
- Jurisdictional Assessment of Wetlands and Other Waters prepared by FirstCarbon Solutions (Appendix C.2)
- Cultural Resources Assessment and Constraints Analysis, prepared by Albion Environmental (Appendix D)
• Cultural Landscape Report by Authentic Resources Team (Appendix D)
• Engineering Geology and Preliminary Geotechnical Planning Study, prepared by Kleinfelder Inc. (Appendix E.1)
• Percolation Testing, prepared by GeoSolutions (Appendix E.2)
• Fire Safety Review, prepared by Citygate Associates, LLC (Appendix F)
• Preliminary Hydrology and Hydraulic Report, prepared by RRM (Appendix G)
• Noise Analysis, prepared by Extant Acoustical. (The analysis is wholly contained in Section 3.10, Noise; modeling data is provided in Appendix H.)
• Traffic Impact Study, prepared by Whitlock & Weinberger Transportation, Inc. (Appendix J)
• Water Supply Assessment, prepared by Wallace Group (Appendix K)
• Tree Survey by Dave Ragan, ISA Certified Arborist (Appendix L)

1.6 - Review of the Draft EIR

Upon completion of the Draft EIR, the City of Atascadero filed a Notice of Completion (NOC) with the State Office of Planning and Research to begin the public review period (Public Resources Code, Section 21161). Concurrent with the NOC, this Draft EIR has been distributed to responsible and trustee agencies, other affected agencies, surrounding cities, and interested parties, as well as all parties requesting a copy of the Draft EIR in accordance with Public Resources Code 21092(b)(3). During the public review period, the Draft EIR, including the technical appendices, is available for review at Atascadero City Hall and the Atascadero Library. The address for each location is provided below:

City of Atascadero
Community Development Department
6500 Palma Avenue
Atascadero, CA 93422
Hours: Monday–Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

San Luis Obispo County Library,
Atascadero Library
6555 Capistrano Avenue
Atascadero, CA 93422
Hours: Monday–Thursday: 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Friday and Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Agencies, organizations, and interested parties have the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR during the 45-day public review period. Written comments on this Draft EIR should be addressed to:

Ms. Callie Taylor, Senior Planner
City of Atascadero
Community Development Department
6500 Palma Avenue
Atascadero, CA 93422
Phone: 805.470.3448
Fax: 805.470.3449
Email: ctaylor@atascadero.org
Submittal of electronic comments in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format is encouraged. Upon completion of the public review period, written responses to all significant environmental issues raised will be prepared and made available for review by the commenting agencies at least 10 days prior to the public hearing before the Atascadero Planning Commission and Atascadero City Council on the project, at which the certification of the Final EIR will be considered. Comments received and the responses to comments will be included as part of the record for consideration by decision makers for the project.
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