

4.10 OTHER VALUES

4.10.1 ALTERNATIVE A – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE: CASINO, HOTEL, CONFERENCE CENTER, AND PARKING FACILITY

NOISE

Noise would be generated by the project during the construction and operational phases. Noise during the construction phase would be temporary and would be generally limited to daylight hours. Operation noise would consist of vehicular traffic coming to and from the facility and some incidental noise associated with increased human presence on site. The noise levels that project operations are expected to generate would be lower than the short-term construction noise. An increase of 1 “A”-weighted decibel (dBA) cannot be perceived and a 3-dBA increase is considered a just-noticeable difference. A change of at least 5-dBA is required before any noticeable change in community response would be expected.

Significance Thresholds

A potential noise impact would be considered significant if ongoing ambient noise is increased substantially beyond existing noise levels or if the ongoing noise level increases above 5 dB at the nearest sensitive receptor or if existing or future planned residential land uses will be exposed to noise levels greater than Del Norte County’s noise goals. Del Norte County uses Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD’s) acceptable exterior noise level for residential projects of 65 dBA.

Methodology

For the purposes of this analysis, potential noise impacts have been segregated into transportation related noise and non-transportation related noise. Non-transportation related noise impacts use industry averages. Average noise propagation and attenuation rates applicable to a relatively “soft” site (e.g., 6 dB for spherical dissipation) were assumed.

Construction Noise

Typical construction noise levels are shown in **Table 4-19**. **Table 4-19** assumes the operation of construction equipment shown in **Table 4-20**. Although construction activity can generate substantial levels of noise, the nearest sensitive receptors located to the north and south would not experience a significant increase in ambient noise level as a consequence. Assuming normal spherical dissipation of 89 dBA measured as steady state sound level (L_{eq}), construction-phase noise as measured at a distance of 50 feet, the attenuated noise from the nearest construction zone would be considerably less when heard at the nearest residence. The nearest residences are approximately 300 feet to the north and over 1,000 feet to the south. The large size of the project parcel and undeveloped nature of the project area would also reduce potential noise impacts to sensitive receptors. The retention of some existing native trees would also provide some noise

attenuation. Temporary construction noise impacts are not expected to be significant. Nonetheless, mitigation is included in **Section 5.2.9** to further reduce construction noise.

TABLE 4-19
TYPICAL CONSTRUCTION NOISE LEVELS

Construction Phase	Noise Level (dBA, L _{eq}) ^a
Ground Clearing	84
Excavation	89
Foundations	88
Erection	79
Finishing	84

NOTES: a = Average noise levels 50 feet from the noisiest source and 200 feet from the rest of the equipment associated with a given construction phase. Noise levels correspond to public works projects, road, sewer, and trench construction.

SOURCE: Bolt, Beranek, and Newman, Noise from Construction Equipment and Operations, Building Equipment, and Home Appliances, 1971.

TABLE 4-20
TYPICAL NOISE LEVELS FROM CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT

Construction Equipment	Noise Level (dBA, L _{eq} at 50 feet)
Dump Truck	88
Air Compressor	81
Grader	85
Scraper	89
Dozer	85
Paver	89
Generator	81
Backhoe	80

SOURCE: Federal Transit Administration, 1995.

Transportation Noise

Operation of the gaming facility would attract vehicle traffic to and from the site. As identified in the traffic study, this traffic would enter the site via Humboldt Road from Highway 101.

Although traffic levels on the local transportation network would increase, levels of service are not projected to degrade to unacceptable levels, so idling and congestion would not occur in the immediate project vicinity. The estimated vehicle trips generated by the project also did not account for pass-by trips or existing travelers that may stop by the site on the way to another destination, such as Redwood National Park, due to available access to/from Highway 101 (Whitlock and Weinberger Transportation, Inc. 2002, 2003). In addition, trip generation estimates were made assuming 100% occupancy of the hotel. The project access road, where project traffic would be concentrated, would be located near the center of the project site at a considerable distance from the nearest residences north and south of the site. Traffic would be at low speeds in this area and would be buffered by retaining native trees or shrubs on all sides. These factors would combine to reduce the severity of potential operational noise impacts. Potential impacts are considered less than significant. No mitigation is necessary.

Non-Transportation Noise

The project would include other noise sources such as human activities in parking lots, truck loading and unloading activities, talking, opening and closing of car doors and trunk lids, maintenance activities, etc. However, the proposed conference center, casino, hotel, and parking lot would be located over 1,000 feet from the nearest sensitive noise receptor to the south (i.e. a residence near Highway 101) and over 1,600 feet from the nearest residence to the north. Potential impacts from operational non-transportation noise are considered less than significant and therefore no mitigation is required.

The proposed gaming facility is not considered a sensitive noise receptor. The interiors of gaming facilities are typically noisy. Construction of the proposed facility would be of such quality as to ensure that exterior off-site generated noise does not detract from indoor activities. Noise from traffic, planes and nearby Highway 101 would not significantly impact the inside noise environment of the proposed facility. Because commercial land uses are considered relatively insensitive to intrusive noise, potential impacts to the proposed project from surrounding land uses are not considered significant.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

A Phase I ESA, which included a site reconnaissance, a federal, state, and regional database records review, and an interview, did not reveal any indications of hazardous material releases on the site. No known hazardous material releases have occurred within 1 mile of the project site. Due to the long-time human habitation and use of the property, the potential exists for previously unidentified soil and/or groundwater contamination to be encountered during site preparation and construction activities at the project site. Precautions have been written into the project description (**Section 2.0**) to address this issue. No significant quantities of hazardous materials will be used in the operation of the casino/hotel.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Aesthetics

The site is immediately adjacent to a County-designated view corridor and partially within an area shown on the Del Norte County Coastal Element “Visual Resource Inventory” map. It is also just north of a segment of State-designated scenic highway. Highway 101 is not classified by Caltrans as a Scenic Highway in front of the project site. Visual considerations contained in the Coastal Element pertain primarily to views west of Highway 101 (e.g. the Pacific Ocean), not the upland areas to the east (**Figure 3-16**). With regards to the coastal zone, the proposed development is outside of the coastal zone. The foreground of the property in the coastal zone would remain undeveloped. As discussed in the Coastal Commission findings (**Appendix Q**), detailed project plans including plans for lighting, signs, roads, landscaping and revegetation, and building plans will be submitted to the Coastal Commission staff for review, as applicable.

Views from Highway 101 toward the proposed resort would contain predominately grazing pasture in the foreground. A spruce-covered outcropping and existing barn would partially obscure the resort buildings. The conceptual building design, shown as **Figure 2.3**, includes aspects of lodge architecture with neutral colors, which blend with the natural surroundings. The proposed parking structure is planned below the events center and would not affect the views of passing vehicles on Highway 101 or the residences to the north. The proposed water storage tank will be an at-grade reservoir and located uphill and to the east of the resort complex buildings; it will be obscured by landscaping. Wastewater pretreatment facilities and pump station would be screened from public view.

The proposed resort would be visible from residences in the subdivision along Roy Avenue and the strip of property that fronts the northern end of the Martin Ranch Property. The view of the Pacific Ocean, Rellim Ridge, the spruce knob, riparian strip, pasture, and barn would be obscured by the resort buildings as viewed from vantage points along Roy Avenue east of its intersection with Enderts Street in the northern subdivision (**Figure 3-16**). This is a potentially significant impact. Mitigation is required (**Section 5.0**). With mitigation measures the project would be consistent with Sections 30251 and 30253 of the Coastal Act.

Night Lighting

The site is located in an area that has relatively dark nighttime conditions. Glare from exterior lighting can be disruptive to neighborhood character. Excessive or poorly directed illumination can be intrusive to nearby residences by reducing privacy and adversely affecting visual quality. Operation of the proposed gaming facility at night would require night lighting for the parking lot, traffic circulation, security, and pedestrian safety. This would be a significant impact, and mitigation is required. Mitigation is discussed in **Section 5.0**.

4.10.2 ALTERNATIVE B – GOLF COURSE, HOTEL, CONFERENCE CENTER, AND PARKING FACILITY (NON-GAMING ALTERNATIVE)

NOISE

The Non-Gaming Alternative would generate noise during the construction and operational phases. Overall noise impacts would be similar to those of Alternative A as golf is generally a quiet sport. However, noise from golf course maintenance operations (principally mowing) would increase over Alternative A. Noise during the construction phase would be temporary and would be generally limited to daylight hours. It would not cause a significant impact. The nearest construction zone to sensitive receptors would be the proposed golf tees of holes 5 and 16 and the 6th fairway. Construction duration would also be very short due to the small size of the tee areas. This construction noise would further dissipate as temporary construction moves further from the sensitive receptors.

Operational noise would consist of vehicular traffic coming and leaving the hotel and golf course. The typical noise from vehicles would be dissipated to insignificant levels due to the distances to the nearest sensitive noise receptors. No significant operational noise impacts would occur under the Non-Gaming Alternative.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

A site reconnaissance, federal, state, and regional database records review, and an interview with the property owner did not reveal any indications of hazardous material releases on the site. No known hazardous material releases have occurred within 1.5 mile of the project site. No mitigation is required. As with the Proposed Action, the potential exists for previously unidentified soil and/or groundwater contamination to be encountered during site preparation and construction activities at the project site. Precautions have been written into the project description (**Section 2.0**) to address this issue. Potentially hazardous chemicals, including herbicides and pesticides, would be used to maintain the golf course. These chemicals would be stored and applied pursuant to manufacturers' recommendations, and therefore no impacts would occur.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Aesthetics

The proposed parking structure and resort would be visible from residences in the subdivision along Roy Avenue and the strip of property that fronts the northern end of the Martin Ranch Property. The view of Rellim Ridge, the spruce knob, riparian strip, pasture, and barn would be obscured by the resort buildings and parking structure as viewed from vantage points along Roy Avenue east of its intersection with Enderts Street in the northern subdivision (**Figure 3-16**). This is a potentially significant impact. Mitigation is required (**Section 5.0**).

Night Lighting

With the exception of the residential subdivision north of the project, the site is located in an area that has relatively dark nighttime conditions. Glare from exterior lighting can be disruptive to neighborhood character and excessive or poorly directed illumination can be intrusive to nearby residences by reducing privacy and adversely affecting visual quality. Operation of the project under the Non-Gaming Alternative at night would require night lighting for the parking lot, traffic circulation, security, and pedestrian safety. This would be a significant impact and mitigation would be required, as per the mitigation for the Proposed Action described in **Section 5.0**.

4.10.3 ALTERNATIVE C – CASINO, HOTEL, CONFERENCE CENTER, GOLF COURSE, AND PARKING FACILITY

NOISE

Similar to the Proposed Action, noise would be generated by Alternative C during the construction and operational phases. Noise during the construction phase would be temporary and would be generally limited to daylight hours. It would not cause a significant impact. The nearest construction zone would be the proposed golf tees of holes 5 and 16 and the 6th fairway. Construction duration would also be very short due to the small size of the tee areas. Construction noise would gradually dissipate as temporary construction moves further from the sensitive receptors.

Operational noise would consist of vehicular traffic coming and leaving the hotel, conference center, casino, and golf course clubhouse and maintenance shop. The typical noise from vehicles would be dissipated to less than significant levels due to the distances to the nearest sensitive noise receptors. No significant operational noise impacts would occur under Alternative C.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

A site reconnaissance, federal, state, and regional database records review, and an interview with the property owner did not reveal any indications of hazardous material releases on the site. No known hazardous material releases have occurred within 1.5 mile of the project site. No mitigation is required. As with the Proposed Action, the potential exists for previously unidentified soil and/or groundwater contamination to be encountered during site preparation and construction activities at the project site. Precautions have been written into the project description (**Section 2.0**) to address this issue. Potentially hazardous chemicals, including herbicides and pesticides, would be used to maintain the golf course. These chemicals would be stored and applied pursuant to manufacturers' recommendations, and therefore no impacts would occur.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Aesthetics

The proposed parking structure and resort would be visible from residences in the subdivision along Roy Avenue and the strip of property that fronts the northern end of the Martin Ranch Property. The view of Rellim Ridge, the spruce knob, riparian strip, pasture, and barn would be obscured by the resort buildings and parking structure as viewed from vantage points along Roy Avenue east of its intersection with Enderts Street in the northern subdivision (**Figure 3-16**). This is a potentially significant impact. Mitigation is required (**Section 5.0**).

Night Lighting

Night lighting environmental consequences are the same as described in **Section 4.10-2**. This would be a significant impact and mitigation would be required, as per the mitigation for the Proposed Action described in **Section 5.0**.

4.10.4 ALTERNATIVE D – ENDERTS BEACH DEVELOPMENT

NOISE

Noise would be generated by the project during the construction and operational phases. Noise during the construction phase would be temporary and would be generally limited to daylight hours. Operation noise would consist of vehicular traffic coming to and from the facility and some incidental noise associated with increased human presence on site. Due to the undeveloped nature of the project area, impacts to sensitive receptors would be less than significant. With the exception of a seasonal residence that is located approximately 1,000 feet north of the site, no noise-sensitive land uses would remain on site after construction of the project. Noise would dissipate sufficiently at this distance. These factors combine to reduce the severity of potential noise impacts. Potential impacts would be insignificant. No mitigation is necessary.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

A site reconnaissance did not reveal any indications of hazardous material releases on the site. However, the site contains a pre-1978 construction house that was the subject of a limited asbestos and lead-based paint survey conducted by Winzler & Kelly Consulting Engineers (2003). The survey report concluded that the texturing and underlying sheetrock material of the living room ceiling contained chrysotile asbestos. The texturing was created by a swirled application of drywall joint compound material over the surface of the sheetrock. It appeared that the positive sample was collected from a small, patched area of the ceiling above a freestanding stovepipe. Other samples tested negative. Abatement, including removing the entire ceiling in large pieces would be required prior to demolition of this structure. The limited lead paint sampling and analysis indicated detectable levels of lead in several painted surfaces. However, the lead contents in the tested materials were less than 5,000 parts per million, or 0.5% by weight, which is the level above which paints are considered “lead-based”. A single pole-mounted transformer exists on site, which contains a PCB-safe sticker. No hazardous material releases are known to have occurred within 1 mile of the project site. No storage of hazardous materials is known to exist within 1 mile of the site. A gasoline storage facility exists just over 1 mile north of the site, east of Highway 101. Due to the long-time human habitation and use of the property, the potential exists for previously unidentified soil and/or groundwater contamination to be encountered during site preparation and construction activities at the project site. Precautions have been written into the project description (**Section 2.0**) to address this issue.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The site is located adjacent to a County-designated view corridor and within an area shown on the Del Norte County Local Coastal Element “Visual Resource Inventory” map. This area is one of seven identified by the Local Coastal Plan (LCP). It is also located near a segment of State-designated scenic highway. The property is included within South Beach, a significant “viewpoint” identified in the LCP, which extends to the northern boundary of Redwoods Park. The LCP describes South Beach as “an open sandy coastal strand providing views of the ocean and offshore rocks as well as the Sitka spruce grove and Sandmine Road wetland area east of the highway. Forested uplands are visible in the distance.” Land uses south of Crescent City to the Redwood National Park Boundary include: agriculture, commercial recreation, open space and industrial. Given the nearby commercial and industrial uses and advertising billboards, the scenic character of the area, including the Enderts Beach site, has already been somewhat diminished. However, development of the site is likely to further degrade the scenic character of the area. The LCP does not strictly prohibit development projects within highly scenic areas. Instead it offers policies and guidelines for development, which address colors, materials, design, placement, utilities and architectural review. Although the Enderts Beach Alternative would appear to have greater impacts to visual resources than the Proposed Action, compliance with Section V, Policies and Recommendations, of the Coastal Element (page 257-260) would ensure impacts to visual resources are reduced to the extent practicable. Assuming mitigation requiring architectural review would be required, and in the absence of clear visual policies, no significant impact to visual resources would occur.

Night Lighting

The site is located in an area that has relatively dark nighttime conditions. Glare from exterior lighting can be disruptive to neighborhood character. Excessive or poorly directed illumination can cause significant impacts to visual resources. Operation of the proposed gaming facility at night would require night lighting. This would be a significant impact and the mitigation described for the Proposed Action in **Section 5.0** is required.

4.10.5 ALTERNATIVE E – NO ACTION

NOISE

Under the No-Action Alternative, each site would continue to be utilized for existing land uses and would not result in significant noise impacts. Each parcel could be developed in the foreseeable future. Depending on the land use, the parcels could ultimately be a significant stationary or mobile source of noise.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Since each site would continue to be used for existing purposes, no significant hazardous material impacts would result.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Under the No-Action Alternative, each site would remain “as is” for an unknown period of time. No impacts to visual resources would occur.