INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

CENTRAL WATER SYSTEM NITRATE REMEDIATION PROJECT

FEBRUARY 2023

The Project is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. The nearest school to the Project site is, Sunnyside Elementary, 2.5 miles to the east of Plainview. Therefore, the Project would have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

Impact #3.4.9d – Would the Project be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

Literature review of available federal, State, and local database information systems was performed for the purpose of identifying known recognized environmental conditions present on the site and the nearby properties that have the potential to adversely impact the site (CalEPA, 2019). The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) website, indicated that there are no known hazardous or toxic sites in the vicinity (within one mile) of the Project site (Department of Toxic Substances Control, 2019).

The Project is not located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. The Project sites are not within the immediate vicinity of a hazardous materials site and would not impact a listed site. There is no data identifying any facilities in the vicinity that might reasonably be anticipated to emit hazardous air emissions or handle hazardous materials, substances, or wastes that might affect the proposed residential development. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant.***

Impact #3.4.9e – For a Project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area?

The Project is not located within a Tulare County Airport Land Use Plan boundary, Federal Aviation Administration designated civilian airport Runway Clear Zone, military airfield

Clear Zone, or an Accidental Potential Zone. The nearest airport is Eckert Field, located approximately five miles to the northeast of the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing in the Project area and there would be no impacts.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

Impact #3.4.9f – Would the Project Impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The Tulare County currently has adopted the 2018 Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJLHMP), an Area Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) and a 2011 Disaster Preparedness Guide (DPG). In the event of a large-scale emergency or disaster, response activities within Tulare County are guided by the Tulare County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The EOP, implements the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), and provides organizational structure and functional guidance through the Initial Response, Extended Response, and Recovery phases of operations (California Emergency Services Act, 2008).

Additionally, the proposed Project is required to adhere to County standards, which identifies the design standards for emergency access during both the Project's construction and operational phases. The Project would also comply with the appropriate local and State requirements regarding emergency response plans and access.

The construction and operation of an underground pipeline would not require long-term roadway closures, nor would it impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The proposed Project would not inhibit the ability of local roadways to continue to accommodate emergency response and evacuation activities.

The proposed Project will comply with all applicable emergency plan guidelines during construction and operations of the Project and in the event of an emergency, disaster, or evacuation event. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant.***

Impact #3.4.9g – Would the Project Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

The Project sites consists mainly of existing rural residential properties and semi-rural paved roads and existing road rights of way. The pipelines would be trenched in the existing rights of way that generally include gravel road shoulders, which is typical of roadways in the area. The Project is within a CalFire Local Responsibility Area (LRA). The closest FHSZ are located in the foothills at the end of Avenue 196, approximately 16.5 miles to the east (CalFire, 2020). The City of Plainview is within "Non-Fuel" to "Moderate" fire threat zones (Tulare County, 2012).

Therefore, the Project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands. Therefore, there would be no Project-specific Impacts.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact

3.4.10 - HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the Project:

a.	Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b.	Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c.	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
	(i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or offsite?	☐	☒	☐	☐
	(ii) Substantially increase the rate of amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result flooding on- or offsite?	☐	☒	☐	☐
	(iii) 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; or	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d.	In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to Project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e.	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Technical reports relied upon in this analysis include the *Plainview Wastewater System Project Feasibility Report Final EIR* (County of Tulare Resource Management Agency, 2016), the *Plainview Community Plan* (Tulare County Resources Management Agency, 2019a), and the *Plainview Wastewater System Project Feasibility Report* (Tulare County Resource Management Agency, 2016b), as well as the Revised Preliminary Engineering Report (QK, 2019b) and Test Well data memo (Schmidt, Ken, 2020), which are included in Appendix D.

Impact #3.4.10a – Would the Project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water quality?

Construction of the Project would involve excavation, soil stockpiling, mass and fine grading, the installation of supporting drainage facilities, and associated infrastructure. During site grading and construction activities, large areas of bare soil could be exposed to erosive forces for a period of time. Construction activities involving soil disturbance, excavation, cutting/filling, stockpiling and grading activities could result in increased erosion and sedimentation to surface waters.

As noted in Impact #3.4.7b, accidental spills or disposal of potentially harmful materials used during construction could possibly wash into and pollute surface water runoff. Materials that could potentially contaminate the construction area, or spill or leak, include diesel fuel, gasoline, lubrication oil, hydraulic fluid, antifreeze, transmission fluid, lubricating grease, and other fluids. In order to reduce potential impacts to water quality during construction activities, if required, the Project SWPPP, or implement standard BMPs targeted at minimizing and controlling construction runoff and erosion to the maximum extent practicable.

The Project would also install underground pipelines, however once installed, the pipeline would not result in increased runoff. The pipelines would be constructed within the existing road rights of way that typically collect stormwater runoff from the roadways.

In order to reduce potential impacts to water quality during construction and operation activities, Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would be required, if applicable. With mitigation, the Project is not anticipated to violate any water quality standards or result in significant impacts to the waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water quality and impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM GEO-1.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant with mitigation incorporated***.

Impact #3.4.10b – Would the Project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

See also Impact #3.4.19b.

The Project area is within the Tule subbasin of the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin within the Tulare Lake Hydraulic Region. The Tulare Lake Hydrologic Region has both watershed areas (surface water) and groundwater sub-basin areas (Tulare County Resource Management Agency, 2016b).

The PMWC is located within the East Kaweah GSA (EKGSA) boundary and included in the East Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Plan. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) each GSA to adopt a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The EKGSA adopted a GSP in January 2020 (Greater Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency, 2020). The groundwater basin is in overdraft and has been for years. However, the GSP outlines several Projects and Management Actions to sustainably manage the groundwater basin and reduce overdraft that include recharge through the management of floodwater, the addition of new recharge basins, the reduction in water usage for agricultural cultivation, and water conservation programs to encourage reduction in public water uses.

The Project would not interfere with groundwater recharge or impede sustainable groundwater management. The current water services to Plainview are provided by two systems, PMWC and PMWC – Central, but after Project construction PMWC will include all the residential and commercial connections east and west of Road 196 . The proposed Project will replace the PCWC – Central water connections and install remote reading water meters to the approximately 43 houses. The new supply well will pump water out of a deeper aquifer that is not contaminated by nitrates. The old well will be disconnected and properly abandoned; therefore the Project will not increase groundwater usage.

The Project includes the existing 43 household connections but does not include providing additional connections. Increases in population between now and 2030 are expected to be approximately 1.3 percent, but represent changes in demographics of younger families replacing older community residents (Tulare County, 2019a). Therefore, the Project would not increase demand beyond current baseline levels and therefore would not decrease groundwater levels or exceed available water supplies. The Project will be in compliance with all applicable plans and will not decrease groundwater supplies. Therefore, impacts from the Project would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.10c(i) –Would the Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or offsite?

See Impacts #3.4.7b and #3.4.10a. The proposed Project underground distribution pipeline system would not result in a change in drainage patterns or increased runoff. The pipeline would be constructed within existing road rights of way that typically collect stormwater runoff from the roadways. Following construction, the trenches would be backfilled and restored to roadways and gravel roadway shoulders (Tulare County Resource Management Agency, 2016b). During construction of the well and water infrastructure, the Project may be required to prepare a SWPPP or linear SWPPP to minimize erosion or soil loss onsite. Mitigation Measure GEO-1 requires the preparation of a linear SWPPP, if applicable.

The Project water storage tank and supply well will alter the existing drainage pattern of a 0.25 acre portion of the parcel by constructing a concrete pad and other structures. Although the Project storage tank and supply well will change the drainage pattern on the parcel, stormwater would be managed in compliance with County standards. The Project site is not anticipated to substantially alter the drainage pattern of the area in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or offsite. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact with the implemented mitigation measures.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM GEO-1.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated*.

Impact #3.4.10c(ii) – Would the Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would substantially increase the rate of amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result flooding on- or offsite?

See Impacts #3.4.7b, #3.4.10a and #3.4.10c(i).

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implementation of Mitigation Measure MM GEO-1.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated*.

Impact #3.4.10c(iii) – Would the Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would 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?

See Impacts #3.4.7b, #3.4.10a and #3.4.10c(i). The extent of erosion on a site would typically vary depending upon slope steepness and stability, vegetation, percentage of cover, concentration of runoff, and weather conditions. The proposed underground pipeline would not result in increased runoff. The pipeline would be constructed within existing road rights of way and the trenches would be backfilled and restored to roadways and gravel roadway shoulders. The Project site where the new well and water storage tank will be located is flat with little or no topography. Therefore, the Project would not 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. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.10c(iv) – Would the Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would impede or redirect flood flows?

See Impacts #3.4.7b and #3.4.10a-c(iii). The Project sites are flat and are in a minimal flood hazard area (Figure 3.4.10-1). The Project will not impede or redirect floodwaters through the addition of impervious surfaces in a manner which would impedes or redirects flood flows. Therefore, the Project will have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.10d – Would the Project, in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to Project inundation?

The Project is not within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map of a 100-year flood zone, as shown in Figure 3.4.10-1. Project Well and Tank site is located within the FEMA Flood Hazard Zone X: Area of Minimal Flood Hazard, and therefore the potential for flooding at the site appears to be very low. However, the additional solar arrays are within the area east of Road 196 is within the 500 year floodplain. Work in that area will be conducted within areas with existing wells and other water-related infrastructure, such as pumps, tanks etc. The addition of a small solar array will be constructed to meet Tulare County and State building codes, and will be designed with additional engineering to withstand potential flooding during major rain events. Therefore, the Project as a whole will not significantly risk release of pollutants during inundation.

The Project sites are not located near the ocean or a steep topographic feature (i.e., mountain, hill, bluff, etc.). Tsunamis are waves generated in oceans from seismic activity. Due to the inland location of the sites, tsunamis are not considered a hazard for the sites. Therefore, there is no potential for the sites to be inundated by tsunami or mudflow. There is no body of water within the vicinity of the Project sites. A seiche is a wave generated by the periodic oscillation of a body of water whose period is a function of the resonant characteristics of the containing basin as controlled by its physical dimensions. There is no potential for inundation of the Project sites by seiche. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant***.

Impact #3.4.10e – Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

See Impact #3.4.10b.

The Project area is within the Tule subbasin of the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin within the Tulare Lake Hydraulic Region, and within the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) adopted by the Greater Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency. provides location-specific sustainable management criteria (SMC) for four of the six sustainability indicators, including establishing minimum thresholds and measurable objectives with integrated interim milestones (Greater Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency, 2020). The proposed Project would not increase water demand or induce population growth that would negatively impact groundwater levels conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the Tulare County Water Quality Control Plan or the Greater Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Plan. The District complies with all water quality and sustainable groundwater management requirements; therefore, impacts are less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.12b – Would the Project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

See Impact #3.4.12a. The Project sites are not located in or near a known mineral resource zone as identified by the Tulare General Plan (Tulare County, 2012). There would be no significant loss of a local important mineral resource recovery site. According to U.S. Geological Survey, the nearest active mine and mineral production plant to the Project is Porterville Ready-mix Sand Pit a hard rock, gravel and sand pit operating within the Tule River Floodplain west of Porterville, approximately 5.3 miles southeast of Plainview. The proposed Project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan. Therefore, no impact would occur.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
3.4.13 - NOISE					
Would the Project result in:					
a.	Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in a local general plan or noise ordinance or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b.	Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c.	For a Project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The Plainview Wastewater System Feasibility EIR was relied upon for the following Noise Impact discussions (Tulare County Resource Management Agency, 2016b).

Impact #3.4.13a – Would the Project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in a local general plan or noise ordinance or applicable standards of other agencies?

Project construction would involve temporary, short-term noise sources and is expected to last for approximately nine months. Construction-related short-term, temporary noise levels would be higher than existing ambient noise levels in the Project area but would not occur after construction is completed. The Tulare County Health and Safety Element does not identify short-term, construction noise-level thresholds. It limits noise generating activities (such as construction) to hours of normal business operation unless specific County approval is given. Construction-related activities would be restricted to daytime hours and would be short-term and temporary in nature. Construction activities are expected to last for approximately nine months. Construction, operation and maintenance noise would be similar in character to existing noise in the area resulting from existing neighboring agricultural-related operations. Table 3.4.13-1 illustrates various types of construction equipment measured under a wide variety of construction activities with an

average of source levels. Although the table gives one level for each piece of equipment, it should be noted that there is a considerable variation in reported ground vibration levels from construction activities. The data provide a reasonable estimate for a wide range of soil conditions (Federal Transit Administration , 2006).

Table 3.4.13-1
Typical Construction Noise Emission Levels
Typical Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	Typical Noise Level (dBA) 50 ft from Source
Truck	88
Compactor	82
Roller	72
Loader	85
Backhoe	80

Notes:
1 – Federal Transit Administration, Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Guidelines, May 2006. Table 12-1.
D = the distance from the equipment to the receiver

Complying with Tulare County General Plan Policies applicable to noise (particularly HS-8.11 Peak Noise Generators, HS-8.18 Construction Noise, and HS-8.19 Construction Noise Control), the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant***.

Impact #3.4.13b – Would the Project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

There are no federal or State standards that address construction noise or vibration. Additionally, Tulare County does not have regulations that define acceptable levels of vibration. One reference suggesting vibration standards is the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) publication concerning noise and vibration impact assessment from transit activities. Although the FTA guidelines are to be applied to transit activities and construction, they may be reasonably applied to the assessment of the potential for annoyance or structural damage resulting from other activities. To prevent vibration annoyance in residences, a level of 80 VdB (vibration velocity level in dB) or less is suggested when there are fewer than 70 vibration events per day. A level of 100 VdB or less is suggested by the FTA guidelines to prevent damage to fragile buildings. Table 3.4.13-2 describes the typical construction equipment vibration levels. While these construction-

related activities would result in minor amounts of groundborne vibration, such groundborne noise or vibration would attenuate rapidly from the source and would not be generally perceptible outside of the construction areas. In addition, there would not be any vibrational impacts from operation and maintenance activities.

Table 3.4.13-2
Typical Construction Vibration Levels
Typical Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	Reference peak particle velocity at 25 feet (inches/second)[1]	Approximate peak particle velocity at 100 feet (inches/second)[2]
Loaded trucks	0.076	0.010
Vibratory compactor/roller	0.210	0.026

Notes:
1 – Federal Transit Administration, Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Guidelines, May 2006. Table 12-2.
2 – Calculated using the following formula: PPV equip = PPVref x (25/D)1.5
where:PPV (equip) = the peak particle velocity in in/sec of the equipment adjusted for the distance PPV (ref) = the reference vibration level in in/sec from Table 12-2 of the FTA Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Guidelines
D = the distance from the equipment to the receiver

Construction related activities in general can have the potential to create groundborne vibrations. However, based on the soil types found in the general Project vicinity, blasting or pile-driving would not be required in connection with construction of the Project. Therefore, the potential for groundborne vibrations to occur as part of the construction of the Project is considered minimal. Furthermore, operation of the Project would not contain any activities which would create groundborne vibrations. The proposed Project would not result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.13c – For a Project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?

The Project is not within two miles of an airport or Airport Land Use Plan. The nearest airport is Exeter Field, located approximately five miles to the northeast of the Project site. Also, as the Project would not impact a public or public use airport. See Impact #3.4.13a,

for Project comments on excessive noise levels to people residing or working in the Project area. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact

3.4.14 - POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the Project

a.	Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b.	Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

This analysis is based on the Plainview Community Plan (Tulare County, 2019a), and Plainview Wastewater System Feasibility EIR (Tulare County Resource Management Agency, 2016b).

Impact #3.4.14a – Would the Project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

The intent of this Project is to remedy a groundwater contamination caused by seepage of nitrates into the underground water supply. Digging a new well to connect to a deeper aquifer for cleaner water would accomplish this goal. In addition to digging a new well, the Project will replace the existing water distribution system pipeline, construct a water storage tank and upgrade the water metering system used in the community. The Project will not cause Plainview's population growth or economic development beyond what has been anticipated and analyzed in the Tulare General Plan or Plainview Community Plan. No roadways or infrastructure in the Project area will be extended. The proposed water system would be sized to serve the community's existing needs (including replacing the 31-connection to existing single-family homes within the community's Urban Development Boundary) and would not provide additional capacity that could accommodate a substantial amount of future development.

Therefore, the proposed Project would not induce substantial population growth in the area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure). Therefore, the proposed Project would have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

Impact #3.4.14b – Would the Project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The project will replace the 43-connection to existing single-family homes but will not add connections to new single-family homes. The Project includes the replacement of an existing water system and will not displace housing or require replacement housing. Therefore, the Project would have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact

3.4.15 - PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the Project:

a.	Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
	(i) Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	(ii) Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	(iii) Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	(iv) Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	(v) Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

Impact #3.4.15a(i) – Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services - Fire Protection?

The Project is within the service area of the Tulare County Fire Department. The proposed underground water distribution pipeline system will not require electricity or flammable materials that could ignite a fire. The potential for a fire to ignite at the water storage tank and supply well is unlikely and would not pose a significant threat to nearby properties.

The Tulare County Fire Department provides fire protection and emergency medical services to the Community of Plainview. Tulare County Fire Department Station #16 located at 22908 Avenue 196 in Strathmore, California (approximately, four miles east of Plainview). Station #16 has Patrol 16 and Engine 16 assigned to Plainview. Additionally, there are seventeen fire hydrants within the Plainview that are located within road rights

of way. The additional water storage capacity will provide fire hydrants with a sufficient water supply and water pressure to meet County fire standards, and will comply with all local, State and federal building codes, development standards and regulations where applicable. The Project is not anticipated to result in substantial or adverse impacts to fire protection services. Therefore, the Project would have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

Impact #3.4.15a(ii) – Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services – Police Protection?

The County of Tulare's Sheriff's Office that operates out of Porterville, located at 379 N. 3rd Street, approximately 8.5 miles southeast of Plainview and provides police protection services to the Project area. The Project will not increase the local population and it is not expected that the Project will result in significant environmental impacts related to acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives police protection services. Police service response is, and would remain, adequate to the Project and surrounding areas. The proposed Project is not anticipated to require active police protection. Therefore, the Project would have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

Impact #3.4.15a(iii) – Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services – Schools?

See Impacts #3.4.15a(i) and (ii). The Plainview Community is within the Sunnyside Union Elementary School District located at 21644 Avenue 196, Strathmore, California, approximately 2.5 miles east of Plainview. The proposed Project would not result in the

creation of new residences or other facilities that could result in an increase in population or need for new schools. Therefore, the Project would have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

Impact #3.4.15a(iv) – Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services – Parks?

See Impacts #3.4.15a(i) through (iii). The nearby Plainview Neighborhood Park, donated by the PMWC, is located at Road 198 and Avenue 194 within the Project area.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

Impact #3.4.15a(v) – Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services – Other Public Facilities?

See Impacts #3.4.15a(i) through (iii). The Project does not involve the creation of new residences or expansion of existing facilities that could result in an increase in population such that additional facilities would be needed. Therefore, the Project would have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact

3.4.16 - RECREATION

Would the Project:

a.	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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b.	Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The Plainview Wastewater System Feasibility EIR (Tulare County Resource Management Agency, 2016b) and the Plainview Community Plan were relied upon (Tulare County Resources Management Agency, 2019a) for the following discussions.

Impact #3.4.16a – Would the Project 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?

The Project will remedy an existing public health issue within the unincorporated community of Plainview. The Project is intended to serve the same amounts of residents in Plainview as the current system. These improvements are not intended to provide additional capacity for substantial amounts of future development. Typically, the increased use of parks and recreational facilities result from the addition of new housing and the corresponding population increase. No new housing is proposed as part of the proposed Project. Therefore, the Project would have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

Impact #3.4.16b – Would the Project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

See Impact #3.4.16a, above. The Project would have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
3.4.17 - TRANSPORTATION				
Would the Project:				
a. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Impact #3.4.17a – Would the Project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

The Project will not construct any new circulation (transit) systems, roadways, bicycle or pedestrian facilities. The Project would result in short-term, temporary traffic impacts during the installation phase of the new pipeline, but because the route is along the existing shoulder of the road, these impacts would be minimal. Following completion, Project would not generate vehicle trips, with the exception of routine maintenance-related trips. There is no increase in staff or increase the traffic in the area.

New intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit are not required by the Plainview Community Plan as it does not contain plans for development, construction or new transportation infrastructure (Tulare County, 2019a).

Therefore, the Project would not conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and nonmotorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit. Therefore, the Project would have less-than-significant impacts.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant.*

Impact #3.4.17b – Would the Project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

See Impact #3.4.17a, above.

Trips made to the Project site during construction-related activities will be temporary in nature and will include workers and equipment from the local areas. The construction will require approximately 16-20 crew members for a period of approximately nine months. Following completion, the Project would not generate additional vehicle trips, with the exception of routine maintenance-related trips. Therefore, the Project will have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant.*

Impact #3.4.17c – Would the Project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

The Project does not consist of any elements that would substantially increase hazards as a result of a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or have incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). The majority of the Project (distribution pipelines) will be installed underground; the aboveground components include the water well and pump station, the storage tank, solar arrays and supporting infrastructure. However, all construction will occur on the Project sites and will not create dangerous intersections or curves. Once complete, the excavated roadway shoulders will be backfilled and returned to their existing conditions. Therefore, Project impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant.*

Impact #3.4.17d – Would the Project result in inadequate emergency access?

Construction-related activities associated with the Project could temporarily interrupt access along the affected local roadways. However, the interruptions would not occur simultaneously and would be no longer than a few hours while trenching and installation-related activities occurs. The construction-related activities associated with the Project may also temporarily impact vehicle travel lanes while the pipelines are being installed underneath the existing rights of way. However, emergency access to the Project site and community in general would not be impacted.

The proposed Project would be required to comply with all emergency access requirements adopted and set forth in the Tulare County Municipal Code. These requirements and all others required to be included in the Project design. Therefore, emergency access impacts will be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
3.4.18 - TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES				
Would the Project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
(i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☒	☐	☐
(ii) A resource determined by the Lead Agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the Lead Agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion

On May 10, 2022, a Project notification letter with invitation to consult on the Project was emailed to the designated contact of the tribe on the State Water Board's Assembly Bill (AB) 52 list for Tulare County, the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe. The Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe did not request consultation.

Additional steps were made to identify tribal cultural resources in the Project area including, a Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) sacred lands files (SLF) search request and outreach letters to tribes on the NAHC contact list for the Project area. The NAHC provided the results of its SLF search dated September 19, 2019, indicating "negative results" (that is, no sacred lands are known to be located in the Plainview Planning area). ASM Affiliates, Inc., also contacted the Native American tribes on the NAHC contact list

March 19, 2019, regarding the presence of known tribal cultural resources: Kern Valley Indian Council; Santa Rosa Racheria; Tubatulabals of Kern County; Tule River Indian Tribe; and Wuksache Indian Tribe. None of the tribes responded to the outreach letters or identified tribal cultural resources in the Project area. No tribal cultural resources were identified in the Project area resulting from the cultural resources study (see Section 3.4.5) or from any of the tribal outreach.

Impact #3.4.18a(i) – Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is – listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)?

Neither the cultural resources study performed by ASM (see Appendix C) or the State Water Board's tribal outreach identified tribal cultural resource in the Project area. If cultural resources are discovered during construction that could be tribal cultural resources, the implementation of CUL-1 and CUL-2 would reduce impacts to tribal cultural resources to less-than-significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant with mitigation incorporated***.

Impact #3.4.18a(ii) – Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is – a resource determined by the Lead Agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the Lead Agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?

See discussion for Impacts #3.4.5a through#3.4.5c and Impact #3.4.18a(i), above.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant with mitigation incorporated***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
3.4.19 - UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS				
Would the Project:				
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the Project that it has adequate capacity to serve the Project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The *Plainview Wastewater System Feasibility EIR* (Tulare County Resource Management Agency, 2016b) and the *Plainview Community Plan* were relied upon (Tulare County Resources Management Agency, 2019a) for the following Utilities and Service Systems Impact discussions.

Impact #3.4.19a – Would the Project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

The well currently being used by the PMWC contains produces water with high levels of the primary nitrate contaminate that are above the maximum contaminate level of 10 micrograms per liter (μg/L) as established by the State. The proposed Project consists of the construction of a new supply well, well pump to provide clean drinking water, replacement of the current distribution system pipeline and 43 service-connections, and construction of a 250,000-gallon storage tank. Approximately 187 existing meters will require upgrades that allow remote meter readings. The new supply well will pump water out of a deeper aquifer that is not contaminated by nitrates. The Proposed project will replace the existing system but will not result in an expanded water system.

The proposed Project will also install 100 kW photovoltaic (PV) solar array system. The PV system is estimated to generate 161,263 kWh/year that will supplement the project's annual energy usage.

Once operational, the water system and accompanying solar arrays will be serviced and maintained by the PMWC. The Project will not be relocating or expanding water lines, wastewater treatment systems, electrical power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities. Therefore, the Project will have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant.***

Impact #3.4.19b – Would the Project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

See Impacts #3.4.10b and #3.4.10e.

The Project will not increase water demand or induce population growth that would negatively impact available water supplies to serve the Project during normal, dry and multiple dry years. Therefore, the Project will have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant.***

Impact #3.4.19c – Would the Project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the Project that it has adequate capacity to serve the Project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

The Project water distribution pipelines will be separate from the wastewater system and will not be adding or connecting to the wastewater pipelines. The Project will not be expanding the service requirements to the local wastewater system and would not require a determination by the wastewater provider for capacity requirements to the area. As indicated in the *Plainview Wastewater System Feasibility Report,* "[T]he City of Lindsay's wastewater treatment facility has adequate capacity to serve Plainview", this Project will not impact the current wastewater system (Tulare County Resource Management Agency, 2016b).

The County of Tulare makes note that the remainder of residences in Plainview rely on individual septic systems (Tulare County, 2012). The Project will only be involved with replacing the current water distribution pipeline system, constructing a new supply well and 250,000gallon storage tank. The Project would not result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves the Project area that is has adequate capacity to serve the Projects projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant.***

Impact #3.4.19d – Would the Project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

This Project would generate solid waste from construction activities related to site preparation for the supply well and storage tank. Solid wastes would include demolition materials from existing trees and structures. There are two landfills within proximity of Plainview where solid waste can be disposed of. All solid waste will be collected and removed from the site and be disposed at either the Teapot Dome Landfill, located at 12063 Avenue 128, approximately ten miles southeast of Plainview or at the Visalia Landfill, located at 8614 Avenue 328, approximately 22 miles north west of Plainview. The Teapot Dome landfill is at 80% capacity while the Visalia landfill is much larger and has 24 years left before it is expected to be at capacity (CalRecycle, 2019).

The Project will comply with State and local standards by properly disposing of any Project related solid waste. The Project is not expected to result in excessive amounts of solid waste that would be in excess of State or local standards or be in excess of the capacity of

local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Therefore, the Project will have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant.***

Impact #3.4.19e – Would the Project comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

See discussion for Impact #3.4.19d, above.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant.***

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
3.4.20 - WILDFIRE				
If located in or near State responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project:				
a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose Project occupants to, pollutant concentration from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Impact #3.4.20a – If located in or near State responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The Project sites consists mainly of existing rural and semi-rural paved roads and existing road rights of way. The pipelines would be trenched in the existing rights of way that generally consist of gravel road shoulders, which is typical of roadways in the area. According to CalFire, all of the Plainview community is in a Local Responsibility Area (LRA). There are no Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) within the Project area or in the Plainview Community. The closest FHSZ are located in the foothills at the end of Avenue 196, approximately 16.5 miles to the east. Therefore, the Project is not located in or near a FHSZ and would not impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant.*

Impact #3.4.20b – If located in or near State responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose Project occupants to, pollutant concentration from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

All of the Plainview community is in an LRA; the Project is not located in or near a SRA or a High HFSZ (CALFIRE, 2019); see also Impact #3.20a above. The Project site consists mainly of existing rural and semi-rural paved roads and existing road rights of way. The pipelines would be trenched in the existing rights of way that generally consist of gravel road shoulders. The Project area is flat with no slopes, there are no prevailing winds or other factors that would exacerbate wildfire risks, or that would expose occupants to, pollutant concentration from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. Therefore, the Project would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant.*

Impact #3.4.20c – If located in or near State responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

See Impacts #3.4.20a-b, above. The Project sites consists mainly of existing rural and semi-rural paved roads and existing road rights of way. The pipelines would be trenched in the existing rights of way that generally consist of gravel road shoulders. The Project would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. Therefore, the Project will have no impact.

The Project is not located within 350 feet of high voltage transmission lines. Based on available data, the nearest high voltage electric transmission lines are outside the eastern city limits of Avenal (California Energy Commission, 2020). The Project would require the

installation or maintenance of additional distribution lines to connect the residences to the existing utility grid. However, the Project would be constructed in accordance with all local and State regulations regarding power lines and other related infrastructure, as well as fire suppression requirements. Therefore, the Project would not exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment and impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be ***no impact***.

Impact #3.4.20d – If located in or near State responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

See Impacts #3.4.20a-c above. The Project will be replacing the existing underground water distribution pipeline and constructing a new supply well and a storage tank. It is not expected that such activities would result in a fire hazard or expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage change. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be ***less than significant.***

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
3.4.21 - MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
a. Does the Project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. Does the Project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a Project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past Projects, the effects of other current Projects, and the effects of probable future Projects.)	☐	☒	☐	☐
c. Does the Project have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion

Impact #3.4.21a – Does the Project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

As evaluated in this IS/MND, the proposed Project is not expected to result in or substantially degrade the quality of the environment; substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species; cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels; threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community; reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species; or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. With recommended mitigation, MM

BIO-1 through MM BIO-7, the proposed Project would reduce or eliminated potential impacts to sensitive species such as but not limited San Joaquin kit fox, burrowing owl, Swainson's hawk, by implementing avoidance and minimization measures.

As noted in the IS/MND, it is unlikely implementation of the Project will impact cultural resources. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 and CUL-2 would reduce potential impacts to less-than-significant levels in the unlikely event unknown cultural resources be inadvertently discovered during construction.

Therefore, the Project does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact with mitigation incorporated.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM BIO-1 through MM BIO-7; CUL-1 and CUL-2.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Project would have a ***less-than-significant impact with mitigation incorporated***.

Impact #3.4.21b - Does the Project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a Project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past Projects, the effects of other current Projects, and the effects of probable future Projects.)?

As described in the impact analyses in Sections 3.4.1 through 3.4.20 of this IS/MND, any potentially significant impacts of the proposed Project would be reduced to a less-than-significant level following incorporation of the mitigation measures listed in *Section 4*, *Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Plan*. Projects completed in the past have also implemented mitigation as necessary. Accordingly, the proposed Project would not otherwise combine with impacts of related development to add considerably to any cumulative impacts in the region. With mitigation, the proposed Project would not have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-cumulatively-considerable impact with mitigation incorporated.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM BIO-1 through MM BIO-7, MM CUL-1 through MM CUL-2, MM GEO-1 and MM GEO-2.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Project would have a ***less-than-significant impact with mitigation incorporated***.

Impact #3.4.21c - Does the Project have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

All of the Project's impacts, both direct and indirect, that are attributable to the Project were identified and mitigated. As shown in *Section 4*, *Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Plan*, the Lead Agency has agreed to implement mitigation, substantially reducing or eliminating impacts from the Project. Therefore, the proposed Project would not either directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects on human beings because all potentially adverse direct impacts of the proposed Project are identified as having no impact, less-than-significant impact, or less-than-significant impact with mitigation.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures MM BIO-1 through MM BIO-7, MM CUL-1 through MM CUL-2, MM GEO-1 and MM GEO-2.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Project would have a ***less-than-significant impact with mitigation incorporated***.

SECTION 4 - MITIGATION, MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	**Mitigation Measure**	**Time Frame for Implementation**	**Responsible Monitoring Agency**	**Date**	**Initials**
3.4.1	**Aesthetics**				
	No Mitigation required.				
3.4.2	**Agriculture and Forest Resources**				
	No Mitigation required.				
3.4.3	**Air Quality**				
	No Mitigation required.				
3.4.4	**Biological Resources**				
#1	**MM BIO-1:** No less than 14 days prior to the start of Project ground disturbance activities in any specific area, a pre-activity clearance survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist knowledgeable in the identification of listed species. The surveys shall cover the Project site plus a 500-foot buffer. Pedestrian surveys achieving 100 percent visual coverage shall be conducted. Multiple surveys are anticipated to be needed as each Project phase is initiated. If no evidence of special-status species is detected, no further action is required.	At least 14 days prior to the start of Project ground-disturbing activities	PMWC /Contractor		
		Steps to Compliance: A. At least 14 days prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities, a pre-activity clearance survey shall be performed by a qualified biologist. B. If necessary, the qualified biologist shall contact CDFW and USFWS to determine next steps. C. If necessary, the qualified biologist shall implement next steps in consultation with the wildlife agencies. D. The qualified biologist shall prepare a brief report to be submitted to the wildlife agencies within 5 working days of completion of the preconstruction survey. E. The project proponent shall submit evidence of compliance to SWRCB- Division of Financial Assistance to verify compliance.			
#2	**MM BIO-2:** If dens/burrows that could support the San Joaquin kit fox are discovered during the pre-construction surveys conducted under	During pre-activity surveys	PMWC /Contractor		

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	**Mitigation Measure**	**Time Frame for Implementation**	**Responsible Monitoring Agency**	**Date**	**Initials**
	BIO-1, the avoidance buffers outlined below shall be established. No work would occur within these buffers unless the biologist approves and monitors the activity. • Potential Den – 50 feet • Atypical Den – 50 feet (includes pipes and other man-made structures) • Known Den – 100 feet • Natal/Pupping Den – 500 feet	**Steps to Compliance:** A. At least 14 days prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities, a pre-activity clearance survey shall be performed by a qualified biologist. If a den is found, no work would be permitted unless a qualified biologist approves and monitors the activity. B. The project proponent shall submit evidence of compliance to SWRCB- Division of Financial Assistance to verify compliance.			
#3	**MM BIO-3:** The following avoidance and minimization measures shall be implemented during all phases of the Project to reduce the potential for impact from the Project. They are modified from the *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Standardized Recommendations for Protection of the Endangered San Joaquin Kit Fox Prior to or During Ground Disturbance* (USFWS 2011). • Project-related vehicles shall observe a daytime speed limit of 20 mph throughout the site in all Project areas, except on County roads and State and federal highways. • All Project activities shall occur during daylight hours, but if work must be conducted at night then a night-time construction speed limit of 10 mph shall be established. • Off-road traffic outside of designated Project areas shall be prohibited. • To prevent inadvertent entrapment of kit foxes or other animals during construction of the Project, all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches more than two feet deep shall	Throughout all phases of the Project	PMWC /Contractor		
		Steps to Compliance: A. The project proponent shall submit evidence of compliance to SWRCB- Division of Financial Assistance to verify compliance with the measures listed in the mitigation measure throughout construction activities.			

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	**Mitigation Measure**	**Time Frame for Implementation**	**Responsible Monitoring Agency**	**Date**	**Initials**
	be covered at the close of each working day by plywood or similar materials. If the trenches cannot be closed, one or more escape ramps constructed of earthen-fill or wooden planks shall be installed. • Before holes or trenches are filled, they shall be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals. If at any time a trapped or injured kit fox is discovered, the USFWS and the CDFW shall be contacted before proceeding with the work. • In the case of trapped animals, escape ramps or structures shall be installed immediately to allow the animal(s) to escape, or the USFWS and CDFW shall be contacted for guidance. • All construction pipes, culverts, or similar structures with a diameter of four inches or greater that are stored at a construction site for one or more overnight periods shall be thoroughly inspected for kit foxes and burrowing owls before the pipe is subsequently buried, capped, or otherwise used or moved in any way. If a kit fox is discovered inside a pipe, that section of pipe shall not be moved until the USFWS has been consulted. If necessary, and under the direct supervision of the biologist, the pipe may be moved only once to remove it from the path of construction activity, until the fox has escaped. • All food-related trash items such as wrappers, cans, bottles, and food scraps shall be disposed of in securely closed containers and removed at least once a week from a construction or Project site. • No firearms shall be allowed on the Project site. • No pets, such as dogs or cats, shall be permitted on the				

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	**Mitigation Measure**	**Time Frame for Implementation**	**Responsible Monitoring Agency**	**Date**	**Initials**
	Project site. • Project-related use of rodenticides and herbicides shall be restricted. • A representative shall be appointed by the Project proponent who will be the contact source for any employee or contractor who might inadvertently kill or injure a kit fox or who finds a dead, injured or entrapped kit fox. The representative shall be identified during the employee education program and their name and telephone number shall be provided to the USFWS and CDFW. • Upon completion of the Project, all areas subject to temporary ground disturbances (including storage and staging areas, temporary roads, pipeline corridors, etc.) shall be recontoured if necessary, and revegetated to promote restoration of the area to pre-project conditions. An area subject to "temporary" disturbance means any area that is disturbed during the Project, but after project completion will not be subject to further disturbance and has the potential to be revegetated. • Any Project personnel who are responsible for inadvertently killing or injuring one of these species shall immediately report the incident to their representative. This representative shall contact the CDFW and USFWS immediately in the case of a dead, injured or entrapped listed animal. • The Sacramento Fish and Wildlife office and CDFW Region 4 office shall be notified in writing within three working days of the accidental death or injury to a San Joaquin kit fox during project related activities. Notification must include the date,				

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	**Mitigation Measure**	**Time Frame for Implementation**	**Responsible Monitoring Agency**	**Date**	**Initials**
	time, and location of the incident or of the finding of a dead or injured animal and any other pertinent information. • New sightings of San Joaquin kit fox shall be reported to the California Natural Diversity Database. A copy of the reporting form and a topographic map clearly marked with the location of where the kit fox was observed shall also be provided to the USFWS.				
#4	**MM BIO-4:** If Project construction activities must occur during the nesting season (February 15 to August 31), pre-activity nesting bird surveys shall be conducted within seven days prior to the start of construction at the construction site plus a 250-foot buffer for songbirds and a 500-foot buffer for raptors (other than Swainson's hawk). The surveys shall be phased with construction of the Project. If no active nests are found, no further action is required. However, nests may become active at any time throughout the summer, including when construction activities are in progress. If active nests are found during the survey or at any time during construction of the Project, an avoidance buffer ranging from 50 feet to 500 feet may be required, with the avoidance buffer from any specific nest being determined by a qualified biologist. The avoidance buffer will remain in place until the biologist has determined that the young are no longer reliant on the nest. Work may occur within the avoidance buffer under the approval and guidance of the biologist, but full-time monitoring may be required. The biologist shall have the ability to stop construction if nesting adults show sign of distress.	Nesting season (February 1 to September 15) A. The project proponent shall be responsible for a pre-activity nesting bird survey within seven days prior to the start of construction at the construction site plus a 250-foot buffer for songbirds and a 500-foot buffer for raptors (other than Swainson's hawk), which shall be performed by a qualified biologist. The project proponent shall submit evidence of compliance to PMWC to verify compliance. B. If active nests are found during the breeding season, then a sufficient buffer shall be established until the nests are vacated, juveniles have fledged, and there is no evidence of a subsequent attempt at nesting. C. If necessary, the qualified biologist shall act as a construction monitor. D. If necessary, the qualified biologist shall prepare a brief report to be submitted to SWRCB- Division of Financial Assistance and CDFW within 30 days of completion of the preconstruction survey. E. The project proponent shall submit evidence of compliance to SWRCB- Division of Financial Assistance to verify compliance.	PMWC /Contractor		

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	**Mitigation Measure**	**Time Frame for Implementation**	**Responsible Monitoring Agency**	**Date**	**Initials**
#5	**MM BIO-5:** If Project construction activities must occur during the nesting season (February 15 to August 31), pre-activity surveys shall be conducted for Swainson's hawk nests in accordance with the *Recommended Timing and Methodology for Swainson's Hawk Nesting Surveys in California's Central Valley*, Swainson's Hawk Technical Advisory Committee (CDFW 2000). The surveys would be conducted on the Project site plus a 0.5-mile buffer. To meet the minimum level of protection for the species, surveys shall be conducted during at least two survey periods. The survey will be conducted in accordance with the methodology outlined in existing protocols and shall phased with construction of the Project. If no Swainson's hawk nests are found, no further action is required.	Nesting season (February 1 to September 15)	PMWC /Contractor		
		A. The project proponent shall ensure a pre-activity survey is completed for Swainson's hawk if during nesting season. The project proponent shall submit evidence of compliance to SWRCB- Division of Financial Assistance to verify compliance.			
#6	**MM BIO-6:** If an active Swainson's hawk nest is discovered at any time within 0.5 miles of active construction, a qualified biologist will complete an assessment of the potential for current construction activities to impact the nest. The assessment will consider the type of construction activities, the location of construction relative to the nest, the visibility of construction activities from the nest location, and other existing disturbances in the area that are not related to construction activities of this Project. Based on this assessment, the biologist will determine if construction activities can proceed and the level of nest monitoring required. Construction activities shall not occur within 500 feet of an active nest but depending upon conditions at the site this distance may be reduced. Full-time monitoring to evaluate the effects of construction activities on nesting Swainson's hawks may be required. The qualified biologist shall have the authority to stop work if it is determined that Project construction is disturbing the nest. These buffers may need to increase depending on the sensitivity of the nest location, the sensitivity of the nesting Swainson's hawk to disturbances, and at the discretion of the	During construction	PMWC/Contractor		
		A. The project proponent shall be responsible for compliance and shall provide verify of compliance to SWRCB- Division of Financial Assistance.			

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	**Mitigation Measure**	**Time Frame for Implementation**	**Responsible Monitoring Agency**	**Date**	**Initials**
	qualified biologist.				
#7	**MM BIO-7:** Prior to the initiation of construction activities, all personnel shall attend a Worker Environmental Awareness Training program developed by a qualified biologist. The program shall include information on the life histories of special-status species with potential to occur on the Project, their legal status, course of action shall these species be encountered onsite, and avoidance and minimization measures to protect these species.	Prior to initiation of construction activities	PMWC /Contractor		
		A. The project proponent shall ensure all construction workers complete the Worker Environmental Awareness Training program, which shall be performed by a qualified biologist prior to construction. A sign-in sheet verifying compliance shall be submitted to SWRCB- Division of Financial Assistance to verify compliance. B. An acknowledgement form signed by each worker indicating that environmental training has been completed shall be kept on record. C. A copy of the training materials, as well as a list of the names of all personnel who attended the training and copies of the signed acknowledgement forms shall be submitted to SWRCB- Division of Financial Assistance. D. A copy of the training transcript, training video or informational binder for specific procedures shall be kept available for all personnel to review and be familiar with, as necessary.			
3.4.5	**Cultural Resources**				
#8	**MM CUL-1:** In the event that new historical or archaeological resources are discovered during the project, all ground-disturbing	During construction	PMWC /Contractor		

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	**Mitigation Measure**	**Time Frame for Implementation**	**Responsible Monitoring Agency**	**Date**	**Initials**
	activities in the vicinity of the find shall cease, an archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards (National Park Service 1983) shall be retained to evaluate the find, and the lead agency will be notified. Work may continue on other parts of the project while evaluation and, if necessary, mitigation takes place (CEQA Guidelines Section15064.5 [f]).	**Steps to Compliance:** A. If necessary, work shall cease and the project proponent shall retain a qualified archaeologist and/or paleontologist to assess finds and recommended procedures. B. The qualified cultural resources specialist shall assess the significance of the find and determine next steps. C. The project proponent shall submit evidence of compliance to PMWC to verify compliance.			
#9	**MM CUL-2:** Upon discovery of human remains or potential human remains, implement Health and Safety Code 7050.5 and notify the lead agency. Health and Safety Code requires that the County Coroner shall be immediately notified of the discovery and no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area may continue until the County Coroner has determined, within two working days of notification of the discovery, the appropriate treatment and disposition of the human remains. If the County Coroner determines that the remains are, or are believed to be, Native American, he or she is required to notify the NAHC in Sacramento within 24 hours. In accordance with California Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98, the NAHC must immediately notify those persons it believes to be the most likely descendant from the deceased Native American. The most likely descendant shall complete their inspection within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The designated Native American representative would then determine, in consultation with the property owner, the disposition of the human remains.	During construction and operation	PMWC /Contractor		
		Steps to Compliance: **A.** In the event that human remains are unearthed during excavation and grading activities of any future development project, all activity shall cease immediately. **B.** If required, the project proponent shall contact the County Coroner to assess the find. **C.** If required, the County Coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission to assess the find. **D.** The project proponent shall submit evidence of compliance to SWRCB- Division of Financial Assistance to verify compliance.			
3.4.6	**Energy**				
	No Mitigation required.				
3.4.7	**Geology and Soils**				

<table>
<tr><th colspan="6">Mitigation Monitoring Program</th></tr>
<tr><th>Impact</th><th>Mitigation Measure</th><th>Time Frame for Implementation</th><th>Responsible Monitoring Agency</th><th>Date</th><th>Initials</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">#10</td><td rowspan="2">MM GEO-1: Prior to issuing of grading or building permits, if required, (a) the Project applicant shall submit to the Lead Agency (1) the approved Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and (2) the Notice of Intent (NOI) to comply with the General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. The requirements of the SWPPP and NPDES shall be incorporated into design specifications and construction contracts. Recommended best management practices for the construction phase may include the following:

• Stockpiling and disposing of demolition debris, concrete, and soil properly;
• Protecting existing storm drain inlets and stabilizing disturbed areas;
• Implementing erosion controls;
• Properly managing construction materials; and
• Managing waste, aggressively controlling litter, and implementing sediment controls.
• Evidence of the approved SWPPP shall be submitted to the Lead Agency.
Or (b) prepare and implement a Type 1 Linear Underground/Overhead Projects SWPPP.</td><td>Prior to construction</td><td>PMWC/ Contractor</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Steps to Compliance:
A. Contractor shall submit a copy of the approved SWPPP and NOI to SWRCB- Division of Financial Assistance.</td></tr>
</table>

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	**Mitigation Measure**	**Time Frame for Implementation**	**Responsible Monitoring Agency**	**Date**	**Initials**
#11	**MM GEO-2:** The property owner shall avoid and minimize impacts to paleontological resources. If a potentially significant paleontological resource is encountered during ground disturbance activities, all construction within a 100-foot radius of the find shall immediately cease until a qualified paleontologist determines whether the resources require further study. The owner shall include a standard inadvertent discovery clause in every construction contract to inform contractors of this requirement. The paleontologist shall notify the Lead Agency and the Project proponent of the procedures that must be followed before construction is allowed to resume at the location of the find. If the find is determined to be significant and the Lead Agency determines avoidance is not feasible, the paleontologist shall design and implement a data recovery plan consistent with the applicable standards. The plan shall be submitted to the Lead Agency for review and approval. Upon approval, the plan shall be incorporated into the Project.	During ground disturbance activities	PMWC /Contractor		
		A. In the event that paleontological resources are encountered during ground disturbance activities, all work within 100 feet shall halt. B. If required, the paleontologist shall conduct additional investigation and complete additional studies or plans. C. The project proponent shall submit evidence of compliance to SWRCB- Division of Financial Assistance to verify compliance.			
3.4.8	**Greenhouse Gas Emissions**				
	No mitigation required.				
3.4.9	**Hazardous Materials**				
	No mitigation required.				
3.4.10	**Hydrology and Water Quality**				
	No mitigation required.				
3.4.11	**Land Use and Planning**				
	No Mitigation required.				
3.4.12	**Mineral Resources**				
	No Mitigation required.				
3.4.13	**Noise**				
	No Mitigation required.				
3.4.14	**Population and Housing**				

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	**Mitigation Measure**	**Time Frame for Implementation**	**Responsible Monitoring Agency**	**Date**	**Initials**
	No Mitigation required.				
3.4.15	**Public Services**				
	No Mitigation required.				
3.4.16	**Recreation**				
	No Mitigation required.				
3.4.17	**Traffic and Transportation**				
	No Mitigation required.				
3.4.18	**Tribal Cultural Resources**				
	No mitigation required.				
3.4.19	**Utilities and Service Systems**				
	No Mitigation is Required.				
3.4.20	**Wildfire**				
	No Mitigation is Required.				

SECTION 5 - LIST OF PREPARERS

This document was prepared by QK's Environmental Planning group with assistance from its Engineering group and the Plainview Municipal Water Company.

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SECTION 6 - REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A

AIR QUALITY

AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

APPENDIX B

BIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS REPORT

AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

APPENDIX C

CLASS III INVENTORY/PHASE I SURVEY REPORT

AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

APPENDIX D

GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATION REPORT

AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

APPENDIX E

PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING REPORT

AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST