

NEVADA PLACER 20 CAPM PROJECT

INITIAL STUDY

with Negative Declaration



**NEVADA AND PLACER COUNTIES, CALIFORNIA
DISTRICT 3 – NEV/PLA – 20 Post Miles 20.00 to 46.12
EA 03-0J520 / EFIS 0319000293**

**Prepared by the
State of California Department of Transportation**



June 2024



General Information About This Document

What is in this document?

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has prepared this Initial Study with Negative Declaration (IS/ND) which examines the potential environmental effects of the Nevada Placer 20 CAPM Project located on State Route 20 in Nevada and Placer counties in California. Caltrans is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This document tells you why the project is being proposed, how the existing environment could be affected by the project, the potential impacts of the project, and proposed Standard Measures and Best Management Practices.

Elsewhere throughout this document, a vertical line in the margin indicates a change made since the draft document circulation. Minor editorial changes and clarifications have not been so indicated. Additional copies of this document are available for review at the Madelyn Helling Library, 980 Helling Way, Nevada City, CA 95959.

The Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration was circulated to the public for 30 days between April 19, 2024, and May 20, 2024. Comments received during this period are included in Appendix E.

The document can be viewed online at: <https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-3/d3-programs/d3-environmental/d3-environmental-docs>

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NEVADA/PLACER 20 CAPM PROJECT

Pavement, drainage rehabilitation, and fire hardening on State Route 20
in Nevada and Placer counties, from Post Miles 20.00 to 46.12,
east of Nevada City.

INITIAL STUDY with Negative Declaration

Submitted Pursuant to: Division 13, California Public Resources Code

**THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation**

06/10/2024

Date of Approval



Erin Dwyer, Office Chief
North Region Environmental–District 3
California Department of Transportation
CEQA Lead Agency

The following person may be contacted for more information about this document:

Caitlin Greenwood
North Region Environmental-District 3
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901
(530) 812-4937

or use the California Relay Service TTY number, 711 or 1-800-735-2922.



NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Pursuant to: Division 13, California Public Resources Code

SCH Number: 2024040843

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) plans to rehabilitate pavement and drainages and upgrade guardrail and roadside signs on State Route 20 between Post Miles 20.00 and 46.12 in Nevada and Placer counties.

Determination

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study for this project and, following public review, has determined from this study that the proposed project would not have a significant impact on the environment based on the following:

The project would have *No Impact* on:

- Agricultural and Forest Resources
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

The project would have *Less than Significant Impacts* to:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Mandatory Findings of Significance



Erin Dwyer, Office Chief
North Region Environmental–District 3
California Department of Transportation
CEQA Lead Agency

06/10/2024

Date

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviated Terms

Acronym/Abbreviation	Description
AB	Assembly Bill
APE	Area of Potential Effect
BMPs	Best Management Practices
BSA	Biological Study Area
CAFE	Corporate Average Fuel Economy
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Cal/OSHA	California Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CAPM	Capital Preventative Maintenance
CAPTI	Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQ	White House Council on Environmental Quality
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFGF	California Fish and Game Code
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGP	Construction General Permit
CH ₄	methane
CHP	California Highway Patrol
CIPP	Cured-in-Place-Pipe (lining)
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO ₂	carbon dioxide
CO _{2e}	carbon dioxide equivalent
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CSP	Corrugated Steel Pipe
CTP	California Transportation Plan
CVFPB	Central Valley Flood Protection Board
CVRWQCB	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibels
dBA	A-weighted decibels
DBH	Diameter-at-Breast Height
Department	Caltrans
DOT	Department of Transportation
DP	Director's Policy

Acronym/Abbreviation	Description
DPS	Distinct Population Segment
DWQ	Department of Water Quality
ECL	Environmental Construction Liaison
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EISA	Energy Independence and Security Act
EO(s)	Executive Order(s)
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ESA(s)	Environmentally Sensitive Area(s)
ESL	Environmental Study Limits
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone
FP	Fully Protected species
GHG	greenhouse gas
GWP	Global Warming Potential
H&SC	Health & Safety Code
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HFCs	hydrofluorocarbons
HMA	Hot Mix Asphalt
IS	Initial Study
ISA	Initial Site Assessment
IS/ND	Initial Study / Negative Declaration
LCFS	low carbon fuel standard
MASH	Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware
MBGR	Metal Beam Guardrail
MGS	Midwest Guardrail System
MLD	Most Likely Descendent
MMT	million metric tons
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
ND	Negative Declaration
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MVP	Maintenance Vehicle Pullouts
N ₂ O	nitrous oxide
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Plan
ND	Negative Declaration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration

Acronym/Abbreviation	Description
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOA	Naturally Occurring Asbestos
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
O ₃	ozone
OPR	Governor's Office of Planning and Research
OHW	Ordinary High Water
OHWM	Ordinary High Water Mark
PAC	Protected Activity Center
PDT	Project Development Team
PM(s)	post mile(s)
PQS	Professionally Qualified Staff
PRC	Public Resources Code (California)
Project	Nevada Placer 20 CAPM Project
PS&E	Plans, Specifications & Estimates
PSI	Preliminary Site Investigation
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RTPA	Regional Transportation Planning Agency
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SF ₆	sulfur hexafluoride
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SLR	Sea Level Rise
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
SSP	Standard Special Provision
SR	State Route
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SRZ	Structural Root Zone
SS	Standard Specification
SSC	Species of Special Concern
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
THVF	Temporary High Visibility Fencing
TMP	Transportation Management Plan
TMS	Transportation Management System
TWW	Treated Wood Waste
UAIC	United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria
U.S. or US	United States
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USC	United States Code

Acronym/Abbreviation	Description
USDOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
U.S. EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
WPCP	Water Pollution Control Program

CHAPTER 1. Proposed Project

1.1 Project Setting

The California Department of Transportation is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). State Route (SR) 20 is an “ocean to mountains” route that begins at SR 1 near Fort Bragg and ends at Interstate 80 (I-80) near Emigrant Gap. Within District 3, the route runs 122 miles west to east through Colusa, Sutter, Yuba, and Nevada counties. SR 20 is mainly a two-lane highway that serves regional, interregional, commute, commercial, agricultural, and recreational traffic. It serves as a major east-west connector to Interstate 5 and SR 99, and interconnects with other major routes, including SR 70 and I-80.

1.2 Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes this Capital Preventative Maintenance (CAPM) Project on State Route 20 located in both Nevada and Placer counties at three locations from East of Dow Road to Interstate 80 from Post Mile (PM) 20.00 to PM 46.12 (Figure 1). The three project locations are as follows:

- **Location 1:** In Nevada County, near Nevada City and Emigrant Gap from east of Dow Road to the Placer County line (PM 20.00 to 41.29). Work would be excluded from PM 25.6 to 25.9, 29.7 to 30.9, 31.7 to 31.9, and 37.0 to 39.8 due to the Omega Curve Project which realigns a portion of SR 20.
- **Location 2:** In Placer County, from the Nevada County line to east of Lake Spaulding Road (PM 41.29 to 43.87).
- **Location 3:** In Nevada County, from east of Lake Spaulding Road to I-80 (PM 43.87 to 46.12).

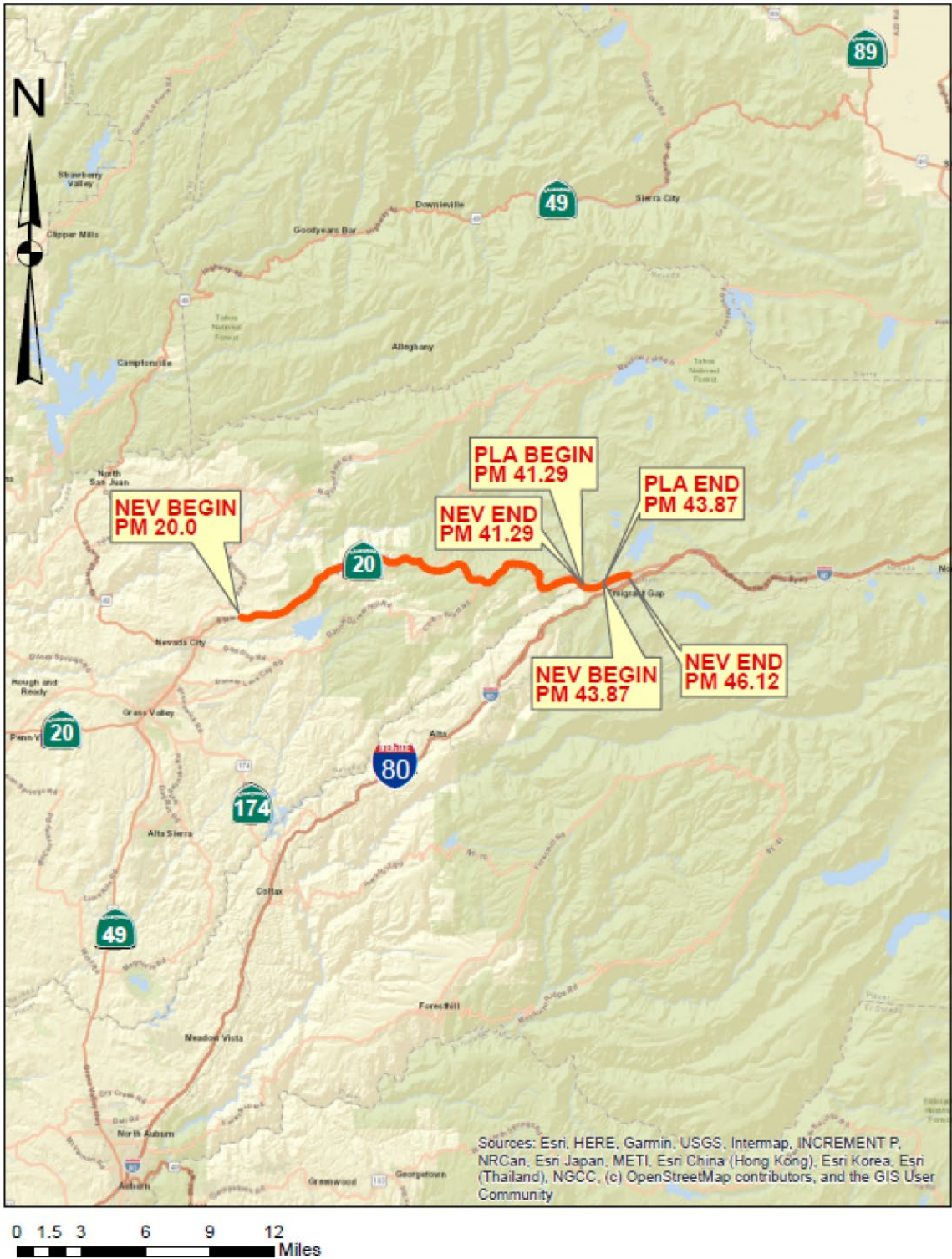


Figure 1. Project Location Map

The project proposes pavement rehabilitation along the length of the project which includes cold plane and overlay of existing pavement, shoulder backing, pavement digouts, striping and rumble strips (Appendix A–*Project Layouts*). The project would also rehabilitate existing drainage systems and address flooding issues at the intersection of SR 20 and Scotts Flat Road (PM 23.38). Other work includes replacing non-standard Metal Beam Guardrail (MBGR) with Midwest Guardrail System (MGS) and vegetation control, upgrades to roadside signs, and upgrades to Transportation Management System (TMS) elements.

This project would also include fire hardening best practices. Vegetation management strips would be created along two state owned structures as part of fire hardening.

1.3 Project Objective

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to improve the existing pavement condition, extend the life of transportation infrastructure, restore culverts to good condition, and bring associated MBGR, roadside signs, and TMS elements (traffic detection loops and associated electrical components) up to current standards. In addition, this project would fire harden State Route 20, which would protect Caltrans facilities and this primary route for emergency services and evacuations from fire.

Need

The project is needed because within the project limits existing flexible pavement on State Route 20 is projected to be in fair condition by 2025 and is anticipated to further deteriorate in absence of proper action.

Culvert assessment indicated that multiple culverts within the project limits are in fair and poor condition. Drainage systems in fair and poor condition require rehabilitation or replacement to restore functionality.

Roadside Safety identified existing metal beam guardrail that does not meet the *Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware* (MASH) standards. The existing centerline rumble strip does not meet current standards. In addition, the visual sign panel assessment indicated multiple two-post roadway signs in poor condition within the project limits. Traffic Operations/Electrical Design identified TMS elements that also do not meet current standards.

Dense timber and vegetation, which surround the project limits, pose an increased threat of wildfire. These conditions, in combination with climate change may exacerbate forest fires. Increasing fire resiliency of SR 20 in this area is essential as this is a primary route for evacuations and emergency services.

1.4 Proposed Project

The project scope includes the following work:

Pavement

- Cold plane 0.25 inch of existing pavement and place 0.25 inch Hot Mix Asphalt-Type A (HMA-A) to the existing mainline from PM 20.00 to PM 43.87.
- Place shoulder backing material at the outside edge of outside shoulders, where appropriate.
- Repair locations of severe existing asphalt pavement failure with digouts.
- Restripe lanes and shoulders with standard 6 inch thermoplastic traffic stripe.
- Conform mainline cold plane and overlay with existing driveways within project limits.

Drainage

Due to the existing conditions of the drainage systems in the project location, twenty-four (24) culverts would be rehabilitated as follows (Table 1):

- Rehabilitate (23) Corrugated Steel Pipe (CSP) culverts with Cured-in-Place-Pipe lining (CIPP).
- Remove and replace (1) downdrain.
- Acquire Drainage Easements at PMs 20.16, 20.31, and 21.03 for maintenance access after construction.
- Rock Slope Protection (RSP) would be placed at the outlets of culverts at PMs 20.16, 20.31, 20.47, 20.55, 21.03, 21.28, 32.31, and 32.70.

In addition to the rehabilitation of the existing drainage systems, one new drainage system would be installed to address the flooding issue at Scotts Flat Road (PM 23.25):

- Install (5) culverts with 18 inch reinforced concrete pipe.
- Install (5) drainage inlets.
- Install RSP as necessary at the outlets of newly installed culverts.
- Acquire a Drainage Easement at PM 23.38 for the system's outlet.

Table 1. Drainage Improvements

Location	Post Mile	Description of Work
1	20.13	CIPP Line
2	20.16	CIPP Line, Add RSP at Outlet
3	20.31	CIPP Line, Add RSP at Outlet
4	20.34	CIPP Line
5	20.47	CIPP Line, Add RSP at Outlet
6	20.55	Remove and Replace Downdrain, Add RSP at Outlet
7	20.79	CIPP Line
8	21.03	CIPP Line, Add RSP at Outlet
9	21.28	CIPP Line, Add RSP at Outlet
10	23.38	Install 5 new culverts at the drainage system at this location, Add RSP at outlets
11	23.38	CIPP Line
12	23.84	CIPP Line
13	24.59	CIPP Line
14	24.75	CIPP Line
15	26.04	CIPP Line
16	26.92	CIPP Line
17	30.97	CIPP Line
18	32.11	CIPP Line
19	32.17	CIPP Line
20	32.31	CIPP Line, Add RSP at Outlet
21	32.70	CIPP Line, Add RSP at Outlet
22	34.25	CIPP Line
23	34.36	CIPP Line
24	41.08	CIPP Line
25	41.10	CIPP Line

Safety

- Replace 10,550 linear feet of the existing MBGR with steel post Midwest Guardrail System and bring appropriate end treatment to current standards of *Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware* (MASH).
- Remove and replace existing centerline rumble strips from PM 25.9 to PM 45.8.

Signs

- Remove and replace (8) one-post roadside signs and (34) two-post roadside signs.

Transportation Management System (TMS)

- Replace (1) traffic loop detection system and upgrade cabinet, conduits, cables, and other associated electronics at PM 27.83.
- Replace existing traffic detection loop at PM 45.61 due to cold planing.
- Install (2) detection systems comprising traffic detecting loops and traffic pull boxes at PM 23.25 and PM 31.83.

Landscape

Bonded fiber matrix, fiber rolls, and rolled erosion control product (blanket) would be utilized for soil stabilization and sediment control methods as a means of erosion control. The total estimated disturbed soil area is approximately 1.6 acres.

Fire Hardening

Fire fuel reduction (fire hardening) has been incorporated into this project with the following items:

- Vegetation management strips, in the form of vegetation removal, would be created at the South Yuba Canal (PM 40.74) and Drum Canal (PM 42.15) structures to potentially reduce threat of wildfire.
 - The vegetation management strip that was proposed in the draft IS/ND at the Bear River Bridge (PM 41.27) has been removed from the project. This work would have required an encroachment permit from Central Valley Flood Protection Board as Bear River is a regulated stream. Due to time constraints with the project schedule, the vegetation management strip at the Bear River Bridge was removed from the project.

- Guardrail with steel posts instead of wood posts.
- Roadside signs with steel posts instead of wood post.
- Minor concrete vegetation control instead of rubber mat vegetation control.
- Culverts of steel or concrete, instead of plastic pipe.

Maintenance Vehicle Pullouts

Maintenance Vehicle Pullouts (MVPs) are to be installed for worker safety.

- Install Maintenance Vehicle Pullouts (MVPs) at PMs 23.25, 27.83, and 31.87.
- The MVP at PM 45.61 was removed as part of the project as a Project Development Team (PDT) decision. This location is located next to the existing sand house and has sufficient room for worker safety.

General Plan Description, Zoning, and Surrounding Land Uses

In Nevada County, land use typically consists of residential, commercial, agricultural, industrial, and public land. The land surrounding the project limits are zoned Residential Agricultural, Open Space, General Agricultural, Forest, and Timberland Production Zone. A small number of parcels adjacent to the project are zoned Public (Nevada County Consolidated Station 82), Highway Commercial (market and event center), and Neighborhood Commercial.

Land use in Placer County consists heavily of timberland to the eastern part of the county and agricultural to the west. Land use and zoning around the project is primarily labeled Forest and Timberland.

1.5 Permits and Approvals Needed

The following table indicates the permitting agency, permits/approvals and status of permits required for the project.

Table 2. Agency, Permit/Approval and Status

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement	Preparing for submittal to CDFW.
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB)	Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification	Preparing for submittal to CVRWQCB.
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Jurisdictional Determination, Section 404 Nationwide Permit 14 for work in Waters of the United States	Submitted to USACE. Awaiting concurrence.
State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)	Finding of No Adverse Effect	SHPO concurrence on Finding of No Effect received June 4, 2024.

1.6 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Alternatives

Under CEQA, “mitigation” is defined as *avoiding, minimizing, rectifying, reducing/eliminating, and compensating for an impact*. In contrast, Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (BMPs) are prescriptive and sufficiently standardized to be generally applicable, and do not require special tailoring for a project. They are measures that typically result from laws, permits, agreements, guidelines, resource management plans, and resource agency directives and policies. They predate the project’s proposal and apply to all similar projects. For this reason, the measures and practices are not considered “mitigation” under CEQA; rather, they are included as part of the project description in environmental documents.

The following section provides a list of project features, standard practices (measures), and Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are included as part of the project description. Any project-specific avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures that would be applied to reduce the effects of project impacts are listed in relevant sections of Chapter 2.

Standard measures relevant to the protection of natural resources deemed applicable to the project include:

Aesthetics Resources

- AR-1:** Temporary access roads, construction easements, and staging areas that were previously vegetated would be restored to a natural contour and revegetated with regionally-appropriate native vegetation.
- AR-2:** Where feasible, guardrail terminals would be buried; otherwise, an appropriate terminal system would be used, if appropriate.
- AR-3:** Where feasible, construction lighting would be temporary, and directed specifically on the portion of the work area actively under construction.
- AR-4:** Where feasible, the removal of established trees and vegetation would be minimized. Environmentally sensitive areas would have Temporary High Visibility Fencing (THVF) installed before start of construction to demarcate areas where vegetation would be preserved, and root systems of trees protected.
- AR-5:** To ensure that the vegetation control would be visually compatible with the scenic corridor, provide integral colored or stained Vegetation Control (Minor Concrete), preferably black or dark grey, at all MGS replacement locations. The color and application method would be determined during the final design phase of the project.

Biological Resources

BR-1: General

Before start of work, as required by permit or consultation conditions, a Caltrans biologist, Environmental Construction Liaison (ECL), or other designated biologist would meet with the contractor to brief them on environmental permit conditions and requirements relative to each stage of the project, including, but not limited to, work windows and how to identify and report regulated species within the project areas as appropriate. Environmental Awareness Training for all construction personnel would be completed and documented as required by permit or consultation conditions.

BR-2: Animal Species

- A. To protect migratory and nongame birds (occupied nests and eggs), if possible, vegetation removal would be limited to the period outside of the bird breeding season (removal would occur between September 1 and January 31). If vegetation removal is required during the breeding season, a nesting bird survey would be conducted by a qualified biologist within five days prior to vegetation removal. If an active nest is located, the biologist would coordinate with CDFW to establish appropriate species-specific buffer(s) and any monitoring requirements. The buffer would be delineated around each active nest and construction activities would be excluded from these areas until birds have fledged, or the nest is determined to be unoccupied.
- B. Pre-construction surveys for active raptor nests within one-quarter mile of the construction area would be conducted by a qualified biologist within one week prior to initiation of construction activities. Areas to be surveyed would be limited to those areas subject to increased disturbance due to construction activities (i.e., areas where existing traffic or human activity is greater than or equal to construction-related disturbance need not be surveyed). If any active raptor nests are identified, appropriate conservation measures (as determined by a qualified biologist) would be implemented. These measures may include, but are not limited to, establishing a construction-free buffer zone around the active nest site, biological monitoring of the active nest site, and delaying construction activities near the active nest site until the young have fledged.
- C. To prevent attracting corvids (birds of the *Corvidae* family which include jays, crows, and ravens), no trash or foodstuffs would be left or stored on-site. All trash would be deposited in a secure container daily and disposed of at an approved waste facility at least once a week. Also, on-site workers would not attempt to attract or feed any wildlife.
- D. Artificial night lighting may be required. To reduce potential disturbance to sensitive resources, lighting would be temporary and directed specifically on the portion of the work area actively under construction. Use of artificial lighting would be limited to Cal/OSHA work area lighting requirements.

- E. All temporarily impacted areas would be hydroseeded (as required by permit condition) with a local/regionally appropriate hydroseed mix that contains native flowering plants that provide nectar and bumble bee pollen, as part of the standard BMPs identified for hydroseeding.
- F. The contractor supplied biologist would conduct a preconstruction survey for southern long toed salamander at PMs 41.08, 41.1, and 41.27 immediately prior to start of construction at these locations.

BR-3: Invasive Plant Species

Invasive non-native species control would be implemented. Measures would include:

- Straw, straw bales, seed, mulch, or other material used for erosion control or landscaping would be free of noxious weed seed and propagules.
- All equipment would be thoroughly cleaned of all dirt and vegetation prior to entering the job site to prevent importing invasive non-native species. Project personnel would adhere to the latest version of the *California Department of Fish and Wildlife Aquatic Invasive Species Cleaning/Decontamination Protocol (Northern Region)* for all field gear and equipment in contact with water (CDFW 2016).

BR-4: Plant Species, Sensitive Natural Communities

- A. A *Revegetation Plan* would be prepared which would include a plant palette, establishment period, watering regimen, monitoring requirements, and invasive plant control measures. The *Revegetation Plan* would also address measures for wetland and riparian areas temporarily impacted by the project.
- B. Prior to the start of work, Temporary High Visibility Fencing (THVF) and/or flagging would be installed around sensitive natural communities, environmentally sensitive habitat areas, rare plant occurrences, intermittent streams and wetlands and other waters, where appropriate. No work would occur within fenced/flagged areas.

- C. Upon completion of construction, all superfluous construction materials would be completely removed from the site. The site would then be restored by regrading and stabilizing with a hydroseed mixture of native species along with fast growing sterile erosion control seed, as required by the Erosion Control Plan.

BR-5: Wetlands and Other Waters

- A. The contractor would be required to prepare and submit a *Temporary Creek Diversion System Plan* to Caltrans for approval prior to any creek diversion. Depending on site conditions, the plan may also require specifications for the relocation of sensitive aquatic species. Water generated from the diversion operations would be pumped and discharged according to the approved plan and applicable permits.
- B. In-stream work would be restricted to the period between June 15 and October 15 to protect water quality and vulnerable life stages of sensitive fish species . Construction activities restricted to this period include any work below ordinary high water. Construction activities performed above the ordinary high water mark (OHWM) of a watercourse that could potentially directly impact surface waters (i.e., soil disturbance that could lead to turbidity) would be performed during the dry season, typically between June through October, or as weather permits per the authorized contractor-prepared Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) or Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP), and/or project permit requirements.
- C. See **BR-4** for Temporary High Visibility Fencing (THVF) information.
- D. If allowed by regulatory agencies, temporary wetland protection mats may be used to prevent permanent damage and minimize temporary damage to wetlands from construction activities. Mats should be designed to accommodate motorized equipment or vehicles. Mats would be removed when wetland access is no longer needed or by November 1 of each year.

Cultural Resources

- CR-1:** An Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) exists on this project. Before starting job activities, install temporary high-visibility fence to protect the ESA and mark its boundaries. Access to an ESA other than that described is prohibited. During construction, the Project Archaeologist would be notified within 24 hours of any breach of the ESA.
- CR-2:** If cultural materials are discovered during construction, work activity within a 60-foot radius of the discovery would be stopped and the area secured until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).
- CR-3:** If human remains and related items are discovered on private or State land, they would be treated in accordance with State Health and Safety Code (H&SC) § 7050.5. Further disturbances and activities would cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner contacted. Pursuant to California Public Resources Code (PRC) § 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner would notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) who would then notify the Most Likely Descendent (MLD).

Human remains and related items discovered on federally owned lands would be treated in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA) (23 USC 3001). The procedures for dealing with the discovery of human remains, funerary objects, or sacred objects on federal land are described in the regulations that implement NAGPRA 43 CFR Part 10. All work in the vicinity of the discovery shall be halted and the administering agency's archaeologist would be notified immediately. Project activities in the vicinity of the discovery would not resume until the federal agency complies with the 43 CFR Part 10 regulations and provides notification to proceed.

Geology, Seismic/Topography, and Paleontology

- GS-1:** The project would be designed to minimize slope failure, settlement, and erosion using recommended construction techniques and Best Management Practices (BMPs). New earthen slopes would be vegetated to reduce erosion potential.
- GS-2:** In the unlikely event that paleontological resources (fossils) are encountered, all work within a 60-foot radius of the discovery would stop, the area would be secured, and the work would not resume until appropriate measures are taken.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- GHG-1:** The project would comply with Standard Specification (SS) 14-9 "Air Quality" which requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality.
- GHG-2:** Caltrans would comply with Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), which includes restricting idling of diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles and equipment with gross weight ratings of greater than 10,000 pounds to no more than 5 minutes.
- GHG-3:** Caltrans would comply with Standard Specification 7-1.02C "Emissions Reduction" which ensures that construction activities adhere to the most recent emissions reduction regulations mandated by the California Air Resource Board (CARB).
- GHG-4:** Use of a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) to minimize vehicle delays and idling emissions. As part of this, construction traffic would be scheduled and routed to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along the highway during peak travel times.
- GHG-5:** Pedestrian and bicycle access would be maintained on State Route 20 during project activities.

Hazardous Waste and Material

- HW-1:** Per Caltrans requirements, the contractor(s) would prepare a project-specific *Lead Compliance Plan* (CCR Title 8, § 1532.1, the “Lead in Construction” standard) to reduce worker exposure to lead-impacted soil. The plan would include protocols for environmental and personnel monitoring, requirements for personal protective equipment, and other health and safety protocols and procedures for the handling of materials containing lead.
- HW-2:** When identified as containing hazardous levels of lead, traffic stripes would be removed and disposed of in accordance with Caltrans Standard Special Provision 36-4 “Remove Yellow Traffic Stripes and Pavement Markings with Hazardous Waste Residue.”
- HW-3:** If treated wood waste (such as removal of sign posts or guardrail) is generated during this project, it would be disposed of in accordance with Standard Specification 14-11.14 “Treated Wood Waste.”
- HW-4:** If asbestos-containing material is removed during this project, it would be removed and disposed of in accordance with Standard Special Provisions (SSP) 14-11.10 Naturally Occurring Asbestos and SSP 14–11.16 Asbestos-containing Construction Materials in Bridges.”

Traffic and Transportation

- TT-1:** A Transportation Management Plan (TMP) would be prepared for the project. The contractor would be required to schedule and conduct work to avoid unnecessary inconvenience to the public and to maintain access to driveways, houses, and buildings within the work zones. Pedestrian and bicycle access would be maintained during construction.

Utilities and Emergency Services

- UE-1:** All emergency response agencies in the project area would be notified of the project construction schedule and would have access to State Route 20 throughout the construction period.
- UE-2:** The project is located within the *Very High* CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ). The contractor would be required to submit a jobsite Fire Prevention Plan as required by Cal/OSHA before starting job site activities. In the event of an emergency or wildfire, the contractor would cooperate with fire prevention authorities.

Water Quality and Stormwater Runoff

- WQ-1:** The project would comply with the provisions of the Caltrans Statewide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit (Order 2022-0033-DWQ), effective January 1, 2023. If the project results in a land disturbance of one acre or more, coverage under the Construction General Permit (CGP) (Order 2022-0057-DWQ) is also required.

Before any ground-disturbing activities, the contractor would prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) (per the Construction General Permit Order 2022-0057-DWQ) or Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP) (projects that result in a land disturbance of less than one acre) that includes erosion control measures and construction waste containment measures to protect Waters of the State during project construction. For SWPPP projects (which are governed according to both the Caltrans NPDES permit and the Construction General Permit), soil disturbance is permitted to occur year-round as long as the Caltrans NPDES and CGP and the corresponding requirements of those permits are adhered to. For WPCP projects (which are governed according to the Caltrans NPDES permit), soil disturbance is permitted to occur year-round as long as the Caltrans NPDES permit is adhered to.

The SWPPP or WPCP would identify the sources of pollutants that may affect the quality of stormwater; include construction site Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control sedimentation, erosion, and potential chemical pollutants; provide for construction materials management; include non-stormwater BMPs; and include routine inspections and a monitoring and reporting plan. All

construction site BMPs would follow the latest edition of the *Caltrans Storm Water Quality Handbooks: Construction Site BMPs Manual* to control and reduce the impacts of construction-related activities, materials, and pollutants on the watershed.

The project SWPPP or WPCP would be continuously updated to adapt to changing site conditions during the construction phase.

Construction may require one or more of the following temporary construction site BMPs:

- Any spills or leaks from construction equipment (e.g., fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid, and grease) would be cleaned up in accordance with applicable local, state, and/or federal regulations.
- Accumulated stormwater, groundwater, or surface water from excavations or temporary containment facilities would be removed by dewatering.
- Water generated from the dewatering operations would be discharged on-site for dust control and/or to an infiltration basin, or disposed of offsite.
- Temporary sediment control and soil stabilization devices would be installed.
- Existing vegetated areas would be maintained to the maximum extent practicable.
- Clearing, grubbing, and excavation would be limited to specific locations, as delineated on the plans, to maximize the preservation of existing vegetation.
- Vegetation reestablishment or other stabilization measures would be implemented on disturbed soil areas, per the Erosion Control Plan.
- For SWPPP projects (which are governed according to both the Caltrans NPDES permit and the Construction General Permit), soil disturbance is permitted to occur year-round as long as the Caltrans NPDES and CGP and the corresponding requirements of these permits are adhered to. For WPCP projects (which are governed according to the Caltrans NPDES permit), soil disturbance is permitted to occur year-round as long as the Caltrans NPDES permit is adhered to.

WQ-2: The project would incorporate pollution prevention and design measures consistent with the *2016 Caltrans Storm Water Management Plan* (Caltrans 2016). This plan complies with the requirements of the Caltrans Statewide NPDES Permit (Order 2022-0033-DWQ).

The project design may include one or more of the following:

- Vegetated surfaces would feature native plants, and revegetation would use the seed mixture, mulch, tackifier, and fertilizer recommended in the Erosion Control Plan prepared for the project.
- Where possible, stormwater would be directed in such a way as to sheet flow across vegetated slopes, thus providing filtration of any potential pollutants.

1.7 Discussion of the NEPA Categorical Exclusion

This document contains information regarding compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other state laws and regulations. Separate environmental documentation supporting a Categorical Exclusion determination would be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. When needed for clarity, or as required by CEQA, this document may contain references to federal laws and/or regulations (CEQA, for example, requires consideration of adverse effects on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species by the National Marine Fisheries Service and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service—in other words, species protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act).

CHAPTER 2. CEQA Environmental Checklist

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors noted below would be potentially affected by this project. Please see the CEQA Environmental Checklist on the following pages for additional information.

Potential Impact Area	Impacted: Yes / No
Aesthetics	Yes
Agriculture and Forest Resources	No
Air Quality	Yes
Biological Resources	Yes
Cultural Resources	Yes
Energy	Yes
Geology and Soils	Yes
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Yes
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Yes
Hydrology and Water Quality	Yes
Land Use and Planning	No
Mineral Resources	No
Noise	Yes
Population and Housing	No
Public Services	No
Recreation	No
Transportation	No
Tribal Cultural Resources	No
Utilities and Service Systems	No
Wildfire	No
Mandatory Findings of Significance	Yes

The CEQA Environmental Checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the project. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with the project indicate there are no impacts to a particular resource. A “NO IMPACT” answer in the last column of the checklist reflects this determination. The words “significant” and “significance” used throughout the CEQA Environmental Checklist are

only related to potential impacts pursuant to CEQA. The questions in the CEQA Environmental Checklist are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

Project features, which can include both design elements of the project, as well as standardized measures applied to all or most Caltrans projects (such as Best Management Practices [BMPs] and measures included in the Standard Plans and Specifications or as Standard Special Provisions [Section 1.6]), are considered to be an integral part of the project and have been considered prior to any significance determinations documented in the checklist or document.

Project Impact Analysis Under CEQA

CEQA broadly defines “project” to include *“the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment”* (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] § 15378). Under CEQA, normally the baseline for environmental impact analysis consists of the existing conditions at the time the environmental studies began. However, it is important to choose the baseline that most meaningfully informs decision-makers and the public of the project’s possible impacts. Where existing conditions change or fluctuate over time, and where necessary to provide the most accurate picture practically possible of the project’s impacts, a lead agency may define existing conditions by referencing historic conditions, or conditions expected when the project becomes operational, or both, that are supported with substantial evidence. In addition, a lead agency may also use baselines consisting of both existing conditions and projected future conditions that are supported by reliable projections based on substantial evidence in the record. The CEQA Guidelines require a “statement of the objectives sought by the project” (14 CCR § 15124(b)).

CEQA requires the identification of each potentially “significant effect on the environment” resulting from the project, and ways to mitigate each significant effect. Significance is defined as *“Substantial or potentially substantial adverse change to any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project”* (14 CCR § 15382). CEQA determinations are made prior to and separate from the development of mitigation measures for the project.

The legal standard for determining the significance of impacts is whether a “fair argument” can be made that a “substantial adverse change in physical conditions” would occur. The fair argument must be backed by substantial evidence including facts, reasonable assumption predicated upon fact, or expert opinion supported by facts. Generally, an environmental professional with specific training in an area of environmental review can make this determination.

Though not required, CEQA suggests Lead Agencies adopt thresholds of significance, which define the level of effect above which the Lead Agency would consider impacts to be significant, and below which it would consider impacts to be less than significant. Given the size of California and its varied, diverse, and complex ecosystems, as a Lead Agency that encompasses the entire State, developing thresholds of significance on a state-wide basis has not been pursued by Caltrans. Rather, to ensure each resource is evaluated objectively, Caltrans analyzes potential resource impacts in the project area based on their location and the effect of the potential impact on the resource as a whole. For example, if a project has the potential to impact 0.10 acre of wetland in a watershed that has minimal development and contains thousands of acres of wetland, then a “less than significant” determination would be considered appropriate. In comparison, if 0.10 acre of wetland would be impacted that is located within a park in a city that only has 1.00 acre of total wetland, then the 0.10 acre of wetland impact could be considered “significant.”

If the action may have a potentially significant effect on any environmental resource (even with mitigation measures implemented), then an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared. Under CEQA, the lead agency may adopt a negative declaration (ND) if there is no substantial evidence that the project may have a potentially significant effect on the environment (14 CCR § 15070(a)). A proposed negative declaration must be circulated for public review, along with a document known as an Initial Study. CEQA allows for a “Mitigated Negative Declaration” in which mitigation measures are proposed to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant (14 CCR § 15369.5).

Although the formulation of mitigation measures shall not be deferred until some future time, the specific details of a mitigation measure may be developed after project approval when it is impractical or infeasible to include those details during the project’s environmental review. The lead agency must (1) commit itself to the mitigation, (2) adopt specific performance standards the mitigation would achieve, and (3) identify the type(s) of potential action(s) that can feasibly achieve that performance standard and that would be considered, analyzed, and potentially incorporated in the mitigation measure.

Compliance with a regulatory permit or other similar processes may be identified as mitigation if compliance would result in implementation of measures that would be reasonably expected, based on substantial evidence in the record, to reduce the significant impact to the specified performance standards (14 CCR § 15126.4(a)(1)(B)).

Per CEQA, measures may also be adopted, but are not required, for environmental impacts that are not found to be significant (14 CCR § 15126.4(a)(3)). Under CEQA, mitigation is defined as avoiding, minimizing, rectifying, reducing, and compensating for any potential impacts (CEQA 15370). Regulatory agencies may require additional measures beyond those required for compliance with CEQA. Though not considered “mitigation” under CEQA, these measures are often referred to in an Initial Study as “mitigation”, Good Stewardship or Best Management Practices. These measures can also be identified after the Initial Study/Negative Declaration is approved.

CEQA documents must consider direct and indirect impacts of a project (California Public Resources Code [PRC] § 21065.3). They are to focus on significant impacts (14 CCR § 15126.2(a)). Impacts that are less than significant need only be briefly described (14 CCR § 15128). All potentially significant effects must be addressed.

Definitions of Project Parameters

When determining the parameters of a project for potential impacts, the following definitions are provided:

Project Area: This is the general area where the project is located. This term is mainly used in the Affected Environment section (e.g., watershed, climate type, etc.).

Project Limits: This is the beginning and ending post miles for a project. This is different than the Environmental Study Limits in that it sets the beginning and ending limits of a project along the highway. It is the limits programmed for a project, and every report, memo, etc. associated with a project should use the same post mile limits. In some cases, there may be areas associated with a project that are outside of the project limits, such as staging and disposal locations.

Project Footprint: The area within the Environmental Study Limits (ESL) the project is anticipated to impact, both temporarily and permanently. This includes staging and disposal areas.

Environmental Study Limits (ESL): The project engineer provides the Environmental team the ESL as an anticipated boundary for potential impacts. The ESL is *not* the project footprint. Rather, it is the area encompassing the project footprint where there could *potentially* be direct and indirect disturbance by construction activity. The ESL is larger than the project footprint in order to accommodate any future scope changes. The ESL is also used for identifying the various Biological Study Areas (BSAs) needed for different biological resources.

Biological Study Area (BSA): The BSA encompasses the ESL plus any areas outside of the ESL that could potentially be affected by a project (e.g., noise, visual, Coastal Zone, etc.). Depending on resources in the area, a project could have multiple BSAs. Each BSA should be identified and defined. If the project is within the Coastal Zone, this area would also include the required 100 foot buffer.

For this project, the BSA has the same limits as the ESL.

2.1 Aesthetics

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				✓
Would the project: b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				✓
Would the project: c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?			✓	
Would the project: d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				✓

Regulatory Setting

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) establishes it is the policy of the state to take all action necessary to provide the people of the state “with...enjoyment of *aesthetic*, natural, scenic and historic environmental qualities” (CA Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21001[b]).

Affected Environment

Determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Visual Impact Assessment/Scenic Resource Evaluation* dated October 5, 2023 (Caltrans 2023j). The project limits are located along SR 20 in Nevada County between just east of Nevada City and Interstate 80. The portion of SR 20 in Placer County runs north of Emigrant Gap to the Nevada County line. From here, the project limits extend along SR 20 to the SR 20/Interstate 80 interchange at Yuba Pass. The entire stretch of SR 20 within the project limits is a two-lane highway.

The project corridor is defined as the area of land that is visible from, adjacent to, and outside the highway right of way and is determined by topography, vegetation, and viewing distance. For this project, the project corridor mostly comprises the densely forested edge of the highway and the surrounding forest canopy. At a few wide openings in the forest, the corridor extends out to the north and south for several distant miles. Throughout the project limits, intermittent narrow openings in the forest extend the corridor to adjacent canyons, valleys, and nearby mountain ridgelines. Visibility of the highway from adjacent lands is limited.

The project corridor is primarily characterized by forested, mountainous terrain. The corridor's land uses are primarily rural/mountain residential and recreation. Sporadic residential properties and several campgrounds are located throughout the corridor. The Pioneer Trail runs parallel to the highway at varying distances along several miles of the corridor. A few commercial uses are located immediately adjacent to the highway. Several miles of the project limits traverse Tahoe National Forest.

In accordance with the California Streets and Highways Code, Nevada County established and enforces a Scenic Corridor Combining District zoning regulation. The regulation applies to land areas adjacent to roads and highways which have been identified as having high scenic quality, such as SR 20. The regulation implements Chapter 18, Aesthetics, of the Nevada County General Plan, which contains policies intended to preserve the scenic roads and highways within its jurisdiction (Nevada County 2014). Together, the County's policy and policy implementation mechanisms form its Scenic Highway Protection Program, which protects the scenic qualities of its roads and highways, including SR 20's scenic corridor.

Environmental Consequences

Potential impacts to Aesthetics are minimal as there would be negligible visual changes to the environment from construction of this project. While this project is located on an Officially Designated State Scenic Highway, the visual impact of the project is anticipated to be low. The project would be noticeable but negligible and would not have any adverse visual effects on the project corridor, including its scenic resources.

The project would not compromise the project corridor's visual quality and visual character, and would not adversely impact highway viewers nor generate public concern. Also, the potential future change of SR 20's highway status from Eligible Scenic Highway to Officially Designated State Scenic Highway would not be compromised by this project. The temporary visual effects created by the project's minor construction activities would be noticeable but brief and also negligible. Impacts to vegetation removal should be minimal. The MGS vegetation control and the new MGS guardrail and posts would be treated with integral color or surface stain. The color and method of application would be determined during the final design. No mitigation measures are proposed.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.1—Aesthetics

a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

NO IMPACT. Scenic vistas are often panoramic views that have high quality compositional and picturesque value. The project corridor contains scenic vistas, notably the Washington Road Vista Point; however, the project would not obstruct, damage, or diminish views of the surrounding landscape, canyons, valleys, or distant ridgelines and mountains from any scenic locations along SR 20. There would be no impact to scenic vistas.

b) Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, within a state scenic highway?

NO IMPACT. As described above, the project corridor is designated an Eligible State Scenic Highway and an Officially Designated State Scenic Highway. The project would not obstruct, damage, or diminish any scenic resources along SR 20, and would comply with Nevada County's Scenic Highway Protection Program. There would be no impact to scenic resources.

- c) Would the project, in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point.)*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. The project would not degrade the project corridor's visual character or visual quality as the project features would be visually similar to and compatible with the existing highway condition and facilities. The corridor's vividness, intactness, and unity would not be compromised by the project due to the limited scope. Temporary impacts to the quality of the public view would occur during construction. While these impacts would be noticeable, they would also be temporary and negligible. Overall, the project would have a negligible effect on the visual character and quality of the project corridor. There would be a less than significant impact to the existing visual character or quality of public views.

- d) Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?*

NO IMPACT. The project does not propose any new permanent sources of light. The project may involve nighttime construction work, which may create temporary adverse light and glare impacts on the surrounding rural/mountain area. However, the project would comply with applicable Caltrans Standard Specifications, Caltrans Special Provisions, and Caltrans North Region Environmental Standard Measures and Best Management Practices to limit any adverse light and glare effects due to construction. The project's new MGS may create a minimal amount of glare until the steel surfaces of its components weather and dull.

2.2 Agriculture and Forest Resources

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project; the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				✓
Would the project: b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				✓
Would the project: c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?				✓
Would the project: d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				✓

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Land Use, Utilities, and Emergency Services Memorandum* dated September 25, 2023 (Caltrans 2023f).

Potential impacts to Agriculture and Forest Resources are not anticipated as most of the work would occur within the Caltrans right of way. Work that would occur outside of the Caltrans right of way would not cause the conversion of agriculture or forest resources to non-forest or agriculture use. Work on five culverts would require temporary access to private and public property outside of the Caltrans right of way to gain access to the inlet or outlet of the culvert for lining. This would require four drainage easements. The drainage easements are required to allow maintenance access to the drainages after the project is constructed. The drainage easements for this project would not impact farmland or forest resources as access to these locations would be short in duration and only used to access the culverts for lining and later for maintenance activities. There is land zoned as Agricultural or Residential Agricultural adjacent to the project; however, none of these parcels are listed as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Significance.

The temporary access and ditch creation outside of the Caltrans right of way would not conflict with existing zoning or cause rezoning of forest or timberland. Fire hardening to help reduce wildfire threat would remove vegetation near the South Yuba Canal and Drum Canal structures within the Caltrans right of way. This would not result in the loss of forest land or the conversion of forest land to non-forest land. There would be no conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.2—Agriculture and Forest Resources

- a) Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?***

NO IMPACT. There is no farmland adjacent to the project that is classified as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Therefore, there would be no impact.

- b) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?***

NO IMPACT. There are no Williamson Act contracts in the project area. In addition, the work outside of the Caltrans right of way would not conflict with Agricultural zoning as the work outside of the right of way would be temporary and not convert land from its existing zoning. There would be no impact to Agricultural zoning or Williamson Act Contracts.

- c) Would the project conflict with existing zoning or cause rezoning of forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?***

NO IMPACT. Any work outside of the Caltrans right of way would be temporary and minor in nature. No activities would occur outside of the Caltrans right of way which would require rezoning or conflict with existing zoning of forest or timberlands; therefore, there would be no impact.

- d) Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?***

NO IMPACT. The project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. The majority of the work would occur within the Caltrans right of way. Work outside of the Caltrans right of way at the drainage easements is for access to the inlet or outlets of culverts for lining and would not result in the loss of forest land.

Work occurring within the drainage easement would include creating a ditch to outlet water from the new culvert. This work would not result in the loss of forest land or the conversion of forest land to non-forest land. There would be no impact to forest land.

e) Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

NO IMPACT. The project would not involve other changes in the existing environment that could result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use. The project involves the maintenance, repair, and upgrade of existing highway facilities. The project would also fire harden two locations within the Caltrans right of way. Any work outside of the Caltrans right of way would be minor, temporary, and would not cause the conversion of farmland or forestland from their existing use.

2.3 Air Quality

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				✓
Would the project: b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?				✓
Would the project: c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			✓	
Would the project: d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?			✓	

Regulatory Setting

The federal Clean Air Act (CAA), as amended, is the primary federal law that governs air quality, while the California Clean Air Act (CAA) is its corresponding state law. These laws, and related regulations by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and California Air Resources Board (CARB), set standards for the concentration of pollutants in the air.

Federal air quality standards and regulations provide the basic scheme for project-level air quality analysis under NEPA. In addition to this analysis, a parallel “Conformity” requirement under the federal CAA also applies. U.S. EPA regulations at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 93 govern the conformity process. Conformity requirements do not apply

in unclassifiable/attainment areas for National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and do not apply at all for state standards regardless of the status of the area.

Affected Environment

Determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Memorandum* dated December 12, 2022 (Caltrans 2022). Within the project limits, the mountainous terrain has a lot of influence over local winds, which creates high variability in wind direction. The direction and movement of winds impact how airborne pollutants are dispersed, which in turn impacts air quality (Nevada 2014).

Both federal and state governments classify areas by attainment status. Attainment means an area meets prescribed air quality standards. If an area does not meet a standard, it is designated as a nonattainment area for that pollutant. Both Nevada and Placer counties are in nonattainment for ozone and Particulate Matter (PM)₁₀ for State Ambient Air Quality Standards. Western Placer County is in nonattainment for PM_{2.5} for National Ambient Air Quality Standards, however this is outside of the project area.

Environmental Consequences

Potential long term impacts to Air Quality are not anticipated due to the modifications not resulting in changes to the traffic volume, fleet mix, speed, location of existing facility or any other factor that would cause an increase in emissions relative to the No-Build Alternative. This project would not cause an increase in operational emissions and is exempt from all air quality conformity analysis requirements per Table 2 of 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 93.126 subsection “Safety-pavement resurfacing and/or rehabilitation.”

During construction, short-term degradation of air quality may occur due to the release of particulate emissions (airborne dust) generated by excavation, grading, hauling, and other construction-related activities. Emissions from construction equipment also are expected and would include carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), directly-emitted particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), and toxic air contaminants such as diesel exhaust particulate matter. Construction activities are expected to increase traffic congestion in the area, resulting in increases in emissions from traffic during the delays. These emissions would be temporary and limited to the immediate area surrounding the construction site.

Fugitive dust would be generated during grading and construction operations. Sources of fugitive dust include disturbed soils at the construction site and trucks carrying uncovered loads of soils. Unless properly controlled, vehicles leaving the site may deposit mud on local streets, which could be an additional source of airborne dust after it dries. PM10 emissions may vary from day to day, depending on the nature and magnitude of construction activity and local weather conditions. PM10 emissions depend on soil moisture, silt content of soil, wind speed, and the amount of equipment operating. Larger dust particles would settle near the source, while fine particles would be dispersed over greater distances from the construction site.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.3—Air Quality

- a) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?***

NO IMPACT. Due to the limited scope of the project, the project would not result in changes to the traffic volume, fleet mix, speed, location of existing facility or any other factor that would cause an increase in emissions. There would not be an increase in operational emissions and the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans.

- b) Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?***

NO IMPACT. Due to the limited scope of the project, the project would not cause an increase in operational emissions and would therefore not cause a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. Therefore, there would be no impact.

c) Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. Due to the limited scope of the project, the project would not cause an increase of any pollutant and would therefore have no long term impact on sensitive receptors (schools, health facilities etc.). Temporary impacts to sensitive receptors would occur during construction. Construction activities near the interchange with Scotts Flat Road would expose the public using the bike path or accessing the nearby stores to construction-related emissions. These emissions would be temporary and are limited to the immediate area surrounding the construction site.

d) Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. The project would not result in any changes to traffic volume, fleet mix, speed, or any other factor that would cause an increase in long term emissions or any other emissions, such as those leading to odors. Construction of the project may lead to emissions that result in odor. The public may notice odor caused by construction near the Scotts Flat Road and SR 20 interchange. These emissions would be temporary and limited to the immediate area surrounding the construction site.

2.4 Biological Resources

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or NOAA Fisheries?			✓	
Would the project: b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			✓	
Would the project: c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			✓	
Would the project: d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				✓

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				✓
Would the project: f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				✓

Regulatory Setting

Within this section of the document (2.4. Biological Resources), the topics are separated into Sensitive Natural Communities, Wetlands and Other Waters, Plant Species, Animal Species, Threatened and Endangered Species, and Invasive Species. Plant and animal species listed as “threatened” or “endangered” are covered within the Threatened and Endangered sections. Other special status plant and animal species, including USFWS and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) candidate species, CDFW Fully Protected (FP) species, Species of Special Concern (SSC), and California Native Plant Society (CNPS) rare plants are covered in the respective Plant and Animal sections.

Sensitive Natural Communities

CDFW maintains a list of sensitive natural communities (SNCs). SNCs are those natural communities that are of limited distribution statewide or within a county or region and are often vulnerable to environmental effects of projects. These communities may or may not contain special status taxa or their habitat.

Wetlands and Other Waters

Waters of the United States (including wetlands) and State are protected under several laws and regulations. The primary laws and regulations governing wetlands and other waters include:

- Federal: Clean Water Act (CWA)–33 United States Code (USC) 1344
- Federal: Executive Order for the Protection of Wetlands (Executive Order [EO] 11990)
- State: California Fish and Game Code (CFGC)–Sections 1600–1607
- State: Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act–Section 3000 et seq.

Plant Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) have regulatory responsibility for the protection of special status plant species. The primary laws governing plant species include:

- Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA)–USC 16 Section 1531, et seq.
See also 50 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 402
- California Endangered Species Act (CESA)–California Fish and Game Code Section 2050, et seq.
- Native Plant Protection Act–California Fish and Game Code Sections 1900–1913
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)–40 CFR Sections 1500 through 1508
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)–California Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 21000–21177

Animal Species

The USFWS, NMFS, and CDFW have regulatory responsibility for the protection of special status animal species. The primary laws governing animal species include:

- NEPA–40 CFR Sections 1500 through 1508
- CEQA–California Public Resources Code Sections 21000–21177
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act–16 USC Sections 703–712
- Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act–16 USC Section 661
- California Fish and Game Code Sections 1600–1603
- California Fish and Game Code Sections 4150 and 4152

Threatened and Endangered Species

The primary laws governing threatened and endangered species include:

- FESA–USC 16 Section 1531, et seq. See also 50 CFR Part 402
- CESA–California Fish and Game Code Section 2050, et seq.
- CESA–California Fish and Game Code Section 2080
- CEQA–California Public Resources Code, Sections 21000–21177
- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended–
16 USC Section 1801

Invasive Species

The primary laws governing invasive species are Executive Order (EO) 13112 as amended and NEPA.

Affected Environment

A Natural Environment Study (NES) (Caltrans 2024b) was prepared in March 2024. Caltrans coordinated with fisheries biologists and water quality specialists, as well as agency personnel from USACE, USFWS, CDFW, and CVRWQCB. See Chapter 3 for a summary of these coordination efforts and professional contacts.

The studies conducted for the project included review of natural resources databases and existing resource information, floristic surveys for special status plant species and invasive plants, wildlife connectivity analyses, delineation of aquatic resources, general reconnaissance-level wildlife surveys, Foothill yellow-legged frog and Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog habitat assessment surveys, bat habitat assessment surveys, and mapping of vegetation and other land cover types.

Aquatic resources delineations, botanical inventories, land cover mapping, wildlife connectivity improvement analysis studies, and habitat assessments for special status species were conducted between June and December 2023. Land cover mapping and wildlife observed were conducted simultaneously with the botanical and aquatic resources delineations.

Sensitive Natural Communities

Natural communities of special concern are habitats considered sensitive because of their high species diversity, high productivity, unusual nature, limited distribution, or declining status. Federal, state, and local agencies consider these habitats important, and compensation for loss of sensitive communities is generally required by agencies. The CDFW–California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) contains a current list of rare natural communities throughout California. USFWS and CDFW consider certain habitats, such as riparian communities, important to wildlife and USACE and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) consider stream habitats important for water quality and wildlife. Waters of the United States and Waters of the State are regulated by the USACE and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards, respectively.

The natural communities of special concern within the ESL include wetland, riverine, and riparian woodland habitat. Other aquatic resources that were identified within the ESL, which are not necessarily sensitive, include canals.

Riparian Woodland

Riparian woodland occurs along portions of the perennial and some of the intermittent streams within the ESL, in addition to low topographical areas along the eastern portion of the ESL. While riparian generally has hydrophytic vegetation, the riparian lacks the hydrology necessary to be considered a wetland. Therefore, riparian is considered an upland land cover. Dominant vegetation includes narrow-leaved willow (*Salix exigua* var. *exigua*), red willow (*Salix laevigata*), arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*), big-leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), California black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*), American dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), mountain dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*), western poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*), and snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*).

Wetlands and Other Waters

Wetlands

Wetlands occur within the eastern portion of the ESL. Plant species observed within the wetlands include Himalayan blackberry, seep monkeyflower (*Erythranthe guttata*), Kentucky blue grass (*Poa pratensis* ssp. *pratensis*), curly dock (*Rumex crispus*), common scouring rush (*Equisetum hyemale* ssp. *affine*), sword leaved rush (*Juncus ensifolius*), Baltic rush (*Juncus balticus* ssp. *ater*), toad rush (*Juncus bufonius*), and aconogonon (*Aconogonon phytolaccifolium*).

Seep

One seep occurs within the ESL at PM 42.18. Dominant vegetation includes fragile-sheathed sedge (*Carex fracta*), sweet-scented bedstraw (*Galium triflorum*), and musk monkeyflower (*Erythranthe moschata*).

Ditch

Ditches occur at 17 locations throughout the ESL. These features are dug in uplands, drain uplands, and are subject to regular maintenance. Ditches within the ESL range from 1 to 5 feet wide. None of these features are realigned or historic natural features. Dominant plant species include ryegrass (*Festuca perennis*), black flatrush (*Cyperus niger*), rush (*Juncus* spp.), seep monkeyflower, pale smartweed (*Persicaria lapathifolia*), and curly dock.

Perennial Channel

A perennial channel occurs within the ESL at PM 41.27. The perennial channel within the ESL contain riffles and pools with cobble bottoms and 13- to 23-foot-wide banks. Dominant vegetation is similar to those described under the riparian woodland land cover.

Intermittent Channel

Intermittent channels occur at 30 locations within the ESL. These features are fed by both rainwater and groundwater such that they support flows beyond rainstorms, but not throughout the year. The intermittent channels contain small cobble or sandy bottoms and 2- to 17-foot-wide banks. Dominant vegetation along some intermittent channels is similar to those described under the riparian woodland land cover. Other intermittent channels are surrounded by upland vegetation similar to those described under the Sierra mixed conifer and montane hardwood-conifer land cover types.

Ephemeral Channels

Many ephemeral channels occur throughout the ESL. These features convey rainwater and associated surface runoff and stop flowing shortly after rain events. Most of the ephemeral channels in the ESL were not flowing at the time of the field surveys. The ephemeral channels contain sandy to gravel bottoms with 1- to 15-foot-wide banks. These features contain little to no vegetation aside from the upland vegetation surrounding the ephemeral drainages including ripgut grass (*Bromus diandrus*), bristly dogtail grass (*Cynosurus echinatus*), cheat grass (*Bromus tectorum*), and hedge parsley (*Torilis arvensis*).

Canal

There are three mapped canals within the ESL at PMs 20.35, 41.27, and 42.15. These features are excavated, linear, concrete-lined, channelized features. They range in size between 1 foot wide to 15 feet wide. None of the mapped canals are realigned natural features.

Plant Species

Thread Leaf Beakseed

The summer 2023 botanical surveys were conducted within the identifiable blooming period for regionally occurring special status plants. One special status plant, thread leaf beakseed (*Bulbostylis capillaris*), occurs within the ESL. Thread leaf beakseed is found in meadows and seeps in montane coniferous forest from 1,295 to 6,810 feet. Thread leaf beakseed is a California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 4.2 plant of limited distribution and is fairly endangered in California.

Animal Species

A review of endangered, threatened, proposed, and other special status animal species listed by USFWS and CDFW was completed to determine if suitable habitat for these species could be found within the ESL. The project would have no effect/no take of the following Fully Protected species or CDFW Species of Special Concern as the project is either out of geographical range of the species or the species is not present within the BSA due to a lack of suitable habitat.

- Southern long-toed salamander (*Ambystoma macrodactylum sigillatum*)—CDFW Species of Special Concern (SSC)
- Yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*)—CDFW SSC

- Sierra Nevada mountain beaver (*Aplodontia rufa californica*)—CDFW SSC
- Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare (*Lepus americanus tahoensis*)—CDFW SSC
- Northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)—CDFW SSC
- Coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*)—CDFW SSC

Those animal species with potentially suitable habitat within the ESL or are anticipated to be present within the project study limits are discussed further below.

Bats Species: Special Status and Commonly Occurring Bats

Pallid Bat

Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) is a California Species of Special Concern. Throughout California, the pallid bat is usually found in low to middle elevation habitats below 6,000 feet; however, the species has been found in habitats of up to 10,000 feet in elevation in the Sierra Nevada. Pallid bats occur in a variety of habitats in California, including deserts, grasslands, shrublands, woodlands and forest and they forage in open areas within these habitats. Day roosts may vary but are found commonly in bridges, rock crevices, tree hollows, mines, caves, and a variety of human-made structures. Tree roosting has been documented in large conifer snags, inside basal hollows of redwoods and giant sequoias, and bole cavities in oaks.

There are no CNDDDB records for the pallid bat within 5 miles of the ESL. No bats were found during the survey of the ESL; however, signs of bat use (i.e., guano) were documented at the I-80 overpass bridge. Trees and artificial structures were identified as potential day and night bat roosting sites. Ninety-four trees or snags considered potentially suitable as day-roosting habitat for local bats were found during the bat roosting bat habitat survey. Many trees within the ESL are suitable for night roosting because this type of roosting is short-term, transitory (i.e., can involve several sites in a single night), and does not have the same environmental constraints as day roosts.

Out of the artificial structures assessed and determined to be potential day-roost habitat, the mine shaft and the Caltrans salt house were considered good quality, and the Caltrans office/garage and the westbound I-80 overpass bridge were considered poor quality. However, guano was found at the westbound I-80 overpass at the south buttress and is probably a night roost. Guano was also found at the Bear River double box culvert and eastbound I-80 overpass bridges and were both determined to be potential night-roost locations.

Townsend's Big-Eared Bat

Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*) is a California Species of Special Concern. It occurs throughout California in a wide variety of habitats, except for subalpine and alpine habitats. It can occur at any season throughout its range. Habitats include conifer forests, riparian habitats, grasslands, deserts, and coastal habitats. This species' distribution is strongly correlated with the availability of caves and cave-like roosting habitat, including abandoned mines (Western Bat Working Group 2005). Townsend's big-eared bat is sensitive to disturbance of roost sites. It may use separate day, night, hibernation, or maternity roosts.

There is one CNDDDB record of a Townsend's big-eared bat occurrence approximately 3.2 miles from the ESL. No bats were found during the survey of the ESL, but signs of bat use (i.e., guano) were documented at the I-80 overpass bridge. Trees and artificial structures were identified as potential day and night bat roosting sites. Ninety-four trees or snags considered potentially suitable as day-roosting habitat for local bats were found during the bat roosting/bat habitat survey. Many trees within the study area are suitable for night roosting because this type of roosting is short-term, transitory (i.e., can involve several sites in a single night), and does not have the same environmental constraints as day roosts.

Out of the artificial structures assessed and determined to be potential day-roost habitat, the mine shaft and the Caltrans salt house were considered good quality, and the Caltrans office/garage and the westbound I-80 overpass bridge were considered poor quality. However, guano was found at the westbound I-80 overpass at the south buttress and is probably a night roost. Guano was also found at the Bear River double box culvert and eastbound I-80 overpass bridge and were both determined to be potential night-roost locations.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Threatened and Endangered Plant Species

As the following special status plant species identified on the USFWS, CDFW-CNDDDB and CNPS species lists were not observed within the ESL during botanical surveys, there would be no effect/no take/no impact to these species:

- Stebbins' morning glory (*Calystegia stebbinsii*)—Federal endangered, State candidate endangered
- Pine Hill flannelbush (*Fremontodendron decumbens*)—Federal endangered, State rare
- Layne's ragwort (*Packera layneae*)—Federal threatened, State rare
- Hartweg's golden sunburst (*Potamogeton praelongus*)—Federal and State endangered
- Scadden Flat checkerbloom (*Silene stipularis*)—State endangered

Threatened and Endangered Animal Species

There would be no effect/no impact to the following Threatened and Endangered animal species identified on the USFWS, NMFS, and CDFW-CNDDDB species lists as there is no suitable habitat for the species within the ESL or the project is out of the geographical range of the species:

- Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*)—Federal threatened
- Conservancy fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*)—Federal endangered
- Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*)—Federal threatened
- Lahontan cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus henshawi*)—Federal threatened
- California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*)—Federal threatened, CDFW Species of Special Concern
- Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (*Rana sierrae*)—Federal endangered, State threatened
- Giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*)—Federal and State threatened
- Yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*)—Western Distinct Population Segment—Federal threatened and State endangered
- Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)—State endangered and Fully Protected

- California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*)—State threatened and Fully Protected
- Wolverine (*Gulo gulo*)—Federal proposed threatened, State endangered and Fully Protected
- Western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*)—State candidate species
- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)—Federal proposed threatened
- Foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*)—Some populations Federally protected, State threatened
- Northwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*)—Federal proposed threatened, State Species of Special Concern
- Great gray owl (*Strix nebulosa*)—State endangered
- California spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis occidentalis*)—Federal proposed threatened, State Species of Special Concern

Migratory Birds

The occupied nests and eggs of migratory birds are protected by federal and state laws, including the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503 and 3503.5. USFWS is responsible for overseeing compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and CDFW is responsible for overseeing compliance with the California Fish and Game Code and making recommendations on nesting bird and raptor protection.

Several bird species were observed foraging within the ESL during the 2023 biological surveys of the ESL. Birds could nest on the ground, in shrubs, in trees, and on built structures within the ESL. The generally accepted breeding season to encompass most birds is from February 1 to September 30.

Invasive Species

During the botanical surveys conducted between June and September 2023, 11 invasive plants that have severe ecological impacts on the environment were identified within the ESL: giant reed (*Arundo donax*), barbed goatgrass (*Aegilops triuncialis*), cheat grass, yellow star-thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe* ssp. *micranthos*), Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*), fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), French broom (*Genista monspessulana*), peppergrass (*Lepidium campestre*), Himalayan blackberry, and Spanish broom (*Spartium junceum*).

Environmental Consequences

Sensitive Natural Communities

Riparian Woodland

The project would temporarily affect 0.002 acre (87.12 square feet) of riparian woodland (Table 3). Temporary impacts to riparian woodland would occur when construction crews gain access to the inlet or outlet of the culvert at PM 41.10 for CIPP lining. No permanent impacts to riparian would occur as a result of the construction of this project.

Table 3. Estimated Maximum Permanent and Temporary Impacts on Riparian Habitat

Riparian Woodland	Permanent Impacts (acres)	Permanent Impacts (square feet)	Temporary Impacts (acres)	Temporary Impacts (square feet)
Riparian Woodland	0.0	0.0	0.002	87.12
Total	0.0	0.0	0.002	87.12

In addition to any proposed mitigation required through the permitting process, implementation of the following Standard Measures and Best Management Practices identified in Chapter 1.6 would ensure that construction activities avoid and minimize potential impacts on riparian vegetation within and adjacent to the limits of disturbance associated with construction.

- BR-1: Retain a Designated Biologist to Conduct Monitoring prior to Construction for environmental awareness training and to monitor environmentally sensitive Fencing Installation during Construction Activities as Appropriate
- BR-4C: Install Fencing and/or Flagging to Protect Sensitive Biological Resources
- BR-5: Protect Water Quality and Minimize Sedimentation Runoff in Wetlands and Other Waters

Wetlands and Other Waters

Wetlands

The project would not cause permanent impacts to wetlands. There would be 0.002 acre of temporary impacts to wetlands from vegetation trimming and equipment access during the work at the drainage located at PM 41.10.

Seep

There would be no permanent or temporary impacts to the seep.

Ditch

There would be no permanent or temporary impacts to wetland ditches.

Perennial Channels

There would be no permanent or temporary impacts to perennial channels.

Intermittent Channels

There would be 0.002 acres of permanent impacts to intermittent channels. Permanent impacts would occur from placing RSP at the outlets of various culverts. There would be 0.001 acre of temporary impacts to intermittent channels due to vegetation trimming and equipment access at the inlets and outlets of the culvert at PM 20.47 for CIPP installation.

Ephemeral Channel

There would be 0.007 acres permanent impacts to ephemeral channels. Permanent impacts would occur from placing RSP at the outlets of various culverts. There would be 0.005 acre of temporary impacts to ephemeral channels due to vegetation trimming to gain access to the inlets and outlets of various culverts.

Canals

There would be no permanent or temporary impacts to the canal systems within the ESL.

The project would permanently affect 0.009 acres (392.04 square feet) of aquatic resources of the United States/Waters of the State (Table 4 below). Permanent impacts would occur from the installation of RSP. The calculations below are assuming a 10-foot by 10-foot work area at the outlet of the culvert. Temporary impacts would affect 0.008 acre (348.48 square feet) of aquatic resources (Table 4 below).

Table 4. Estimated Maximum Permanent and Temporary Impacts on Aquatic Resources

Aquatic Resources	Permanent Impacts (acres)	Permanent Impacts (square feet)	Temporary Impacts (acres)	Temporary Impacts (square feet)
Wetland	0	0	0.002	87.12
Seep	0	0	0	0
Wetland Ditch	0	0	0	0
Perennial Channel	0	0	0	0
Intermittent Channel	0.002	87.12	0.001	43.56
Ephemeral Channel	0.007	304.92	0.005	217.80
Total	0.009	392.04	0.008	348.48

Caltrans would acquire all applicable permits, including a CWA Section 404 permit from the USACE, a CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, and/or a Section 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement from the CDFW. Caltrans would comply with all conditions detailed in these permits and/or certifications. Compensating for the loss of regulated habitats is commonly included in these conditions. Caltrans would demonstrate that there is no net loss of wetlands and Other Waters of the United States and State-protected waters/wetlands from project construction. Restoration of temporary impacts to wetlands and Waters of the United States would be performed on site. Implementation of the standard avoidance and minimization measures found in Chapter 1.6 would ensure the project minimizes effects on aquatic resources of the United States/Waters of the State, including wetland communities in and adjacent to the project area.

- BR-1: Retain a Designated Biologist to Conduct Monitoring prior to Construction for environmental awareness training and to monitor Fence Installation during Construction Activities as Appropriate
- BR-4C: Install Fencing and/or Flagging to Protect Sensitive Biological Resources

- BR-5: Protect Water Quality and Minimize Sedimentation Runoff in Wetlands and Other Waters

Caltrans would also implement any additional BMPs that may be included in the Section 404 permit, Section 401 Water Quality Certification, and 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration.

Plant Species

Thread Leaf Beakseed

One population of approximately 500 thread leaf beakseed (*Bulbostylis capillaris*) individuals was observed within the ESL between PM 41.5 and PM 41.6. This species has a California Rare Plant Ranking of 4.2, which means that it is a plant of limited distribution and fairly endangered in California (per the California Native Plant Society). There are no CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the ESL (California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2023). Project construction would largely avoid impacts on this population; however, driving of vehicular construction equipment into the area where the plants occur could harm or destroy these species, if present.

As thread leaf beakseed has a California Rare Plant Ranking of 4.2, there are no statutory requirements to avoid or minimize impacts to this species. No avoidance or minimization measures are proposed.

Special Status Animal Species

Bats Species: Special Status and Commonly Occurring Bats

Pallid Bat and Townsend's Big-eared Bat

The project does not propose to remove or alter any of the artificial or natural structures that provide potential bat roosting habitat. No adverse impacts on roosting bats are anticipated.

Cumulative impacts on bat roosting habitat could result from construction of other projects in Nevada and Placer counties. Construction of the project could add to the cumulative loss of bat roosting habitat in the region; however, considering the measures in place to avoid and minimize effects on the species and the minimal amount of habitat lost in relation to the higher quality surrounding habitat available, the project's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts on bat roosting habitat is not cumulatively considerable.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Due to the scope, description, and location of the project, in addition to there being no suitable habitat for any species within the ESL, there would be no impacts to any threatened and endangered species.

Migratory Birds

The project has the potential to affect nesting migratory birds either through direct injury or through mortality during ground-disturbing activities and vegetation removal or by disrupting normal behaviors, including nesting. Considering the avoidance and minimization efforts proposed below, the project would not result in any adverse impacts on migratory birds.

The following measures would ensure that construction activities avoid and minimize potential impacts on migratory birds within and adjacent to the limits of disturbance associated with construction.

- BR-1: Retain a Designated Biologist to Conduct Monitoring prior to Construction for environmental awareness training and to monitor Fence Installation during Construction Activities as Appropriate
- BR-2: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Nesting Birds including Northern Goshawk, Great Gray Owl, and California Spotted Owl
- BR-4C: Install Fencing and/or Flagging to Protect Sensitive Biological Resources

The proposed measures listed above would ensure that construction activities avoid and minimize potential impacts on nesting birds. Therefore, no compensatory mitigation is proposed.

Considering the measures in place to avoid and minimize effects on nesting migratory birds and the minimal amount of habitat lost in relation to the surrounding habitat available, the project's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts on nesting migratory birds is not cumulatively considerable.

Invasive Plants

The project would create additional disturbed areas and likely remove areas that contain invasive species. Areas of disturbance would be more susceptible to colonization or spread by invasive plants. Considering the avoidance and minimization efforts proposed below, the project would not result in any adverse impacts from invasive plants.

Implementation of the following measures would ensure that the potential introduction and spread of invasive species are avoided and minimized.

- BR-1: Conduct Mandatory Environmental Awareness Training for Construction Personnel
- BR-2G: Hydroseed disturbed areas with local/regionally appropriate hydroseed mix

The proposed measures listed above would ensure that construction activities avoid and minimize potential spread of invasive species.

The implementation of the Avoidance and Minimization Measures would likely prevent project activities from contributing to the cumulative impact of invasive species in the region.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.4a)— Biological Resources

- a) *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or NOAA Fisheries/NMFS?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.

Plant Species

As determined by botanical surveys, thread leaf beakseed is the only special status plant species (a regionally rare plant species) that occurs within the ESL. As project construction would largely avoid impacts on this population, and as this species has a California Rare Plant Rank of 4.2 and there are no statutory requirements to avoid or minimize impacts to this species, no measures would need to be incorporated into the project to protect thread leaf beakseed during construction. The impact would be *less than significant*.

Animal Species

Queries to the USFWS, NMFS and CDFW databases identified listed, candidate, and other special status species that could be potentially present within the ESL. Many of the species identified in these queries do not have suitable habitat within the ESL. It was determined that temporary and/or permanent impacts as a result of the project could occur to the following species that have potential habitat within the ESL. Based on the reasoning below, there would be a *less than significant impact* to animal species.

Special Status and Commonly Occurring Bats

Pallid bats and Townsend's big-eared bat are both State Species of Special Concern. The project does not propose to remove or alter any artificial structures that may provide potential bat roosting habitat. There would be no impact to bat species.

Threatened and Endangered Species

As there is no suitable habitat within the ESL for any threatened or endangered species, there would be *no impact* to threatened or endangered species.

Invasive Species

Caltrans is proposing to reduce the potential to spread invasive species by conducting pre-treatment and post-construction monitoring on invasive populations within the ESL. With implementation of Standard Measures BR-1 (retain a designated biologist, Environmental Awareness Training) and BR-2G (install a regionally appropriate hydroseed mix with native plants) and with implementation of the Standard Measures and Best Management Practices identified in Section 1.6, the project is not anticipated to increase or decrease the area currently occupied by invasive plants or the potential for spreading invasive plant species; therefore, the impact would be *less than significant*.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.4b)— Biological Resources

- b) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.

Sensitive Natural Communities

The project would temporarily affect 0.002 acre (87.12 square feet) of riparian woodland. With implementation of Standard Measures BR-1 (retain a designated biologist, environmental awareness training), BR-4C (install fencing/flagging to protect riparian woodland), and BR-5 (protect wetlands and other waters) and any proposed mitigation required through the permitting process, impacts to riparian habitat would be *less than significant*.

Invasive Species

The project is not anticipated to increase or decrease the area currently occupied by invasive species within the ESL. The implementation of Caltrans Standard Measures and BMPs would prevent invasive species from having an effect on riparian woodland or other sensitive natural communities; therefore, the impact would be *less than significant*.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.4c)— Biological Resources

- c) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.

Wetlands and Other Waters

The ESL contains wetlands and non-wetlands waters. The project would permanently impact 0.009 acres (392.04 square feet) of aquatic resources of the United States or Waters of the State.

- 0.002 acres (87.12 square feet) to intermittent channel
- 0.007 acres (304.92 square feet) to ephemeral channel

There would be a total of 0.008 acre (348.48 square feet) of temporary impacts to aquatic resources as follows:

- 0.002 acres (87.12 square feet) to wetlands
- 0.001 acres (43.56 square feet) to intermittent channel
- 0.005 acres (217.80 square feet) to ephemeral channel

Caltrans would acquire all applicable permits, including a CWA Section 404 permit from the USACE, a CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, and/or a Section 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement from the CDFW. Temporary impacts to wetlands and Waters of the United States would be restored on site.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.4d)— Biological Resources

- d) Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?*

NO IMPACT.

Animal Species

The species lists obtained from the USFWS, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and CDFW identified essential fish habitat for Chinook salmon, coho, groundfish, and coastal pelagics, and highly migratory species in the Cisco Grove, Blue Canyon, Washington, and North Bloomfield 7.5-minute USGS topographic quadrangles around the project. There is no suitable habitat for these species within the ESL or within the receiving waters downstream of the ESL.

Project activities, such as paving and culvert replacement, would not permanently affect wildlife movement and would not result in a change from existing conditions. Additional pavement would be installed where maintenance vehicle pullouts are located. However, these areas are minor and located in already disturbed roadside areas and would not impact the movement of any wildlife species or wildlife corridor.

As there are no scope elements of the project which would interfere with the movement of a resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, there would be no impact to resident or migratory fish species.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Temporary and permanent impacts to threatened and endangered species would not substantially interfere with species movement within the ESL because the project would not change the ability of species to move throughout the project areas compared to existing conditions. With the implementation of Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (Section 1.6) to protect threatened and endangered species during construction, there would be no impact.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.4e)— Biological Resources

- e) Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?*

NO IMPACT.

Sensitive Natural Communities

Because the project is mostly within Caltrans' right of way and would only cause minor impacts to sensitive natural communities, no conflicts would occur with local policies or ordinances. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Wetlands and Other Waters

Because the project is mostly within Caltrans' right of way and Caltrans would be permitting and mitigating impacts to Waters of the United States and State, no conflicts would occur with local policies or ordinances. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Plant Species

Because the project is mostly within Caltrans' right of way and Standard Measures and BMPs would be implemented to protect uncommon plant species, no conflicts would occur with local policies or ordinances. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Animal Species

Because the project is mostly within Caltrans' right of way and would only cause less than significant impacts to animal species, no conflicts would occur with local policies or ordinances. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Because the project is mostly within Caltrans' right of way and would cause no impacts to threatened and endangered species, no conflicts would occur with local policies or ordinances. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Invasive Species

Because the project is mostly within Caltrans' right of way and with the implementation of Caltrans Standard Measures and BMPs to prevent the spread of invasive species, no conflicts would occur with local policies or ordinances. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.4f)—Biological Resources

- f) Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?*

NO IMPACT.

Sensitive Natural Communities

There are no Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP), Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCP), or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans that apply to the project. Nevada County does not have an approved HCP or NCCP. Placer County has the Placer County Conservation Program, which only applies to western Placer County and does not cover the project area. Because there are no applicable local, regional, or state conservation plans that apply to the project, there would be no impact.

Wetlands and Other Waters

There are no HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan that apply to the project. Nevada County does not have an approved HCP or NCCP. Placer County has the Placer County Conservation Program, which only applies to western Placer County and does not cover the project area. Because there are no applicable local, regional, or state conservation plans that apply to the project, there would be no impact.

Plant Species

There are no HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan that apply to the project. Nevada County does not have an approved HCP or NCCP. Placer County has the Placer County Conservation Program, which only applies to western Placer County and does not cover the project area. Because there are no applicable local, regional, or state conservation plans that apply to the project, there would be no impact.

Animal Species

There are no HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan that apply to the project. Nevada County does not have an approved HCP or NCCP. Placer County has the Placer County Conservation Program, which only applies to western Placer County and does not cover the project area. Because there are no applicable local, regional, or state conservation plans that apply to the project, there would be no impact.

Threatened and Endangered Species

There are no HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan that apply to the project. Nevada County does not have an approved HCP or NCCP. Placer County has the Placer County Conservation Program, which only applies to western Placer County and does not cover the project area. Because there are no applicable local, regional, or state conservation plans that apply to the project, there would be no impact.

Invasive Species

There are no HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan that apply to the project. Nevada County does not have an approved HCP or NCCP. Placer County has the Placer County Conservation Program, which only applies to western Placer County and does not cover the project area. Because there are no applicable local, regional, or state conservation plans that apply to the project, there would be no impact.

2.5 Cultural Resources

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?			✓	
Would the project: b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?			✓	
Would the project: c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?				✓

Regulatory Setting

The term “cultural resources,” as used in this document, refers to the built environment (e.g., structures, bridges, railroads, water conveyance systems, etc.), places of traditional or cultural importance, and archaeological sites (both prehistoric and historic), regardless of significance. Under California state laws, cultural resources that meet certain criteria of significance are referred to by various terms including *archaeological resources*, *historic resources*, *historic districts*, *historical landmarks*, and *tribal cultural resources* as defined in PRC § 5020.1(j) and PRC § 21074(a). The primary state laws and regulations governing cultural resources include:

- California Historical Resources–PRC § 5020 et seq.
- California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR)–PRC § 5024 et seq. (codified 14 CCR § 4850 et seq.)
 - PRC § 5024, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): The MOU between Caltrans and the State Historic Preservation Officer streamlines the PRC § 5024 process.
- California Environmental Quality Act–PRC § 21000 et seq. (codified 14 CCR § 15000 et seq.)

- Native American Historic Resource Protection Act–PRC § 5097 et seq.
- Assembly Bill (AB) 52, amends California Environmental Quality Act and the Native American Historic Resource Protection Act:
 - An effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, as defined in PRC § 21074(a), is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment
 - Additional consultation guidelines and timeframes
- California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act–California Health and Safety Code §§ 8010-8011

Sections 5024(f) and 5024.5 require state agencies to provide notice to and consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) before altering, transferring, relocating, or demolishing state-owned historical resources that are listed on or are eligible for inclusion in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) or are registered or eligible for registration as California Historical Landmarks. Procedures for compliance with PRC Section 5024 are outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)¹ between the California Department of Transportation and SHPO, effective January 1, 2015. For most Federal-aid projects on the State Highway System, compliance with the Section 106 PA would satisfy the requirements of PRC Section 5024.

Affected Environment

Analysis of the cultural resources for the project was carried out by Caltrans Professionally Qualified Staff (PQS) in a manner consistent with Caltrans regulatory responsibilities under Section 106 of the NHPA (36 CFR Part 800) as it pertains to the administration of the Federal Aid Highway Program in California and pursuant to the January 2014 Programmatic Agreement (PA) among Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the California SHPO. Methods used to support the studies for the analysis include records searches, field surveys including Phase I pedestrian surveys, and Native American consultation with tribal entities. A summary of consultation with tribal

¹ The MOU is located on the SER at <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/5024mou-15-a11y.pdf>

entities can be found in Chapter 3—*Agency and Public Coordination*. Consultation with local historical societies was also conducted. A consultation request was sent to the Nevada County Historical Society via their online submission form on August 25, 2023. At this time no response has been received. All consultation with historical societies would remain open during the life of this project.

The reports in Table 5 document Caltrans' compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA.

Table 5. Cultural Resource Reports Completed

Report Title	Date
Archaeological Survey Report	August 2023
Historic Property Survey Report	April 2024
Finding of No Adverse Effect	April 2024
ESA Action Plan	April 2024

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) is the geographical area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause alterations in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist. When historic properties are present the APE may extend beyond the boundary of the project study area. The APE aligns with the cultural resources study area and project study area. It consists of a broad corridor that encompasses existing and new right of way as well as lands that may be used during construction but are not included in the final right of way. As defined by Caltrans for this project, the project study area comprises the entire APE, totaling 933.12-acres.

Several cultural resources were identified within the APE but were found to be exempt from evaluation pursuant to Attachment 4 of the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (Properties Exempt from Evaluation) and as applicable PRC 5024 MOU Stipulation VIII.C.1 and Attachment 4.

Four archaeological resources were identified within the APE:

- P-29-002274/CA-NEV-1448/H
- FS 05—17-55-423, P-29-003053
- P-29-003054
- P-29-003070

All sites can be protected in their entirety through the use of an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) Action Plan.

Six built-environment properties were identified within the APE:

- the Blue Tent Ditch
- the Emigrant Trail (Nevada County) multiple locations and associated wagon roads and trails
- the Ridge Ditch
- the Snow Mountain Ditch
- an unnamed ditch associated with the Emigrant Gap Mining District
- the Drum-Spaulding Project Historic District (the Drum Canal and the Spaulding Powerhouse Access Road)

The Blue Tent Ditch, the Emigrant Trail (Nevada County) multiple locations and associated wagon roads and trails, the Ridge Ditch, the Snow Mountain Ditch, and the unnamed ditch associated with the Emigrant Gap Mining District were assumed eligible for the purpose of the undertaking only because of their extensive size and limited potential to be affected by project activities. When possible, the built environment resources are designated as Environmentally Sensitive Areas and protected in place by the presence of exclusionary fencing or other measures. In March 2024, Caltrans Cultural Studies Office granted permission to assume the eligibility of these built environmental resources.

Two Drum-Spaulding Project Historic District features (the Drum Canal and the Spaulding Powerhouse Access Road) were identified within the APE. The Drum-Spaulding Project Historic District is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), under Criterion A and C. The Emigrant Trail (Nevada County) multiple locations and associated wagon roads and trails was previously found eligible by consensus.

Environmental Consequences

Caltrans assessed the potential effects of the Build Alternative on the historic properties within the APE and determined there would be no adverse effect. The Finding of No Adverse Effect was submitted to the SHPO in April 2024 and consensus was received on June 4th, which can be found in Appendix F–*SHPO Concurrence on the Finding of No Adverse Effect*. 2024 Caltrans also determined that there would be no adverse effect from project's activities

on the four archeological properties within the APE because they would be protected in their entirety with ESA fencing.

No properties were found eligible for protection under the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f). The project would not result in a “use” of any historic sites as defined by Section 4(f) as there are none.

With the implementation of the Finding of Effect with the attached Environmental Sensitive Area Action Plan, the overall finding for the project, regardless of alternative, is *No Adverse Effect without standard conditions*.

Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation Measures

Based on the determinations made in the CEQA Environmental Checklist, no mitigation measures are proposed for this project.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.5—Cultural Resources

- a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. Six built environment resources and two Historic District features were identified within the APE. Caltrans determined that the project would not cause an adverse effect to eligible resources under the NRHP or California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) nor to the historical resources assumed eligible for the purpose of this undertaking only. As the project would not cause an adverse effect to these resources, the impact would be less than significant.

- b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. Four archaeological resources were identified within the APE. All sites would be protected in their entirety with the use of an Environmental Sensitive Area Action Plan. Standard measures would be included in the design package to ensure that if any cultural materials are discovered during construction, the appropriate measures would be taken to protect them. There would be a less than significant impact to archaeological resources.

c) Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

NO IMPACT. The research and field reviews completed for this project indicate that there are no known human remains within the project limits. It is not anticipated that any human remains would be disturbed from the construction of this project; therefore, there would be no impact.

2.6 Energy

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?			✓	
Would the project: b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?				✓

Regulatory Setting

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code [USC] Part 4332) requires the identification of all potentially significant impacts to the environment, including energy impacts.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) and CEQA Guidelines Appendix F—Energy Conservation require an analysis of a project’s energy use to determine if the project may result in significant environmental effects due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary use of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources.

Affected Environment

Determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Energy Analysis Memorandum* dated August 29, 2023 (Caltrans 2023c).

Transportation energy is generally described in terms of direct and indirect energy. Direct energy is the energy consumed in actual propulsion (e.g., automobiles, trains, airplanes). This energy consumption is a function of traffic characteristics such as VMT, speed, vehicle mix, and thermal value of the fuel being used. Some projects may also include features such as new or replacement roadway lighting or other features requiring electricity, which is an ongoing and permanent source of direct energy consumption. The one-time energy expenditure involved in constructing a project is also considered direct energy.

Indirect energy is defined as all of the remaining energy consumed to run a transportation system, including maintenance energy, and any substantial impacts on energy consumption related to project-induced land use changes and mode shifts, as well as any substantial changes in energy associated with vehicle operation, manufacturing, or maintenance due to increased automobile use.

Environmental Consequences

The project is not capacity increasing and would not add additional lanes and would not result in additional trips or change the speed or alignment of the roadway. The project does not add roadway capacity. It would improve the existing pavement condition within the project limits. As such, it is unlikely to increase direct energy consumption through increased fuel usage. Energy impacts from construction would be short term and would not result in inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.6—Energy

- a) Would the project result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. The project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation. During construction, Caltrans standard measures would be implemented to reduce wasteful and unnecessary energy use. The project would not cause an increase in capacity, change in speed, or roadway alignment and would therefore not result in an increase in energy used during operation. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact.

- b) Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?*

NO IMPACT. As the project would not increase capacity and would not result in inefficient energy use during construction, the project would not conflict with a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

2.7 Geology and Soils

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. 				✓
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				✓
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			✓	
iv) Landslides?			✓	
Would the project: b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			✓	
Would the project: c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			✓	
Would the project: d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?			✓	

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				✓
Would the project: f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				✓

Regulatory Setting—Geology and Soils

The primary laws governing geology and soils include:

- Historic Sites Act of 1935–16 USC 461 et seq.
- CEQA–California Public Resources Code (PRC) 21000

Affected Environment—Geology and Soils

Determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Geology Memorandum* dated October 24, 2023 (Caltrans 2023e), and the *Paleontological Resources Assessment* dated December 1, 2023 (Caltrans 2023m). The project is located in the foothills of the western edge of the Sierra Nevada geomorphic province. Geology around the project’s higher elevations mainly comprises granitic and metamorphic rock. The geology around the lower elevations to the west comprises Cenozoic Era volcanic mudflow deposits, sedimentary rock, and young segments in the uppermost 4,000 feet.

Erosion hazards vary but increase near rivers and steep slopes. Erosion is increased with intensive development. Generally, the soil in the project area is not suitable for intensive agriculture but moderate to high elevation soils are excellent for timber growth. Expansive- and liquefaction-prone soils exist around the project area.

Pre-Quaternary faults, which are older than two million years, are found throughout most of the project limits running in a north-south direction. These faults are generally inactive.

Historic (less than 200 years) and Quaternary faults (younger than two million years) can be found to the east of the project. These faults are more active. Metamorphic and igneous bedrock, which is found extensively throughout higher elevations around the project, is associated with the least amount of seismic hazard due to ground shaking during an earthquake.

Secondary hazards from earthquakes consist of ground settlement or subsidence, landslides, or liquefaction. Many areas around the project are at low risk for secondary earthquake hazards. Landslides are a moderate threat in areas where there are steep slopes, dense bedrock and lack of depth and cohesiveness. Landslides are also a hazard at previously hydraulically mined areas. Over 20,000 acres of land east of Nevada City has been hydraulically mined in the past. Large amounts of precipitation near these sites can lead to landslides. Avalanches are a hazard from earthquakes due to the seasonal deep snowpack in mountainous regions.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Questions 2.7a-e)— Geology and Soils

- a) *Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:*
 - i) *Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.*

NO IMPACT. There are no faults delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map (California Department of Conservation 2021) within or near the project area. Less significant faults are known to exist around the project area; however, the scope of work is mainly limited to work within the road, road fill material, and previously disturbed areas which would not cause impacts to faults. As the work associated with this project would not rupture a known earthquake fault, there would be no impact.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

NO IMPACT. The project is located in an area of relatively low seismicity. More active seismic areas exist to the east of the project where the risk of strong seismic ground shaking is the highest. As most of the project scope involves maintaining or fixing highway elements in-kind, it would not change the risk for strong seismic ground shaking from what currently exists.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. Soils prone to liquefaction exist around the project area. However, due to the low seismicity of the area plus most of the project work occurring within road bed fill material or previously disturbed areas, it is unlikely that the project would directly or indirectly cause seismic-related ground failure. There would be a less than significant impact to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction.

iv) Landslides?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. Steep slopes exist around the project, particularly at the eastern end of the project. The steep slopes in this area do have a moderate risk for landslides, particularly during heavy precipitation events. In areas where fire hardening (and therefore vegetation removal) would occur, soil stabilization measures would be put in place to reduce erosion and the potential for landslide. In addition, the project mainly focuses on maintaining and upgrading existing highway elements and it is unlikely that the project would directly or indirectly cause landslides. There would be a less than significant impact to landslides.

b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. The project is proposing to fire harden state assets by removing vegetation in a vegetation management strip at two locations. In areas where the land around the project is steep, there is potential for erosion or the loss of topsoil. In order to prevent excessive erosion or topsoil loss, anti-erosion Best Management Practices (such as fiber rolls) would be installed. In addition, the fire hardening locations (and therefore vegetation removal) are limited in area, which would help prevent substantial soil erosion. There would be a less than significant impact to soil erosion or topsoil.

- c) *Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. There is low to moderate risk in the project area for liquefaction, subsidence, or landslides. As the scope of the project is to maintain and upgrade existing highway facilities, it would not change the existing risk of landslide or liquefaction. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact.

- d) *Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. Expansive soils exist around portions of the project. Some of the work would occur in roadbed fill which would not be directly impacted by expansive soils. Other work that would occur in native soils includes some culvert work, sign installation, and vegetation removal for fire hardening. As expansive soils do not make up the majority of soils around the project, there would be a less than significant impact.

- e) *Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?*

NO IMPACT. The installation and use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems are not relevant to the project; therefore, there would be no impact.

Regulatory Setting—Paleontological Resources

Several sections of the California Public Resources Code protect paleontological resources, including Sections 5097.5 and 30244.

Affected Environment

The project is in an area of very low paleontological potential. The native soils are typically volcanic in nature and are too young to contain paleontological resources.

Environmental Consequences

The project would not directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource, site, or unique geologic feature. Pavement restoration, rehabilitation of drainage systems, three culvert replacements, metal beam guardrail upgrades, replacing two roadside signs, vegetation removal, and upgrading TMS elements (traffic detection loops and associated electronics) involve shallow earthwork to no earthwork, with the work at locations along the existing SR 20 that have been previously disturbed, are situated on engineered fill, and have remnant soils too young to contain paleontological resources.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.9f)— Paleontological Resources

f) Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

NO IMPACT. The project is located in an area of low paleontological potential with soils that are too young to contain paleontological resources. The geological features within the project area are typical of the area. The project area is highly disturbed and does not contain unique geological features. There would be no impact to paleontological resources or unique geologic features.

2.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			✓	
Would the project: b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			✓	

Climate Change

Climate change refers to long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other elements of the Earth's climate system. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, established by the United Nations and World Meteorological Organization in 1988, is devoted to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction and climate change research and policy. Climate change in the past has generally occurred gradually over millennia, or more suddenly in response to cataclysmic natural disruptions. The research of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and other scientists over recent decades, however, has unequivocally attributed an accelerated rate of climatological changes over the past 150 years to GHG emissions generated from the production and use of fossil fuels.

Human activities generate GHGs consisting primarily of carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), tetrafluoromethane, hexafluoroethane, sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), and various hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). CO₂ is the most abundant GHG. While CO₂ is a naturally occurring and necessary component of Earth's atmosphere, fossil-fuel combustion is the main source of additional, human-generated CO₂ that is the main driver of climate change. In the U.S. and in California, transportation is the largest source of GHG emissions, mostly CO₂.

The impacts of climate change are already being observed in the form of sea level rise, drought, extended and severe fire seasons, and historic flooding from changing storm

patterns. The most important strategy to address climate change is to reduce GHG emissions. Additional strategies are necessary to mitigate and adapt to these impacts. In the context of climate change, “mitigation” involves actions to reduce GHG emissions to lessen adverse impacts that are likely to occur. “Adaptation” is planning for and responding to impacts to reduce vulnerability to harm, such as by adjusting transportation design standards to withstand more intense storms, heat, and higher sea levels. This analysis would include a discussion of both in the context of this transportation project.

Regulatory Setting

This section outlines federal and state efforts to comprehensively reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation sources. For a full list of laws, regulations, and guidance related to climate change (GHGs and adaptation), please refer to Caltrans’ Standard Environmental Reference (SER), Chapter 16, Climate Change.

FEDERAL

To date, no nationwide numeric mobile-source GHG reduction targets have been established, nor have any regulations or legislation been enacted specifically to address climate change and GHG emissions reduction at the project level.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code [USC] Part 4332) requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making a decision on the action or project. In January 2023, the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) issued updated and expanded interim National Environmental Policy Act Guidance on Consideration of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change (88 Fed. Reg. 1196) (CEQ NEPA GHG Guidance), in accordance with EO 14057, *Catalyzing Clean Energy Industries and Jobs Through Federal Sustainability*, 86 FR 70935 (December 13, 2021) and EO 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*. The CEQ guidance does not establish numeric thresholds of significance, but emphasizes quantifying reasonably foreseeable lifetime direct and indirect emissions whenever possible. This guidance also emphasizes resilience and environmental justice in project-level climate change and GHG analyses.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recognizes the threats that extreme weather, sea level rise, and other changes in environmental conditions pose to valuable transportation infrastructure and those who depend on it. FHWA therefore supports a sustainability approach that assesses vulnerability to climate risks and incorporates resilience into planning, asset management, project development and design, and operations and maintenance practices (FHWA 2022). This approach encourages planning for sustainable highways by addressing climate risks while balancing environmental, economic, and social values— “the triple bottom line of sustainability” (FHWA n.d.). Program and project elements that foster sustainability and resilience also support economic vitality and global efficiency, increase safety and mobility, enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve the quality of life.

Early efforts by the federal government to improve fuel economy and energy efficiency to address climate change and its associated effects include The Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (42 USC Section 6201); and Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards. The U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) sets and enforces corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standards for on-road motor vehicles sold in the United States. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) calculates average fuel economy levels for manufacturers, and also sets related GHG emissions standards for vehicles under the Clean Air Act. Raising CAFE standards leads automakers to create a more fuel-efficient fleet, which improves our nation’s energy security, saves consumers money at the pump, and reduces GHG emissions (U.S. DOT 2014). These standards are periodically updated and published through the federal rulemaking process.

STATE

California has been innovative and proactive in addressing GHG emissions and climate change by passing multiple Senate and Assembly bills and executive orders (EOs).

In 2005, EO S-3-05 initially set a goal to reduce California’s GHG emissions to 80 percent below year 1990 levels by 2050, with interim reduction targets. Later EOs and Assembly and Senate bills refined interim targets and codified the emissions reduction goals and strategies. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) was directed to create a climate change scoping plan and implement rules to achieve “real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases.” Ongoing GHG emissions reduction was also mandated in Health and Safety Code (H&SC) Section 38551(b). In 2022, the California Climate Crisis Act was passed, establishing state policy to reduce statewide human-caused GHG emissions by 85

percent below 1990 levels, achieve net zero GHG emissions by 2045, and achieve and maintain negative emissions thereafter.

Beyond GHG reduction, the State maintains a climate adaptation strategy to address the full range of climate change stressors, and passed legislation requiring state agencies to consider protection and management of natural and working lands as an important strategy in meeting the state's GHG reduction goals.

Affected Environment

This project is mainly within Nevada County, with some portions of the project within Placer County. The project is in a rural area, with a primarily natural-resources based forestry, agricultural, and tourism economy. SR 20 is the main transportation route to and through the area for both passenger and commercial vehicles. The nearest alternate route is Interstate 80 (I-80), which is south of SR 20 until the two highways merge at the Yuba Pass. Traffic counts are low and SR 20 is rarely congested. Railroad tracks running parallel to the SR 20 right of way carry several passenger and freight trains each day. The Nevada County Transportation Commission guides transportation development in the project area. In Placer County, the Placer County General Plan Health and Safety Element (Placer County 2013) and the Placer County Sustainability Plan (Placer County 2020) address GHG. In Nevada County, the Nevada County General Plan Chapter 4: Circulation and Chapter 14: Air Quality (Nevada County 2014) in addition to the Nevada County Energy Action Plan (Nevada County 2019) address GHG.

GHG INVENTORIES

A GHG emissions inventory estimates the amount of GHGs discharged into the atmosphere by specific sources over a period of time. Tracking annual GHG emissions allows countries, states, and smaller jurisdictions to understand how emissions are changing and what actions may be needed to attain emission reduction goals. U.S. EPA is responsible for documenting GHG emissions nationwide, and the CARB does so for the state of California, as required by H&SC Section 39607.4. Cities and other local jurisdictions may also conduct local GHG inventories to inform their GHG reduction or climate action plans.

NATIONAL GHG INVENTORY

The annual GHG inventory submitted by the U.S. EPA to the United Nations provides a comprehensive accounting of all human-produced sources of GHGs in the United States. Total national GHG emissions from all sectors in 2021 were 5,586.0 million metric tons (MMT), factoring in deductions for carbon sequestration in the land sector. (Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry provide a carbon sink equivalent to 12% of total U.S. emissions in 2021 [U.S. EPA 2023a].) While total GHG emissions in 2021 were 17% below 2005 levels, they increased by 6% over 2020 levels. Of these, 79.4% were CO₂, 11.5% were CH₄, and 6.2% were N₂O; the balance consisted of fluorinated gases. From 1990 to 2021, CO₂ emissions decreased by only 2% (U.S. EPA 2023a).

The transportation sector's share of total GHG emissions increased to 28% in 2021 and remains the largest contributing sector (Figures 3–5). Transportation fossil fuel combustion accounted for 92% of all CO₂ emissions in 2021. This is an increase of 7% over 2020, largely due to the rebound in economic activity following the COVID-19 pandemic (U.S. EPA 2023a, 2023b).

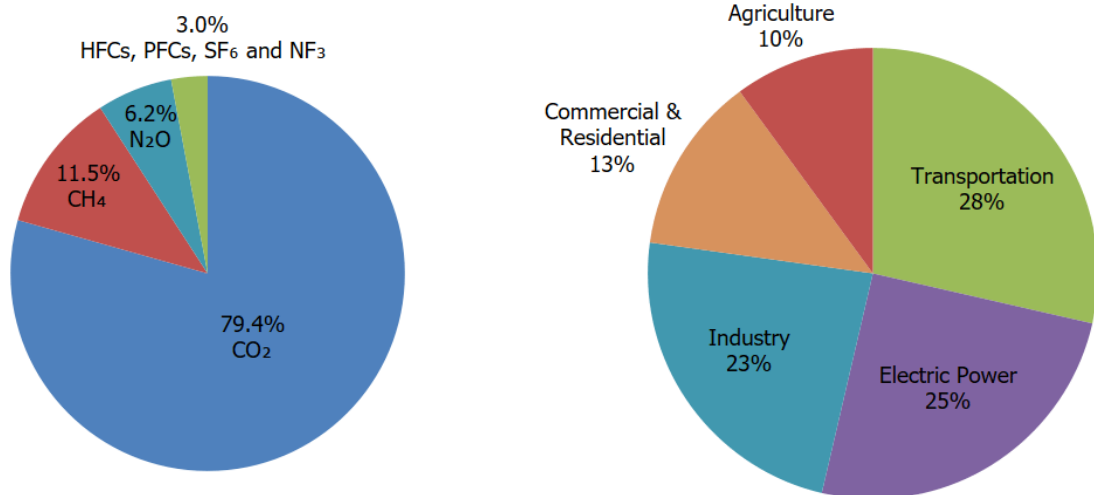


Figure 2. U.S. 2022 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

(Source: U.S. EPA 2023a)

STATE GHG INVENTORY

The CARB collects GHG emissions data for transportation, electricity, commercial and residential, industrial, agricultural, and waste management sectors each year. It then summarizes and highlights major annual changes and trends to demonstrate the state's progress in meeting its GHG reduction goals. Overall statewide GHG emissions declined from 2000 to 2020 despite growth in population and state economic output (Figures 4 and 5) (CARB 2022a).

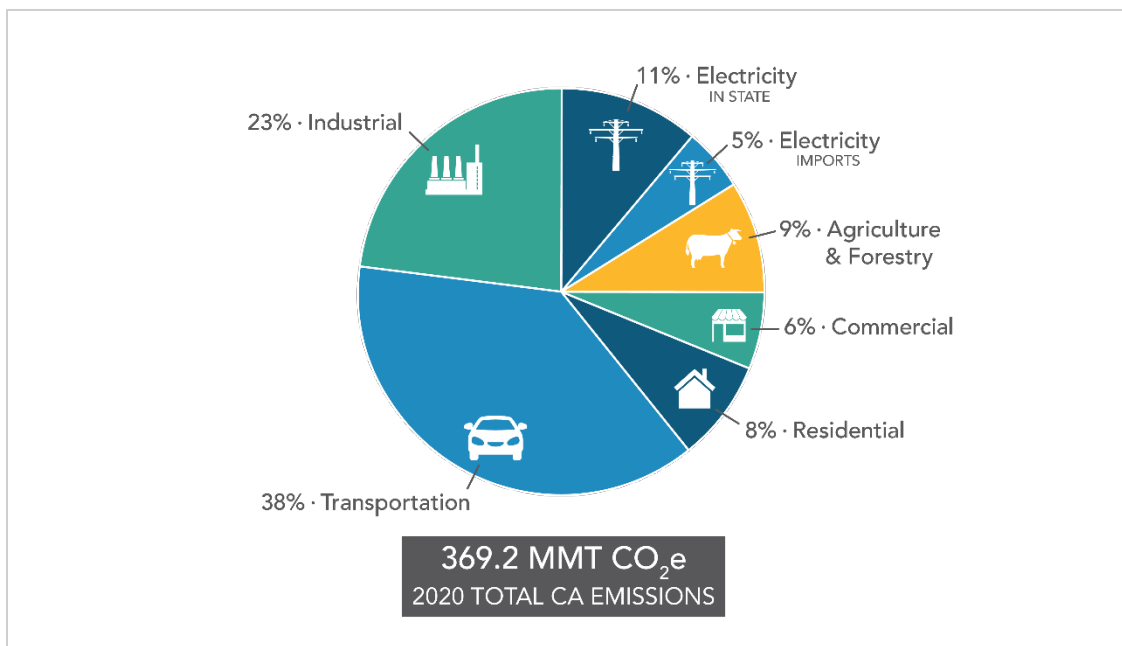


Figure 3. California 2020 Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Scoping Plan Category
(Source: CARB 2022a)

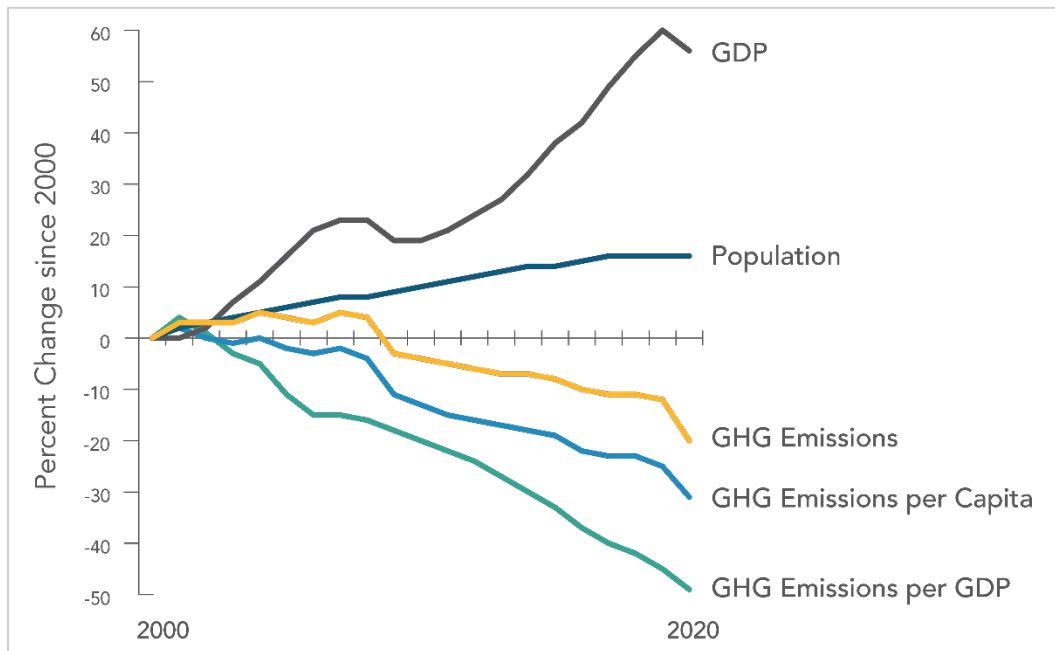


Figure 4. Change in California GDP, Population, and GHG Emissions since 2000
(Source: CARB 2022a)

AB 32 required the CARB to develop a Scoping Plan that describes the approach California will take to achieve the goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and to update it every 5 years. The AB 32 Scoping Plan, and the subsequent updates, contain the main strategies California will use to reduce GHG emissions. The CARB adopted the first scoping plan in 2008 (CARB 2008). The second updated plan, *California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan*, adopted on December 14, 2017, reflects the 2030 target established in EO B-30-15 and SB 32. The *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality*, adopted September 2022, assesses progress toward the statutory 2030 reduction goal and defines a path to reduce human-caused emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels and achieve carbon neutrality no later than 2045, in accordance with AB 1279 (CARB 2022b).

REGIONAL PLANS

As required by *The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008*, the CARB sets regional GHG reduction targets for California's 18 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to achieve through planning future projects that will cumulatively achieve those goals, and reporting how they will be met in the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). Targets are set at a percent reduction of passenger vehicle GHG emissions per person from 2005 levels. The project is included in the RTP/SCS for the Nevada County Transportation Commission.

The project area is not within the jurisdiction of an MPO and therefore not subject to CARB GHG reduction targets. The Nevada County Transportation Commission is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for the project area. The Nevada County Regional Transportation Commission 2015-2035 RTP (Nevada County Regional Transportation Commission 2016) identifies the following measures and goals to reduce GHG: improving transit, ridesharing, telecommuting, reducing dependence on the automobile, creating and improving bicycle, pedestrian transit networks and connections, improving public transportation services, encouraging jurisdictions to consider the proximity to transit and multi-modal facilities when siting new facilities, reducing regional GHG emissions, and encouraging native plant use in shoulders and medians to increase carbon up take (Table 6).

Table 6. Regional and Local Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plans

Title	GHG Reduction Policies or Strategies
<i>Placer County General Plan Health and Safety Element</i> , adopted November 2021 (Placer County 2014)	Includes policies and implementation programs to protect the public from climate related hazards such as landslides and slope instability, floods, wildfire, health hazards and inequities, economic instability, extreme heat, severe winter weather, and forestry and agricultural pests and diseases.
<i>Placer County Sustainability Plan</i> , adopted January 2020 (Placer County 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a road map to achieve GHG reductions. • Demonstrate the County's conformity to California laws and regulations. • Implement the General Plan. • Identify effective, feasible GHG emission reduction strategies for new development subject to environmental review. • Improve resiliency for climate-related hazards.
<i>Nevada County Energy Action Plan</i> , adopted February 2019 (Nevada County 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 1 Energy Efficiency: Increase the energy efficiency of county buildings and operations, improve compliance with California Building Energy Efficiency Standards, and expand outreach on existing efficiency practices for utility customers. • Goal 2 Renewable Energy: Encourage renewable energy practices and energy storage in addition to grid optimization projects that support renewable energy. • Goal 3 Water Energy: Improve the efficiency of water systems, facilities, and transportation to reduce energy used in sourcing, treating, and delivering water.
<i>Nevada County General Plan Chapter 4: Circulation</i> , adopted 2010 (Nevada County 2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals RD-4.1 to RD-4.4 and associated policies: Increased opportunities for ridesharing, bicycle use, and other means of reducing automobile dependence. • Goals EP-4.3 and EP-4.4 and associated policies: Reduce GHG emissions during construction and encourage the development of energy efficient circulation patterns.
<i>Nevada County General Plan Chapter 14: Air Quality</i> , adopted 1995 (Nevada County 2014)	Policy 14.7: The county will help develop programs to maximize participation in van pool, ride sharing, and mass transit.

Project Analysis

GHG emissions from transportation projects can be divided into those produced during operation and use of the State Highway System (SHS) (operational emissions) and those produced during construction. The primary GHGs produced by the transportation sector are CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, and HFCs. CO₂ emissions are a product of burning gasoline or diesel fuel in internal combustion engines, along with relatively small amounts of CH₄ and N₂O. A small amount of HFC emissions related to refrigeration is also included in the transportation sector. (GHGs differ in how much heat each traps in the atmosphere, called global warming potential, or GWP. CO₂ is the most important GHG, so amounts of other gases are expressed relative to CO₂, using a metric called “carbon dioxide equivalent”, or CO₂e. The global warming potential of CO₂ is assigned a value of 1, and the GWP of other gases is assessed as multiples of CO₂.)

The CEQA Guidelines generally address greenhouse gas emissions as a cumulative impact due to the global nature of climate change (Public Resources Code § 21083(b)(2)). As the California Supreme Court explained, “because of the global scale of climate change, any one project's contribution is unlikely to be significant by itself.” (Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Assn. of Governments (2017) 3 Cal.5th 497, 512.) In assessing cumulative impacts, it must be determined if a project’s incremental effect is “cumulatively considerable” (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(1) and 15130).

To make this determination, the incremental impacts of the project must be compared with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects. Although climate change is ultimately a cumulative impact, not every individual project that emits greenhouse gases must necessarily be found to contribute to a significant cumulative impact on the environment.

Operational Emissions

The purpose of the project is to improve the existing pavement condition and extend the life of transportation infrastructure. The project would also preserve and restore existing drainage systems activities and upgrade roadway elements to current standards. This would not increase the vehicle capacity of the roadway. This type of project generally causes minimal or no increase in operational GHG emissions. Because the project would not increase the number of travel lanes on State Route 20, no increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) would occur. While some GHG emissions during the construction period would be unavoidable, no increase in operational GHG emissions is expected. In addition, smoother pavement surfaces would provide benefits to long-term GHG emissions.

Construction Emissions

Construction GHG emissions would result from material processing and transportation, on-site construction equipment, and traffic delays due to construction. These emissions would be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence can be reduced through innovations in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases. While construction GHG emissions are only produced for a short time, they have long-term effects in the atmosphere, so cannot be considered “temporary” in the same way as criteria pollutants that subside after construction is completed.

Use of long-life pavement, improved Transportation Management Plans, and changes in materials can also help offset GHG emissions produced during construction by allowing longer intervals between maintenance and rehabilitation activities.

Construction is expected to begin in 2025 and last approximately 240 working days. The Caltrans Construction Emission Tool (CAL-CET2021 version 1.0) was used to estimate average carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) emissions from construction activities. The CO₂ produced during construction is estimated to be approximately 391 tons, with the CH₄, N₂O, and HFC emissions being less than 1 ton.

Construction GHG would result in generation of short-term, construction-related GHG emissions. Construction GHG emissions consist of emissions produced as a result of material processing, emissions produced by onsite construction equipment, and emissions arising from traffic delays and detours due to construction. These emissions would be generated at different levels through the construction phase.

Certain Standard Specifications and laws that the contractor is required to follow would reduce GHG during construction. All construction contracts include Caltrans Standard Specifications related to air quality. Sections 7-1.02A and 7 1.02C, Emissions Reduction, require contractors to comply with all laws applicable to the project and to certify they are aware of and would comply with all CARB emission reduction regulations. Section 14-9.02, Air Pollution Control, requires contractors to comply with all air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes. Certain common regulations, such as equipment idling restrictions, that reduce construction vehicle emissions also help reduce GHG emissions.

CEQA Conclusion

While the project would result in GHG emissions during construction, it is anticipated the project would not result in any increase in operational GHG emissions. The project does not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. With implementation of construction GHG reduction measures, the impact would be less than significant.

Caltrans is firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce GHG emissions. These measures are outlined in the following section.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies

STATEWIDE EFFORTS

In response to Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, California is implementing measures to achieve emission reductions of GHGs that cause climate change. Climate change programs in California are effectively reducing GHG emissions from all sectors of the economy. These programs include regulations, market programs, and incentives that will transform transportation, industry, fuels, and other sectors to take California into a sustainable, cleaner, low-carbon future, while maintaining a robust economy (CARB 2022c).

Major sectors of the California economy, including transportation, will need to reduce emissions to meet 2030 and 2050 GHG emissions targets. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) identified five sustainability pillars in a 2015 report:

- 1) Increasing the share of renewable energy in the State's energy mix to at least 50 percent by 2030
- 2) Reducing petroleum use by up to 50 percent by 2030
- 3) Increasing the energy efficiency of existing buildings by 50 percent by 2030
- 4) Reducing emissions of short-lived climate pollutants; and
- 5) Stewarding natural resources, including forests, working lands, and wetlands, to ensure that they store carbon, are resilient, and enhance other environmental benefits (California Governor's OPR 2015).

The transportation sector is integral to the people and economy of California. To achieve GHG emission reduction goals, it is vital that the state build on past successes in reducing criteria and toxic air pollutants from transportation and goods movement. GHG emission reductions will come from cleaner vehicle technologies, lower-carbon fuels, and reduction of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Reducing today's petroleum use in cars and trucks is a key state goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 (California Environmental Protection Agency 2015).

In addition, SB 1386 (by Wolk 2016) established as state policy the protection and management of natural and working lands and requires state agencies to consider that policy in their own decision making. Trees and vegetation on forests, rangelands, farms, and wetlands remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through biological processes and sequester the carbon in above- and below-ground matter.

Subsequently, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-82-20 to combat the crises in climate change and biodiversity. It instructs state agencies to use existing authorities and resources to identify and implement near- and long-term actions to accelerate natural removal of carbon and build climate resilience in our forests, wetlands, urban greenspaces, agricultural soils, and land conservation activities in ways that serve all communities and in particular low-income, disadvantaged, and vulnerable communities. To support this order, the California Natural Resources Agency released *Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy* (California Natural Resources Agency 2022).

CALTRANS ACTIVITIES

Caltrans continues to be involved on the Governor's Climate Action Team as the CARB works to implement EOs S-3-05 and S-01-07 and help achieve the targets set forth in AB 32. EO B-30-15, issued in April 2015, and SB 32 in 2016 set an interim target to cut GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. The following major initiatives are underway at Caltrans to help meet these targets.

Climate Action Plan For Transportation Infrastructure

The *California Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure* (CAPTI) builds on executive orders signed by Governor Newsom in 2019 and 2020 targeted at reducing GHG emissions in transportation, which account for more than 40% of all polluting emissions, to reach the state's climate goals. Under CAPTI, where feasible and within existing funding program structures, the state will invest discretionary transportation funds in sustainable infrastructure projects that align with its climate, health, and social equity goals (California State Transportation Agency 2021).

California Transportation Plan

The *California Transportation Plan* (CTP) is a statewide, long-range transportation plan to meet our future mobility needs and reduce GHG emissions. It serves as an umbrella document for all the other statewide transportation planning documents. The CTP 2050 presents a vision of a safe, resilient, and universally accessible transportation system that supports vibrant communities, advances racial and economic justice, and improves public and environmental health. The plan's climate goal is to achieve statewide GHG emissions reduction targets and increase resilience to climate change. It demonstrates how GHG emissions from the transportation sector can be reduced through advancements in clean fuel technologies; continued shifts toward active travel, transit, and shared mobility; more efficient land use and development practices; and continued shifts to telework (Caltrans 2021a).

Caltrans Strategic Plan

The *Caltrans 2020–2024 Strategic Plan* includes goals of stewardship, climate action, and equity. Climate action strategies include developing and implementing a Caltrans Climate Action Plan; a robust program of climate action education, training, and outreach; partnership and collaboration; a VMT monitoring and reduction program; and engaging with the most vulnerable communities in developing and implementing Caltrans climate action activities (Caltrans 2021b).

Caltrans Policy Directives And Other Initiates

Caltrans Director's Policy 30 (DP-30) Climate Change (June 22, 2012) established a Department policy to ensure coordinated efforts to incorporate climate change into Departmental decisions and activities. *Caltrans Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Mitigation Report* (Caltrans 2020) provides a comprehensive overview of Caltrans' emissions. The report documents and evaluates current Caltrans procedures and activities that track and

reduce GHG emissions and identifies additional opportunities for further reducing GHG emissions from Department-controlled emission sources, in support of Departmental and State goals.

Project-Level Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies

The following measures would also be implemented to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and potential climate change impacts from the project.

- The construction contractor must comply with the 2018 Caltrans Standard Specifications in Section 14-9. Section 14-9.02 specifically requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality, including the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District and Placer County Air Pollution Control District regulations and local ordinances.
- Compliance with Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations, which restricts idling of construction vehicles and equipment to no more than 5 minutes.
- Caltrans 2018 Standard Specification 7-1.02C "Emissions Reduction" ensures that construction activities adhere to the most recent emissions reduction regulations mandated by the California Air Resource Board.
- Utilize a Transportation Management Plan to minimize vehicles delays.
- For improved fuel efficiency from construction equipment:
 - Maintain equipment in proper tune and working condition
 - Use right sized equipment for the job
 - Use equipment with new technologies

Adaptation Strategies

Reducing GHG emissions is only one part of an approach to addressing climate change. Caltrans must plan for the effects of climate change on the state's transportation infrastructure and strengthen or protect the facilities from damage. Climate change is expected to produce increased variability in precipitation, rising temperatures, rising sea levels, variability in storm surges and their intensity, and in the frequency and intensity of wildfires. Flooding and erosion can damage or wash out roads; longer periods of intense heat can buckle pavement and railroad tracks; storm surges, combined with a rising sea level, can inundate highways. Wildfire can directly burn facilities and indirectly cause damage when rain falls on denuded slopes that landslide after a fire. Effects will vary by location and may,

in the most extreme cases, require a facility be relocated or redesigned. Furthermore, the combined effects of transportation projects and climate stressors can exacerbate the impacts of both on vulnerable communities in a project area. Accordingly, Caltrans must consider these types of climate stressors in how highways are planned, designed, built, operated, and maintained.

FEDERAL EFFORTS

Under NEPA Assignment, Caltrans is obligated to comply with all applicable federal environmental laws and FHWA NEPA regulations, policies, and guidance. Caltrans practices generally align with the *2023 CEQ Interim Guidance on Consideration of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change*, which offers recommendations for additional ways of evaluating project effects related to GHG emissions and climate change. These recommendations are not regulatory requirements.

The *Fifth National Climate Assessment*, published in 2023, presents the most recent science and “analyzes the effects of global change on the natural environment, agriculture, energy production and use, land and water resources, transportation, human health and welfare, human social systems, and biological diversity; [It] analyzes current trends in global change, both human-induced and natural, and projects major trends for the subsequent 25 to 100 years ... to support informed decision-making across the United States.” Building on previous assessments, it continues to advance “an inclusive, diverse, and sustained process for assessing and communicating scientific knowledge on the impacts, risks, and vulnerabilities associated with a changing global climate” (U.S. Global Change Research Program 2023).

The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) recognizes the transportation sector’s major contribution of GHGs that cause climate change and has made climate action one of the department’s top priorities (U.S. DOT 2023). FHWA’s policy is to strive to identify the risks of climate change and extreme weather events to current and planned transportation systems. FHWA has developed guidance and tools for transportation planning that fosters resilience to climate effects and sustainability at the federal, state, and local levels (FHWA 2022).

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provides sea level rise projections for all U.S. coastal waters to help communities and decision makers assess their risk from sea level rise. Updated projections through 2150 were released in 2022 in a report and online tool (NOAA 2022).

STATE EFFORTS

Climate change adaptation for transportation infrastructure involves long-term planning and risk management to address vulnerabilities in the transportation system. A number of state policies and tools have been developed to guide adaptation efforts.

California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment (Fourth Assessment–2018) provides information to help decision makers across sectors and at state, regional, and local levels protect and build the resilience of the state's people, infrastructure, natural systems, working lands, and waters. The Fourth Assessment reported that if no measures are taken to reduce GHG emissions by 2021 or sooner, the state is projected to experience an up to 8.8 degrees Fahrenheit increase in average annual maximum daily temperatures; a two-thirds decline in water supply from snowpack resulting in water shortages; a 77% increase in average area burned by wildfire; and large-scale erosion of up to 67% of Southern California beaches due to sea level rise. These effects will have profound impacts on infrastructure, agriculture, energy demand, natural systems, communities, and public health (State of California 2018).

Sea level rise is a particular concern for transportation infrastructure in the Coastal Zone. Major urban airports will be at risk of flooding from sea level rise combined with storm surge as early as 2040; San Francisco airport is already at risk. Miles of coastal highways vulnerable to flooding in a 100-year storm event will triple to 370 by 2100, and 3,750 miles will be exposed to temporary flooding. The Fourth Assessment's findings highlight the need for proactive action to address these current and future impacts of climate change.

To help actors throughout the state address the findings of California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment, AB 2800's multidisciplinary Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group published *Paying it Forward: The Path Toward Climate-Safe Infrastructure in California*. This report provides guidance on assessing risk in the face of inherent uncertainties still posed by the best available climate change science. It also examines how state agencies can use infrastructure planning, design, and implementation processes to respond to the observed and anticipated climate change impacts (Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group 2018).

EO S-13-08, issued in 2008, directed state agencies to consider sea level rise scenarios for 2050 and 2100 during planning to assess project vulnerabilities, reduce risks, and increase resilience to sea level rise. It gave rise to the *2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy*, the *Safeguarding California Plan*, and a series of technical reports on statewide sea level rise projections and risks, including the *State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance Update* in

2018. The reports addressed the full range of climate change impacts and recommended adaptation strategies. The current *California Climate Adaptation Strategy* incorporates key elements of the latest sector-specific plans such as the *Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy*, *Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan*, *Water Resilience Portfolio*, and the *CAPTI* (described above). Priorities in the 2023 *California Climate Adaptation Strategy* include acting in partnership with California Native American tribes, strengthening protections for climate-vulnerable communities that lack capacity and resources, implementing nature-based climate solutions, using best available climate science, and partnering and collaboration to best leverage resources (California Natural Resources Agency 2023).

EO B-30-15 recognizes that effects of climate change threaten California’s infrastructure and requires state agencies to factor climate change into all planning and investment decisions. Under this EO, the Office of Planning and Research published *Planning and Investing for a Resilient California: A Guidebook for State Agencies*, to encourage a uniform and systematic approach to building resilience.

SB 1 Coastal Resources: Sea Level Rise (by Atkins 2021) established statewide goals to “anticipate, assess, plan for, and, to the extent feasible, avoid, minimize, and mitigate the adverse environmental and economic effects of sea level rise within the Coastal Zone.” As the legislation directed, the Ocean Protection Council collaborated with 17 state planning and coastal management agencies to develop the *State Agency Sea-Level Rise Action Plan for California* in February 2022. This plan promotes coordinated actions by state agencies to enhance California's resilience to the impacts of sea level rise (California Ocean Protection Council 2022).

CALTRANS ADAPTATION EFFORTS

Caltrans Vulnerability Assessments

Caltrans completed climate change vulnerability assessments to identify segments of the State Highway System vulnerable to climate change effects of precipitation, temperature, wildfire, storm surge, and sea level rise.

The climate change data in the assessments were developed in coordination with climate change scientists and experts at federal, state, and regional organizations at the forefront of climate science. The findings of the vulnerability assessments guide analysis of at-risk assets and development of Adaptation Priority Reports as a method to make capital programming decisions to address identified risks.

Project Adaptation Efforts

In addition to statewide efforts, each Caltrans District has prepared a *Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment* to help determine the impacts of climate change within the district for various metrics including temperature, sea level rise, precipitation, and wildfire (Caltrans 2019). Predictions of future conditions for these metrics were made in the report to show the scale of climate impacts throughout the district. The Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment helps guide project adaptation efforts as well as the district's plan overall. These studies help with understanding the vulnerability of California's State Highway System and other Caltrans assets to future changes in the climate. The objectives of the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment are:

- Understand the types of weather-related and longer-term climate change events that will likely occur with greater frequency and intensity in future years,
- Conduct a vulnerability assessment to determine those Caltrans assets vulnerable to various climate-influenced natural hazards.
- Develop a method to prioritize candidate projects for actions that are responsive to climate change concerns when financial resources become available.

Future climate conditions are in some ways uncertain. While it is documented that the climate is changing, the degree of change depends on the quantity of GHG emissions currently and in the future. Climate-change risk analysis involves uncertainties as to the timing and intensity of potential risks. Increased levels of GHG emissions will result in more climate change. These changes to the climate can have impacts on transportation assets which could potentially increase the costs of maintenance and construction of transportation projects, disrupt local economies, and damage the State Highway System. Individual project adaptation efforts are required to help minimize climate change-related impacts on the State Highway System and help make the system more resilient.

Sea Level Rise

The project is outside the Coastal Zone and not in an area subject to sea level rise. Accordingly, direct impacts to transportation facilities due to projected sea level rise are not expected.

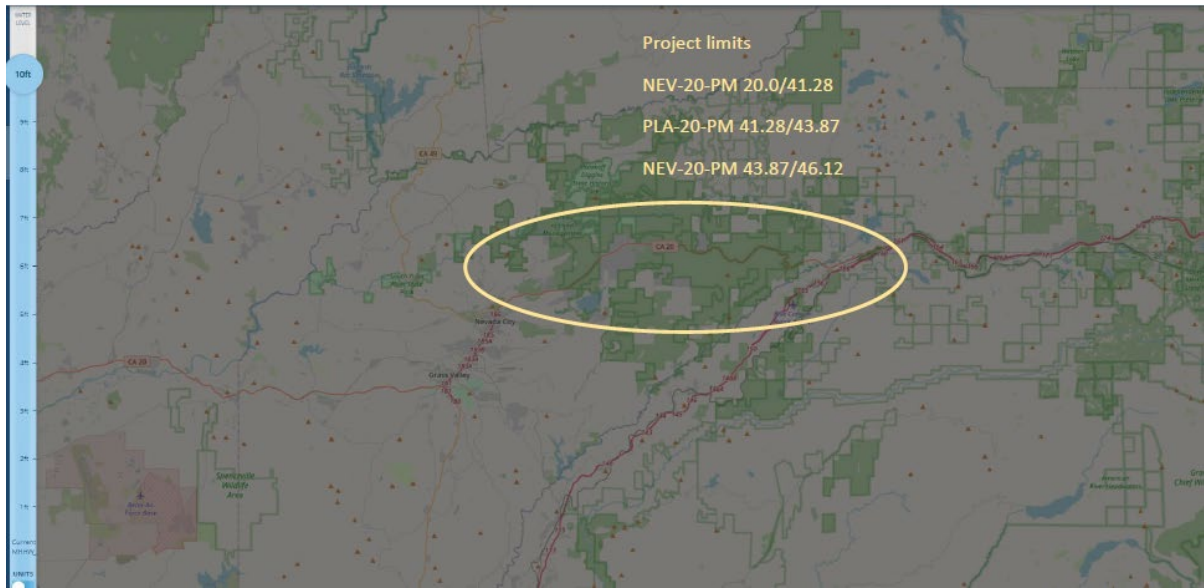


Figure 5. Sea Level Rise in Relation to the Project

(Source: NOAA 2022)

Precipitation and Flooding

The southwest region of the United States is predicted to have less precipitation in the future due to climate change. However, individual precipitation events have the potential to be heavier with more precipitation falling as rainfall. Heavy precipitation can impact transportation assets by flooding, landslides, washouts, or structural damage. Site-specific hydrological analysis of flood flows will be required to determine how precipitation events will affect bridges and culverts. By 2055 the percent change in the 100 year storm precipitation depth in the project area will be between 5.0-14.9%. The increased precipitation in the project area would require implementing designs that are more adaptive to changing conditions. Heavy precipitation events occurring without proper drainage allowing for increased water around the roadway could cause severe damage to the State Highway System and the local economy.

Heavy precipitation events could impact the project area by flooding the roadway, causing safety issues for the traveling public. As the project resides in a rural community, flooded roadways could cause difficulties traveling or the inability to travel depending on the amount of flooding. Heavy precipitation could also increase the risk of landslides as the steep slopes along the project area are already prone to landslides. Landslides have the potential to block or damage roadways and cause safety concerns for the traveling public.

This project proposes to improve the existing pavement condition, extend the life of transportation infrastructure, and preserve and restore existing drainage systems that are in fair and poor condition. Four new culverts would be installed. Most of the culverts that would be restored in this project are Corrugated Steel Pipe (CSP) culverts that would be rehabilitated using a Cured-in-Place-Pipe (CIPP) liner to preserve the life of the culvert and restore it to good condition.

Poor condition culverts do not transmit water efficiently. CIPP lining would increase the condition score of the culverts to good, allowing for more effective transfer of water away from the road during heavy precipitation or flood events. This would help prevent safety issues for the public, keep the roads accessible during heavy precipitation, and help prevent flooding. The four culverts added to the culverts system at Post Mile 23.38 are being installed to address flooding at this location. These culverts are designed to help prevent current and future flooding during heavy precipitation. Improving drainage can also help stabilize slopes that are prone to landslides.

Project improvements installed in response to potential heavy precipitation and flooding will need to be monitored for success after construction. After heavy precipitation events, areas that were prone to flooding will need to be monitored to determine if the newly installed culvert system helps alleviate the flooding. Culverts will also need to be monitored and kept clear of debris after precipitation events to ensure water flows through them as expected. If the culverts in some areas are not sufficient for the amount of water they receive in the future, the culverts may need to be upsized or other design options may be necessary.

Wildfire

Increasing temperatures and changes to precipitation patterns as a result of increased GHG in the atmosphere are expected to affect wildfire frequency and intensity. Wildfire can directly impact many transportation assets including any components made of wood, vegetation along the roadside including landscaping, rock and concrete structures, and the safety of road users. Wildfire can also indirectly contribute to landslide and flooding risk by burning soil-stabilizing land cover, such as plants, and reducing the capacity of soil to absorb water. Smoke can also impact visibility and the health of the public. Wildfire can also contribute to bottlenecks or operational failures, particularly during evacuations in remote areas. Impacts to transportation assets from wildfire can be costly, necessitating emergency projects to repair fire-related damages which can require months or years of time to complete. The level of wildfire concern for the project area in 2055 according to the Caltrans District 3 Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment is *high*.

As the project is in an area of future *high* and *very high* wildfire concern and is currently in the “*very high*” category for the Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the State Responsibility Area (SRA) according to Office of the State Fire Marshal, wildfire will likely affect the project area. As State Route 20 has rural communities living adjacent to it, damage to roads caused by wildfire could cause safety concerns for residents during or after a fire. State Route 20 is the main evacuation route in the area, so damage to the road or hazards (such as heat and smoke created from wildfire) could delay or prevent evacuation. Wildfire could also increase landslide risk. Landslides are already a risk around the project in areas where slopes are steep. Landslides have the potential to damage or block roadways, further restricting movement by residents and the traveling public and potentially creating safety issues.

The project would help protect transportation assets from wildfire in numerous ways. In a direct response to the threat of wildfire, two structures within the project would be fire hardened by creating vegetation management strips. These strips would be created at the South Yuba Canal and the Drum Canal. In addition to the vegetation management strips, vegetation control would also be placed under the Midwest Guardrail System (MGS) installed as part of this project. Vegetation control consists of the placement of mats or minor concrete to prevent vegetation growth under the MGS. The MGS would also be installed with metal posts rather than wood posts, which would prevent combustion. The removal and prevention of vegetation growing adjacent to the road may also help prevent combustion of vegetation from vehicles pulled over on the shoulders. Culverts made of steel or concrete would also help prevent burning or collapse during a wildfire.

Determining the success of implementing fire hardening activities into a project can be measured in two ways—either by preventing fires from starting or measuring the amount of damage to transportation assets after a wildfire occurs. The fire hardening included in this project is mainly meant to protect transportation assets during wildfire and not prevent wildfire. The prevention of wildfire due to measures implemented in this project would be difficult to measure. If a wildfire occurs near State Route 20, the fire hardening measures included in this project can be surveyed to determine if they prevented damage to transportation assets such as the road, culverts, and structures. If some fire hardening measures did not prevent damage in the way it was intended, new or expanded measures would need to be introduced.

Temperature

Temperature rise is a direct outcome of increased GHG in the atmosphere. Heat waves are expected to become more frequent as temperatures continue to rise. By 2055, the change in absolute minimum air temperature around the project limits in Nevada and Placer counties will decrease by 4.0–5.9°F. By 2055 the average maximum temperature over seven days will increase between 4.0–7.9°F. There is potential for increased temperature to impact the design life of pavement, as the change in both the minimum temperature and average high temperature can affect the pavement binder. Economic consequences of rising temperatures could include more frequent pavement maintenance due to deterioration of the pavement binder.

The cold plane and pavement overlay used to repair pavement in this project has a design life of 10 years and is suitable for current temperature ranges. This pavement option is considered a temporary pavement repair focused on improving the road surface.

The suitability of the pavement repair for both colder minimum temperatures and hotter average temperatures can be measured by observing the pavement condition during its design life. If the pavement is showing signs of deterioration within the 10 year design life, more extreme temperatures may be the cause. Different methods and types of pavement that are suitable for more extreme temperatures will need to be used in the future.

2.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			✓	
Would the project: b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?			✓	
Would the project: c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				✓
Would the project: d) Be located on a site which 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?				✓
Would the project: e) 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?				✓

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				✓
Would the project: g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?				✓

Regulatory Setting

Hazardous materials, including hazardous substances and wastes, are regulated by many state and federal laws. Statutes govern the generation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, substances, and waste, and also the investigation and mitigation of waste releases, air and water quality, human health, and land use.

The primary laws governing hazardous materials, waste and substances include:

- California Health and Safety Code—Chapter 6.5
- Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act—§ 13000 et seq.
- CFR Title 22 Division 4.5 Environmental Health Standards for the Management of Hazardous Waste, Title 23 Waters, and Title 27 Environmental Protection

Worker and public health and safety are key issues when addressing hazardous materials that may affect human health and the environment. Proper management and disposal of hazardous material is vital if it is found, disturbed, or generated during project construction.

Affected Environment

An Initial Site Assessment (ISA) was completed for the Nevada Placer 20 CAPM Project on February 2, 2021 (Caltrans 2021c). The review for potentially hazardous waste within the project limits included a review of project plans, a review of Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA) maps, and a review of the GeoTracker database which contains information on hazardous waste sites.

Since construction of the project cannot avoid disturbing soils, a Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) is required. The PSI involves sampling soils for Aerially Deposited Lead (ADL) and NOA and will determine if hazardous soils exist and what actions, if any, would need to occur during construction. Treated wood waste (TWW) would also be encountered during construction of this project. This project is not located on the Cortese list.

Environmental Consequences

During the design phase, Caltrans would perform soil testing to determine if NOA is present at hazardous levels within the project area. The results of these tests would determine what measures would be incorporated into the Plans, Specifications and Estimates package to address any potential contamination. Special Standard Provisions (SSPs) would be used to address treated wood waste from the removal of guardrail. Additional SSPs and/or non-Standard Special Provisions (nSSP) may be used depending upon the results of the PSI.

Aerially deposited lead (ADL) from the historical use of leaded gasoline, exists along roadways throughout California. There is the likely presence of soils with elevated concentrations of lead as a result of ADL on the State Highway System right of way within the limits of the project alternatives. Soil determined to contain lead concentrations exceeding stipulated thresholds must be managed under the July 1, 2016, ADL Agreement between Caltrans and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. This ADL Agreement allows such soils to be safely reused within the project limits as long as all requirements of the ADL Agreement are met.

No contaminated properties would be acquired as a part of this project.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.9—Hazards and Hazardous Materials

- a) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. There is potential for NOA and ADL to occur within the project limits. The probability of the project creating a significant hazard to the public or environment through transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials is less than significant because the PSI would determine if there is contamination with NOA and/or ADL within the project limits. If the PSI shows that there is contamination, SSPs to address the contamination would be placed in the Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) package to

ensure that the contamination would not create a significant hazard to the public, construction crew, or the environment which would cause the impact to be less than significant.

- b) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. There is potential for NOA and ADL to occur within the project limits. Sampling taken during the PSI would determine what material handling requirements, if any, would be needed. These requirements would prevent a reasonably foreseeable hazardous waste accident involving the release of hazardous materials, therefore making the impact less than significant.

- c) Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?*

NO IMPACT. There are no existing or proposed schools within one-quarter mile of the project; therefore, there would be no impact.

- d) Would the project be located on a site which 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?*

NO IMPACT. There are no hazardous materials sites within the project limits pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, otherwise known as a Cortese listed site; therefore, there would be no impact.

- e) 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?*

NO IMPACT. The project is about 1.71 miles away from the Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport. As there would be no change in land use caused by this project and the project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working within the project area, there would be no impact.

f) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

NO IMPACT. The project would not impair the implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; therefore, there would be no impact.

g) Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

NO IMPACT. The project would not expose people or structures, directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. The work would not expose people or structures to any significant risks from wildfire. Fire hardening has been incorporated into the project, which would help protect structures adjacent to or connected to the roadway from wildland fires. Therefore, there would be no impact.

2.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?			✓	
Would the project: b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?				✓
Would the project: 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 off-site;				
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in 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?				✓

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?				✓
Would the project: e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?				✓

Regulatory Setting

The primary laws and regulations governing hydrology and water quality include:

- Federal: Clean Water Act (CWA)–33 USC 1344
- Federal: Executive Order for the Protection of Wetlands–EO 11990
- State: California Fish and Game Code (CFGF)–Sections 1600–1607
- State: Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act– Sections 13000 et seq.

Affected Environment

Determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Water Quality Assessment* dated February 10, 2023 (Caltrans 2023k). The elevation of this project varies from approximately 3,000 to 5,600 feet. This stretch of highway runs through rural, hilly, heavily forested land. The primary drainage features are systems of shallow roadside channels and cross culverts. In most areas, water flows directly off the roadway into the forest. The project falls within two hydrological units: the Yuba River Hydrological Unit and the Bear River Hydrological Unit. The primary receiving waters (waters that have treated or untreated wastewater discharged into them) of this project are Deer Creek, Mosquito Creek, North Fork Deer Creek, and Steephollow Creek.

Environmental Consequences

Typical construction Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (BMPs) (Section 1.6) would be utilized to prevent pollutants from leaving the construction site. In addition to BMPs, Caltrans is required to follow the conditions of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, issued by the State Water Resources Control Board. Adherence to Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 13 is also required to prevent receiving water pollution as a result of construction activities and/or project activities.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.10—Hydrology and Water Quality

- a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. Indirect impacts to surface water could occur due to siltation and erosion runoff from adjacent project activities, which could result in reduced water quality. Because of the limited project scope, and with Caltrans' existing requirements to comply with stormwater regulations and the implementation of Standard Measures and BMPs (Section 1.6), the project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact.

- b) 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?*

NO IMPACT. The project would not cause a decrease in groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge. The project would maintain or upgrade existing facilities and the work would not impact groundwater recharge or management; therefore, there would be no impact.

- c) *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:*

- (i) *result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?*

NO IMPACT. The project includes maintaining and improving drainages throughout the project limits. Drainage improvements would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the area. According to the District 3 Work Plan, there are no slopes prone to erosion within the boundaries of the project; therefore, drainage improvements would have no impact on erosion. The addition of RSP at the outlets of various culverts throughout the project would help slow the rate at which water flows out of culverts with steep slopes, therefore reducing any potential erosion caused by water flows.

- (ii) *substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. The project would add impervious surface to the project area. The slight increase in impervious surfaces would come from minor concrete placed under guardrail as vegetation control and in the construction of the Maintenance Vehicle Pullouts. This would not result in a substantial increase in surface runoff on or off-site. Improved drainages throughout the project limits would be able to accommodate any additional runoff caused by the increase in impervious surfaces. There would be a less than significant impact.

- (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?*

NO IMPACT. The project would not create or contribute to runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. The project proposes to repair and improve drainages throughout the project limits. Repaired drainages would increase water conveyance so that runoff water would not exceed the capacity of the system. At the intersection of SR 20 and Scotts Flat Road (PM 23.38), the current drainage system cannot contain the capacity for runoff at certain times of the year which leads to localized flooding. The drainage improvements in this area would increase capacity of the drainage systems and prevent future flooding. The project would not provide additional sources of polluted runoff to the project area. Therefore, there would be no impact.

(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?

NO IMPACT. The project would not impede or redirect flood flows. Drainage improvements and repair would prevent flows from being impeded and would have the appropriate capacity to deal with runoff. Therefore, there would be no impact to flood flows.

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

NO IMPACT. As the project is not in a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zone, there would be no impact.

e) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

NO IMPACT. The project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. Caltrans is required to comply with existing stormwater regulations, which would prevent conflicts with a water quality control plan. Accordingly, this project would not impact groundwater.

2.11 Land Use and Planning

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Physically divide an established community?				✓
Would the project: b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Land Use, Utilities, and Emergency Services Memorandum* dated September 25, 2023 (Caltrans 2023f).

Potential impacts to Land Use and Planning are not anticipated as there would be no conflicts with any land use plan, policy, or regulation relating to land use, nor would the project physically divide an established community. The project is consistent with existing zoning, plans, and other applicable land use controls. As the project proposes to maintain and upgrade existing facilities, there would be no impact on land use and planning.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.11—Land Use and Planning

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

NO IMPACT. The project is maintaining and upgrading existing highway facilities. As these actions would not result in the project dividing an established community, there would be no impact.

- b) Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?*

NO IMPACT. As the project is maintaining and upgrading existing highway facilities, there would be no conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation, nor would the project cause a significant environmental effect. Therefore, there would be no impact.

2.12 Mineral Resources

Question:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project: a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				✓
Would the project: b) 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?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Mineral Resources Memorandum* dated December 12, 2023 (Caltrans 2023g).

Potential impacts to mineral resources are not anticipated because this project would not change the access to mineral resources in the area. The project would not result in a loss of availability of a known mineral resource, nor would it result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated in Nevada County’s or Placer County’s planning documents. This project would not change the alignment of the road, remove access to local roads, or otherwise cause residents to be unable to access mineral resources. Lane closures may be required during construction, however local roads would remain accessible during construction, allowing the public access to mining sites as needed. In addition, this project would not remove large amounts of soil resulting in the loss of mineral resources.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.12—Mineral Resources

- a) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?***

NO IMPACT. The project would be maintaining and upgrading existing highway facilities, mostly within the Caltrans right of way. This work would not result in the loss of a known mineral resource of statewide importance as the work would mostly occur within disturbed highway shoulder and roadbed fill. There would be no impact to the availability of known mineral resources.

- b) 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?***

NO IMPACT. The project would be maintaining and upgrading existing highway facilities, mostly within the Caltrans right of way. This work would not result in the loss of a known mineral resource of local importance as delineated in the local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan as the work would mostly occur within disturbed highway shoulder and roadbed fill. There would be no impact to the availability of known mineral resources.

2.13 Noise

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			✓	
Would the project result in: b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			✓	
Would the project result in: 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?				✓

Regulatory Setting

The primary laws governing noise are NEPA and CEQA.

Affected Environment

A *Noise Analysis Memorandum* was completed on February 14, 2023 (Caltrans 2023h). This project is located in a rural part of Nevada County and Placer County. The project area is surrounded by a mix of vacant land, National Forest, timber preserves, and residential land uses. Numerous residences are located along State Route 20 within the project limits. These residences may be exposed to elevated noise levels during roadway construction operations.

The project meets the criteria for a Type III project; therefore, a Noise Study Report and Noise Abatement Report were deemed unnecessary.

Environmental Consequences

The project does not construct a new highway in a new location or substantially change the vertical or horizontal alignments and does not include any other activities discussed in the definition of a Type I project. This project does meet the criteria for a Type III project as defined in 23 CFR 772. Traffic volumes, composition and speeds would remain the same. Traffic noise impacts are not anticipated and a detailed Noise Study Report is not required. Noise abatement was not considered for this project.

During construction of the project, noise from construction activities may intermittently dominate the noise environment in the immediate area of construction. Noise generated by construction activities would be a function of the noise levels generated by individual pieces of construction equipment, the type and amount of equipment operating at any given time, the timing and duration of construction activities, and the proximity of nearby sensitive receptors (schools, health facilities etc.).

Construction noise would primarily result from the operation of heavy construction equipment and arrival and departure of heavy-duty trucks. Construction noise levels would vary on a day-to-day basis during each phase of construction depending on the specific task being completed. Table 15 summarizes noise levels produced by construction equipment that is commonly used on roadway construction projects. Construction equipment is expected to generate noise levels ranging from 70 to 90 dBA at a distance of 50 feet, and noise produced by construction equipment would be reduced over distance at a rate of about 6 dB per doubling of distance.

Table 7. Construction Equipment Noise

Equipment	Maximum Noise Levels (dBA at 50 feet)
Cold Plane Pavement	90
Heavy Trucks	88
Concrete Saw	90
Pneumatic Tools	85
Jackhammer	89

dBA = A-weighted decibels

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.13—Noise

- a) 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 the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. The project would result in temporary construction noise levels above ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project. Construction noise levels would be regulated by Caltrans Standard Specification 14-8.02 “Noise Control” which requires contractors to control noise levels resulting from work activities and to not exceed 86 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet from the job site from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. There would be a less than significant impact to temporary noise levels.

- b) Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. The project is not expected to generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise. Vibration levels could be perceptible and cause disturbances at residences near the project area during operation of heavy equipment, such as vibratory rollers. However, these effects would be short-term and intermittent and would cease once construction is completed. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact to excessive groundborne vibration.

- 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?*

NO IMPACT. The project is about 1.71 miles away from the Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport. Noise levels during construction would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels; therefore, there would be no impact.

2.14 Population and Housing

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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)?				✓
Would the project: b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Land Use, Utilities, and Emergency Services Memorandum* dated September 25, 2023 (Caltrans 2023f).

Potential impacts to Population and Housing are not anticipated as there are no growth-inducing elements of the project. In addition, no permanent right of way acquisitions are required. There would be no changes to population and housing; therefore, there would be no impacts to Population and Housing.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.14—Population and Housing

- a) 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)?*

NO IMPACT. The project would maintain and upgrade existing highway facilities. The project does not contain any growth-inducing elements, such as adding lanes. As there would be no induced growth as a result of the project, there would be no impact.

b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

NO IMPACT. The scope of the project would not require displacing any people or housing. The work outside of the Caltrans right of way within the drainage easements would be minor in nature and would not necessitate displacement of people or housing. Therefore, there would be no impact.

2.15 Public Services

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) 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 other performance objectives for any of the public services:				✓
Fire protection?				✓
Police protection?				✓
Schools?				✓
Parks?				✓
Other public facilities?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Land Use, Utilities, and Emergency Services Memorandum* dated September 25, 2023 (Caltrans 2023f).

Potential impacts to Public Services are not anticipated due to the scope of the project. This project proposes to maintain and upgrade existing Caltrans facilities and perform fire hardening activities. No permanent impacts to public services would occur due to this scope of work as there would be no changes to service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives. The project would also not result in physical changes to government facilities. There would be no impact to public services.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.15—Public Services

- a) 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 other performance objectives for any of the public services: fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities.*

NO IMPACT. The project is maintaining and upgrading existing highway facilities. There would be no need for new or altered government facilities nor would the project result in poor response times or other performance measures for any public service, such as parks or public facilities. The project would not result in any growth or increase distance of travel which could in turn disrupt service ratios or response times.

2.16 Recreation

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) 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?				✓
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Land Use, Utilities, and Emergency Services Memorandum* dated September 25, 2023 (Caltrans 2023f).

Potential impacts to Recreation are not anticipated as all the work would occur outside of recreational areas and access to recreational areas would remain open during construction. Within the project area, there are numerous recreational facilities that are either adjacent to State Route 20 or accessible by local roads that connect to State Route 20. The only work outside of the Caltrans right of way would not occur on land that is considered recreational or could be used recreationally. One way lane closures would occur during construction to accommodate road grinding and paving; however, access to local roads and recreational facilities would remain open throughout construction.

***Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.16—
Recreation***

- a) 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?***

NO IMPACT. The project would maintain and upgrade highway facilities. There are no elements of the project scope which would induce growth or in other ways increase the use of existing parks or other recreational facilities. There would be no impact to parks or recreational facilities.

- b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?***

NO IMPACT. The project is a state highway project and does not include recreational facilities or the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, there would be no impact.

2.17 Transportation

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

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Traffic Safety Analysis* dated May 1, 2023 (Caltrans 2023i).

As the project would maintain and upgrade existing facilities, potential impacts to Transportation are not anticipated as there would be no scope elements that would conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or transportation policy. This project is not a capacity increasing project; therefore, its construction would not conflict with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b). No hazards would be created by a geometric design feature or incompatible uses due to the construction of this project as the geometric features of the road would remain unchanged. Emergency access would not be changed due to the construction of this project. Therefore, there would be no impact to transportation as a result of this project.

***Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.17—
Transportation and Traffic***

- a) Would the project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?***

NO IMPACT. The project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system as the project proposes to maintain and upgrade existing highway facilities. As the project scope does not conflict with either Nevada County's or Placer County's circulation or transportation element, there would be no impact.

- b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?***

NO IMPACT. The project does not increase vehicle miles traveled and is therefore exempt from CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b). Accordingly, there would be no impact.

- c) 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)?***

NO IMPACT. As the project would maintain and upgrade existing facilities, it would not change the geometric design or incompatible uses of State Route 20 throughout the project area and would not increase hazards. Therefore, there would be no impact.

- d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?***

NO IMPACT. The project would not change access to State Route 20 and therefore would have no impact on emergency access. Emergency services would continue to have access to the project location during construction.

2.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, or 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:</p> <p>a) 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 § 5020.1(k), or</p>				✓
<p>b) 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 § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.</p>				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Historic Property Survey Report* (Caltrans 2024a) and the *Archaeological Survey Report* (Caltrans 2023a) dated April 2024 and August 2023 respectively.

Potential impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources are not anticipated due to archaeological and historic resources of tribal importance being protected in place; therefore, causing no impact. Potential impacts to tribal cultural resources are not anticipated due to archaeological and cultural studies conducted by Caltrans staff, which included background research, literature review, and in-person field surveys. Additionally, Caltrans consulted with the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria, Wilton Rancheria, Colfax-Todd's Valley Consolidated Tribe, Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe, T'si Akim Maidu, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California. Consultation with all tribal parties is ongoing for the life of the project.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.18—Tribal Cultural Resources

Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in the Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, or 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) 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 § 5020.1(k).***

NO IMPACT. The project would not have an impact on any listed or eligible historical resources of cultural value to a California Native American tribe. Any listed or eligible historical resources within the APE that have cultural value to California Native American tribes would be protected in place; therefore, there would be no impact.

- b) 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 § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.***

NO IMPACT. The project would not have an impact on any significant archaeological or historical resources with cultural value to California Native American tribes. Any potentially significant resources with cultural value to California Native American tribes within the APE would be protected in place; therefore, there would be no impact.

2.19 Utilities and Service Systems

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?				✓
Would the project: b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?				✓
Would the project: c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which 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?				✓
Would the project: 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?				✓
Would the project: e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				✓

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the *Land Use, Utilities, and Emergency Services Memorandum* dated September 25, 2023 (Caltrans 2023f).

Potential impacts to Utilities and Service Systems are not anticipated due to there being no utility relocation required for this project. The known utilities in the project area include PG&E overhead electric lines, AT&T overhead and underground telecommunication lines, and a Lumen and Verizon underground fiber optic line near the Union Pacific Railroad at the Yuba Pass Bridge area. As there would be no utility relocation required for the construction of the project, there would be no impact to utilities.

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.19—Utilities and Service Systems

- a) 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?*

NO IMPACT. There would be no utility relocation or construction of new or expanded utilities as a result of this project. Therefore, there would be no impact to utility systems.

- b) Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?*

NO IMPACT. The project would only require water supplies during construction. As there would be no requirement for water to serve the project past construction; therefore, there would be no impact.

- c) Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which 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?*

NO IMPACT. The project would maintain and upgrade existing highway facilities, which does not include any work on or use of wastewater treatment systems. Therefore, there would be no impact.

- d) 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?*

NO IMPACT. Solid waste would not be generated in excess of State or Local standards as a result of this project, therefore there would be no impact. Solid waste in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure or in amounts that would impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals would not occur.

- e) Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?*

NO IMPACT. The project would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste; therefore, no impact.

2.20 Wildfire

Question	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
If located in or near State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or lands classified as <i>very high</i> 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 concentrations 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 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?				✓

Senate Bill 1241 required the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, the Natural Resources Agency, and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to develop amendments to the “CEQA Environmental Checklist” for the inclusion of questions related to fire hazard impacts for projects located on lands classified as *very high* Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The 2018 updates to the CEQA Guidelines expanded this to include projects “near” these *very high* Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

“No Impact” determinations in this section are based on the scope, description, and location of the project, as well as the Wildfire Memorandum dated October 24, 2023 (Caltrans 2023I).

Potential impacts to wildfire are not anticipated due to fire hardening features incorporated into the project scope. Portions of the project are within the State Responsibility Area, with the majority of this area classified as a *very high* Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The project would create two vegetation management strips as fire hardening near the South Yuba Canal and the Drum Canal. At each location, the vegetation management strip would occur between SR 20 and the adjacent structure. They are 10 feet wide but vary in length depending on the length of the adjacent structure and the amount of surrounding vegetation. All vegetation would be removed from these areas to help protect the structure in the event of a fire. In addition to the vegetation management strips, vegetation control would also be placed under Midwest Guardrail System (MGS) installed as part of this project. Vegetation control consists of the placement of either a mat or minor concrete to prevent vegetation growth under the MGS. Vegetation control would be installed under all locations where work on guardrail would occur. Metal posts would be used in place of wood posts where work on roadside signs and guardrail would occur as the metal posts would make the signs and guardrail more resistant to burning during a fire. In locations where new culverts are going to be installed, steel or concrete pipes would be used in place of plastic pipe. Concrete or steel pipes would not melt or burn like plastic pipes do in the event of a fire. These measures would increase wildfire resilience. The other scope elements of the project would not have an impact on wildfire as they include maintaining and upgrading existing highway features, which would not change wildfire risk.

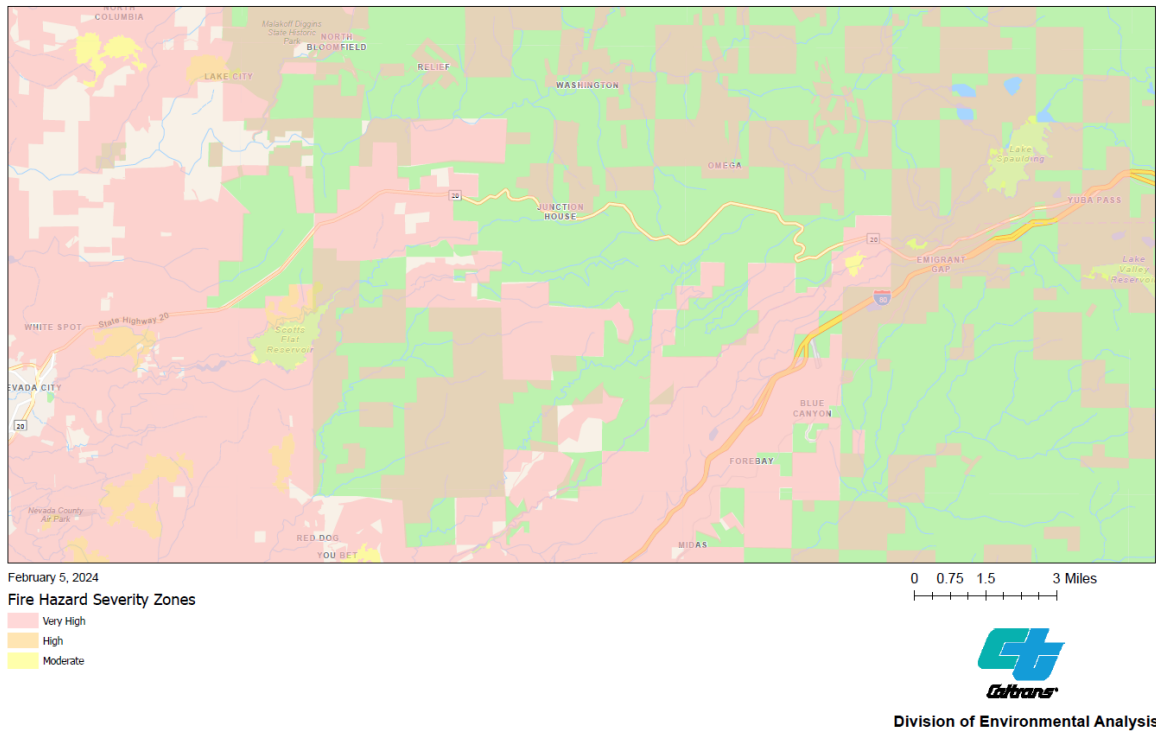


Figure 6. Fire Hazard Severity Zones Around the Project Limits

(Source: Caltrans Environmental GIS Library (Caltrans 2023c))

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.20—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?*

NO IMPACT. The project would repair and maintain existing highway facilities in addition to fire hardening structures on the State Highway System. During construction, as there would not be total closures of State Route 20, construction would not impede the use of emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans. The constructed project would not impact an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; therefore, there would be no impact.

- b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?*

NO IMPACT. While the project is within a *very high* Fire Hazard Severity Zones, the project would not exacerbate wildfire risks. Rather, the project includes fire hardening elements to help alleviate wildfire risk. The remaining project elements would not change the existing wildfire risk and would therefore not increase the risk of uncontrolled wildfire spread or cause occupants to be exposed to wildfire-related pollutants. There would be no impact to wildfire risk.

- 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 may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?*

NO IMPACT. The project would not require any additional infrastructure to be installed to support the project. No utilities would need to be relocated during the construction of the project. The vegetation management strips installed to fire harden structures along the State Highway System would require maintenance; however, this would not cause temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment as there are no impacts to resources within the vegetation management strips. The maintenance of the vegetation management strips would not exacerbate fire risk. Therefore, there is no impact.

- 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?*

NO IMPACT. The project would not increase risks related to post-fire slope instability or drainage changes. The project would not change the risk of wildfire, nor would it increase the risk of post-fire landslides or flooding. There would be no changes to the existing slopes within the project area. Rather, the project would improve drainages throughout the project limits, which would reduce the incidence of flooding. Therefore, there is no impact.

2.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

Does the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have the potential to 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, 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) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)				✓
c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				✓

Discussion of CEQA Environmental Checklist Question 2.21—Mandatory Findings of Significance

- a) *Does the project have the potential to 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, 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?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. The project would cause permanently impacts 0.009 acres (392.04 square feet) and temporary impacts of 0.008 acres (Table 4) to aquatic resources of the United States/Waters of the State. The project would temporarily affect 0.002 acre of riparian woodland (Table 3). With the implementation of Standard Measures BR-1, BR-4C, and BR-5, combined with anticipated mitigation from the permitting process, the impact would be less than significant.

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

NO IMPACT. There are two other projects in or soon to be in construction on State Route 20 in the vicinity of the project. Any construction activities that have the potential to contribute to cumulative impacts would either be mitigated through permitting or minimized or avoided using standard measures; therefore, the project would not result in any adverse effects that, when considered in connection with other projects, would be considered cumulatively considerable. Therefore, there would be no impact.

- c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?*

NO IMPACT. Based on the scope of work and the studies completed for the project, the project would not cause substantial adverse effects either directly or indirectly on human beings by exposing the public to hazards or hazardous materials, requiring right of way acquisitions, interfering with the movement of emergency services through the project area, impeding access to public facilities, causing changes to land use, or by other means described in this document. There would be no adverse effects to people within or near the project area due to the implementation of Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (Section 1.6) that would help minimize or avoid impacts to people and no substantial adverse effects on humans would occur as a result. Therefore, there would be no impact.

2.22 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are those that result from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, combined with the potential impacts of this project. A cumulative impact assessment looks at the collective impacts posed by individual land use plans and projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively substantial impacts taking place over a period of time (CEQA § 15355).

Cumulative impacts to resources may result from residential, commercial, industrial, and highway development, as well as from agricultural development and the conversion to more intensive agricultural cultivation. These land use activities can degrade habitat and species diversity through consequences such as displacement and fragmentation of habitats and populations, alteration of hydrology, contamination, erosion, sedimentation, disruption of migration corridors, changes in water quality, and introduction or promotion of predators. They can also contribute to potential community impacts identified for the project, such as changes in community character, traffic patterns, housing availability, and employment.

Per Section 15130 of CEQA, a Cumulative Impact Analysis (CIA) discussion is only required in "...situations where the cumulative effects are found to be significant." An EIR is required when a project might result in "significant" direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on any resource. This project is a capital maintenance project. No resources would be significantly impacted as a result of construction of the project. *This project would not lead to any significant or substantial cumulative impacts. Given this, an EIR and CIA were not required for this project.*

CHAPTER 3. Agency and Public Coordination

Early and continuing coordination with the general public and public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process. It helps planners determine the necessary scope of environmental documentation and the level of analysis required, and to identify potential impacts and avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures and related environmental requirements. Agency and tribal consultation and public participation for this project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including Project Development Team (PDT) meetings, interagency coordination meeting, and tribal outreach. This chapter summarizes the results of Caltrans' efforts to identify, address, and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination.

The following agencies, organizations, and individuals were consulted in the preparation of this environmental document.

Coordination with Resource Agencies

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was requested to review the Sacred Lands Files for any Native American sacred site within or adjacent to the project area on January 31, 2023. The NAHC responded on January 31, 2023, with confirmation that the request had been received. The following tribes were contacted:

- United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria
- Wilton Rancheria
- Colfax-Todd's Valley Consolidated Tribe
- Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe
- T'si Akim Maidu
- Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

Initial correspondence was sent January 31, 2023 and was followed up by phone calls and/or emails on February 28, 2023 (Table 16).

The NAHC responded to the Sacred Lands Files and Tribal Contact List request on March 3, 2023, confirming that the project locations were positive for sacred lands and included a list of the tribal contacts.

Table 8. Tribal Contacts

Date	Personnel	Notes
January 31, 2023	Gene Whitehouse, Chairperson, United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria	Tribal contact
January 31, 2023	Jesus Tarango, Chairperson, Wilton Rancheria	Tribal contact
January 31, 2023	Clyde Prout III, Chairperson, Colfax Todd's Valley Consolidated Tribe	Tribal Contact
January 31, 2023	Richard Johnson, Chairperson, Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe	Tribal Contact
January 31, 2023	Don Ryberg, Chairperson, T'si Akim Maidu	Tribal Contact
January 31, 2023	Smokey Serrell, Chairperson, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California	Tribal Contact

Consultation with local historical societies was also conducted. The Placer County Historical Society was asked to consult on this project on August 25, 2023, via email. A consultation request was sent to the Nevada County Historical Society via their online submission form on August 25, 2023. At this time no response has been received. All consultation with Historical Societies will remain open during the life of this project.

On May 11, 2023, Anna Starkey, Cultural Regulatory Specialist for United Auburn Indian Community, responded to the Caltrans consultation request asking if archaeological sites located in the project area were going to be protected or avoided and asked that UAIC have the opportunity to join the survey efforts, and review the results of that survey. Caltrans responded to Ms. Starkey stating that all of the sites that UAIC had concerns about were accounted for and would be protected in place to be avoided, and that the survey results would be shared for UAIC to review. On February 1, 2024, Caltrans sent Anna Starkey the Archaeological Survey Report for her review via FILR and is awaiting a response.

All consultation efforts with Tribal partners are ongoing and will remain open for the life of the project.

Consultation with USACE, the CVRWQCB, and CDFW relating to obtaining permits would occur during the design phase.

Coordination with Property Owners

No outreach to property owners was required during the environmental phase. As the work would occur mainly within the Caltrans right of way, surveys on private land were not needed; therefore, contact with property owners was not required.

Circulation

The draft Initial Study/ Negative Declaration was circulated April 19 to May 20, 2024. During the circulation of the draft Initial Study/Negative Declaration, four comments were received. The comments were from CDFW, California Highway Patrol (CHP), Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB), and CVRWQCB. The comment letters and subsequent responses can be found in Appendix E - *Response to Comments*.



CHAPTER 4. List of Preparers

The following individuals performed the environmental work and contributed to the preparation of the Initial Study/ Negative Declaration for this project:

California Department of Transportation, District 3

Laura Loeffler	Senior Environmental Planner
Caitlin Greenwood	Associate Environmental Planner
Rochelle Frymire	Biologist
Jason Lee	Air Quality Specialist
Catherine Davis	Archaeologist
Sonia Miller	Architectural Historian
Mark Melani	Hazardous Waste Specialist
Ryan Pommerenck	Noise Specialist
Jeff Juarez	Landscape Architect
Jarod Barkley	Water Specialist
Erin Dwyer	Acting Environmental Office Chief
Eric Poole	Transportation Engineer
Sam Vandell	Project Manager



CHAPTER 5. Distribution List

Federal and State Agencies

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
North Central Region (Region 2)
Morgan Kilgour
1701 Nimbus Road
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

California Highway Patrol
11363 McCourtney Road
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
11020 Sun Center Drive, #200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

United States Army Corps of Engineers
Sacramento District
1325 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

United States Forest Service
Tahoe National Forest
631 Coyote Street
Nevada City, CA 95959

Regional/County/Local Agencies

Nevada County Clerk-Recorder
950 Maidu Avenue, Suite 210
Nevada City, CA 95959

Nevada County Consolidated Fire District
640 Coyote Street
Nevada City, CA 95959

Nevada County Madelyn Helling Library
908 Helling Way
Nevada City, CA 95959

Nevada County Supervisor – District 1
Heidi Hall
950 Maidu Avenue, Suite 200
Nevada City, CA 95959

Nevada County Supervisor – District 5
Hardy Bullock
950 Maidu Avenue, Suite 200
Nevada City, CA 95959

Placer County Clerk-Recorder
3715 Atherton Road
Rocklin, CA 95765

Placer County Supervisor – District 5
Cindy Gustafson
175 Fulweiler Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

CHAPTER 6. References

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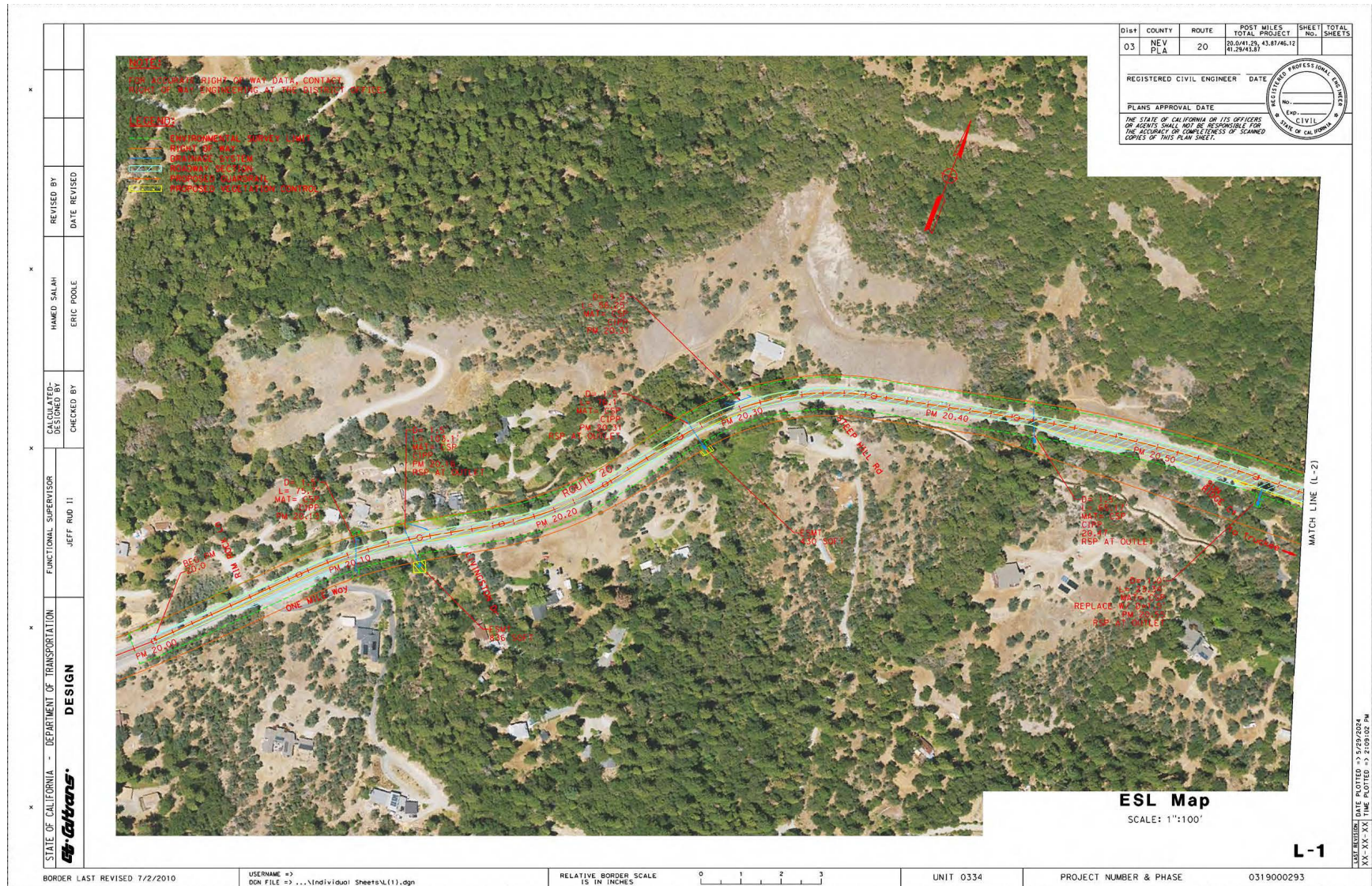
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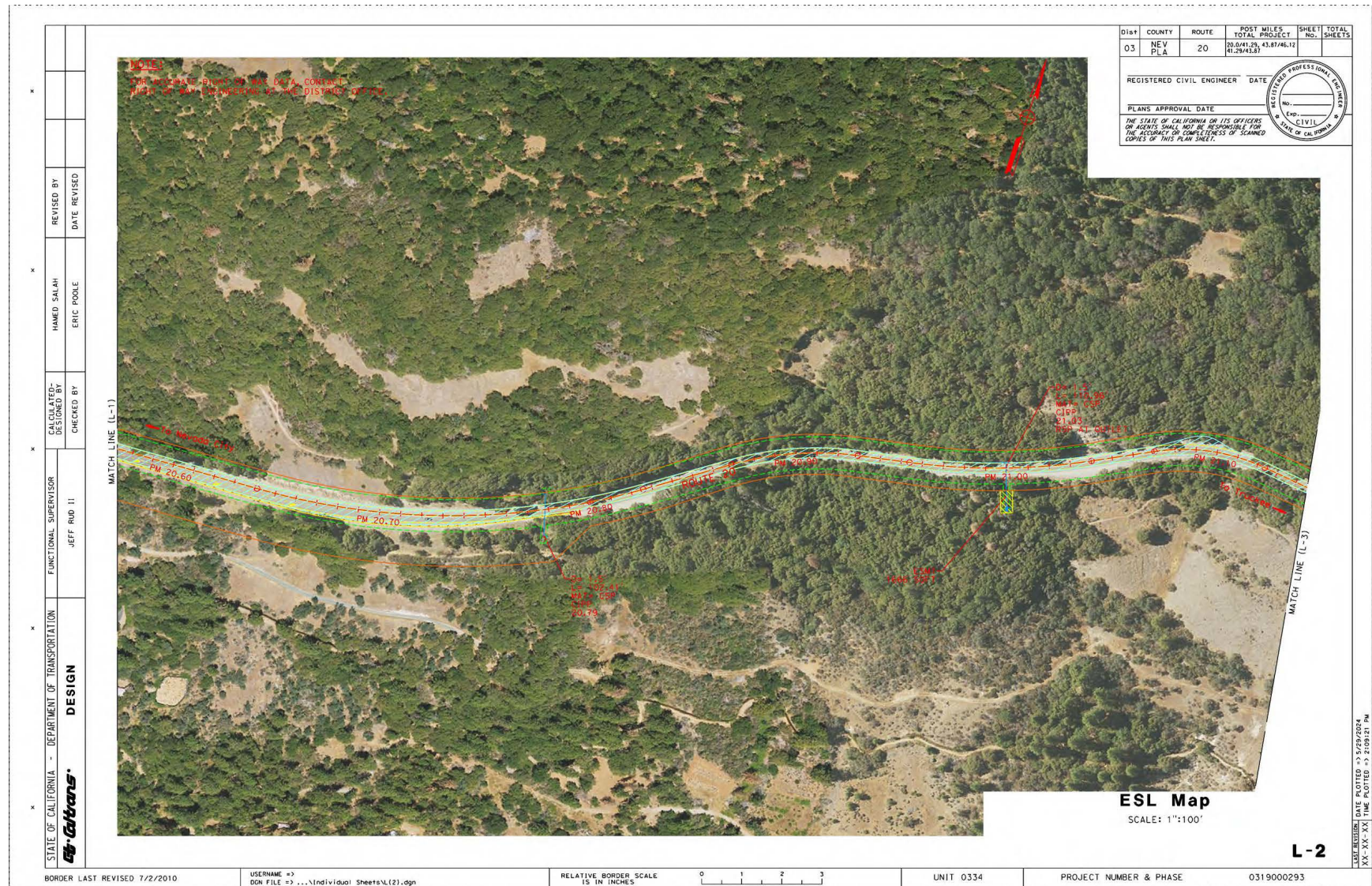
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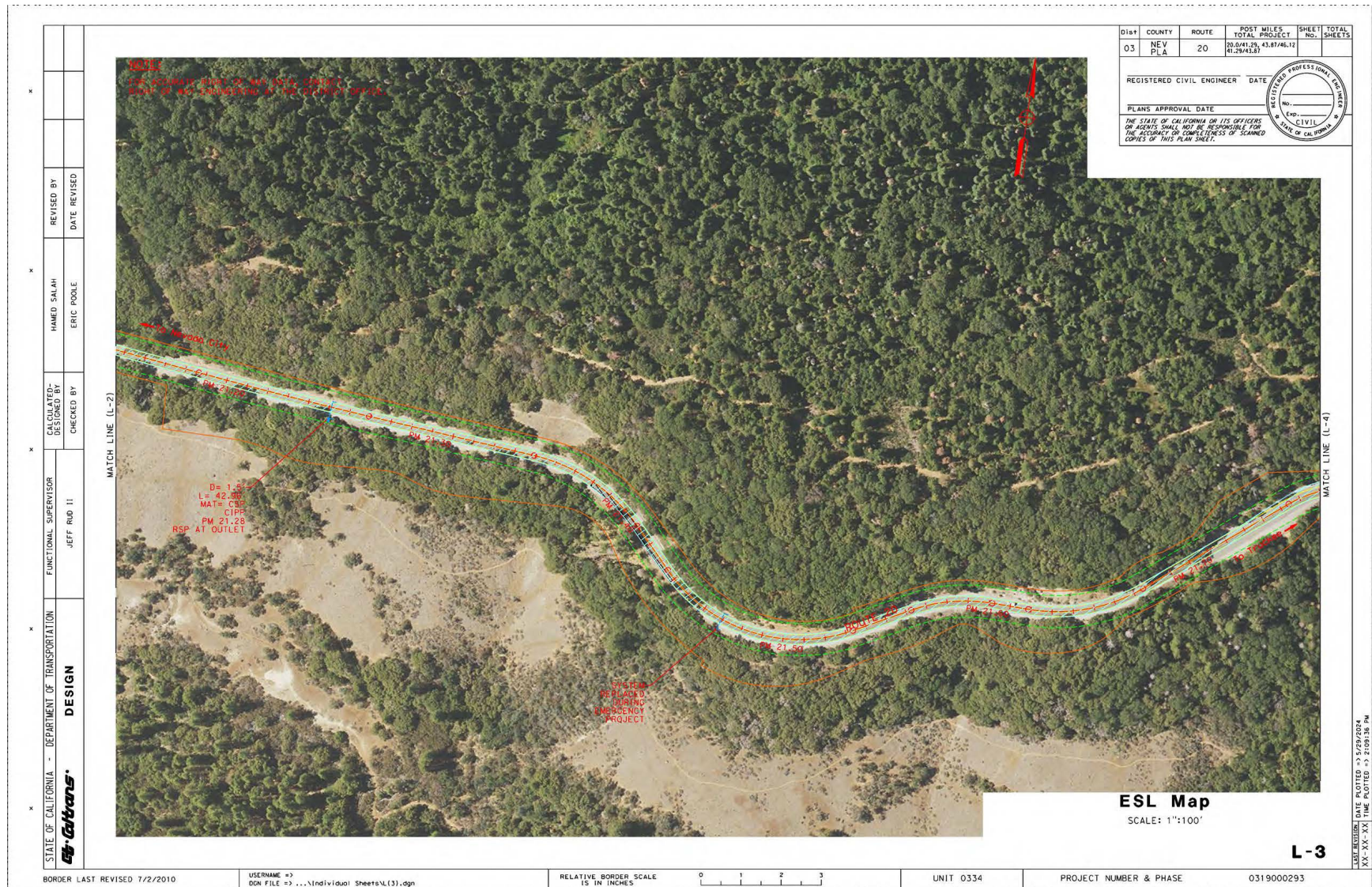
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Appendix A. Project Layouts

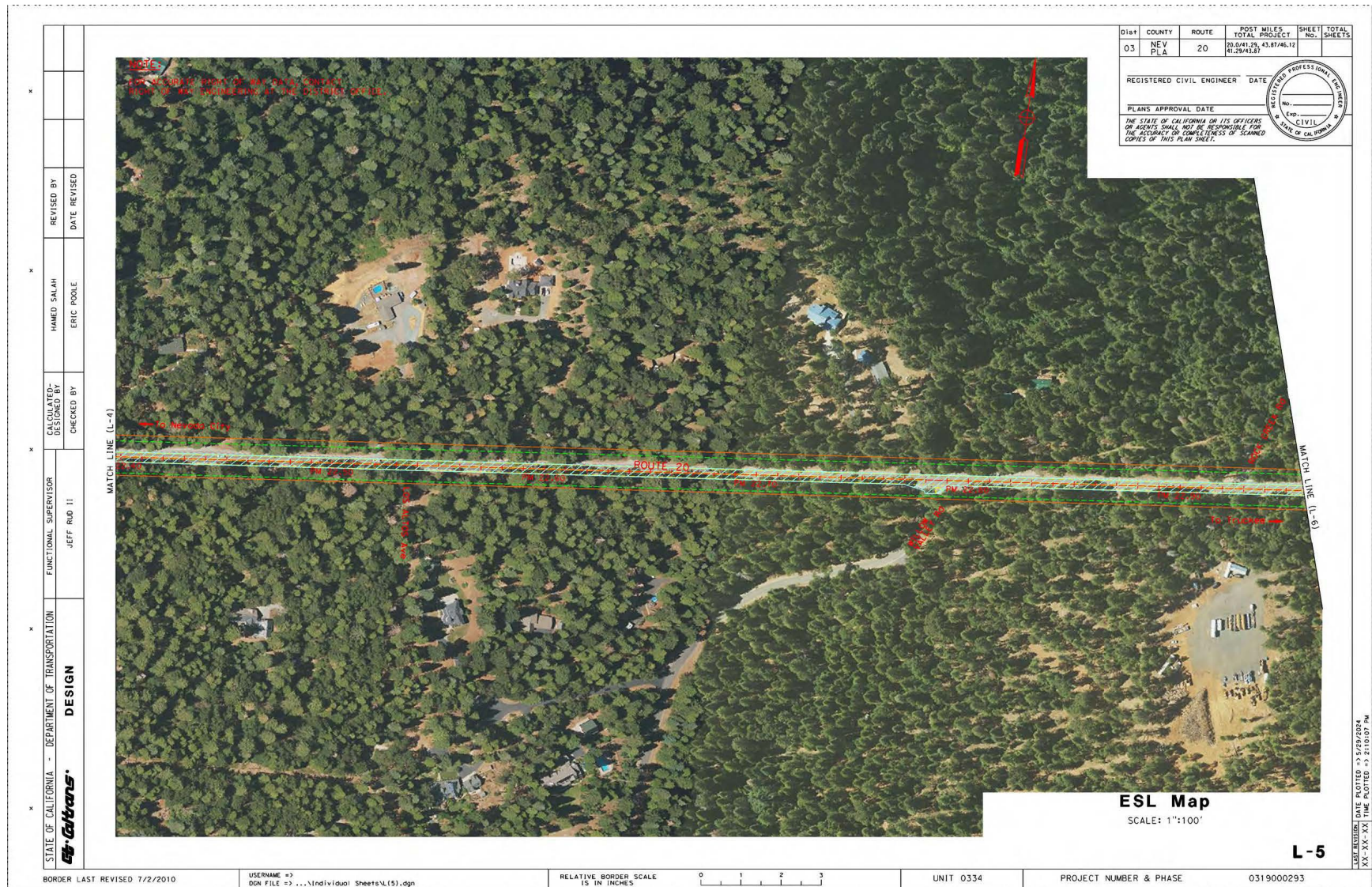


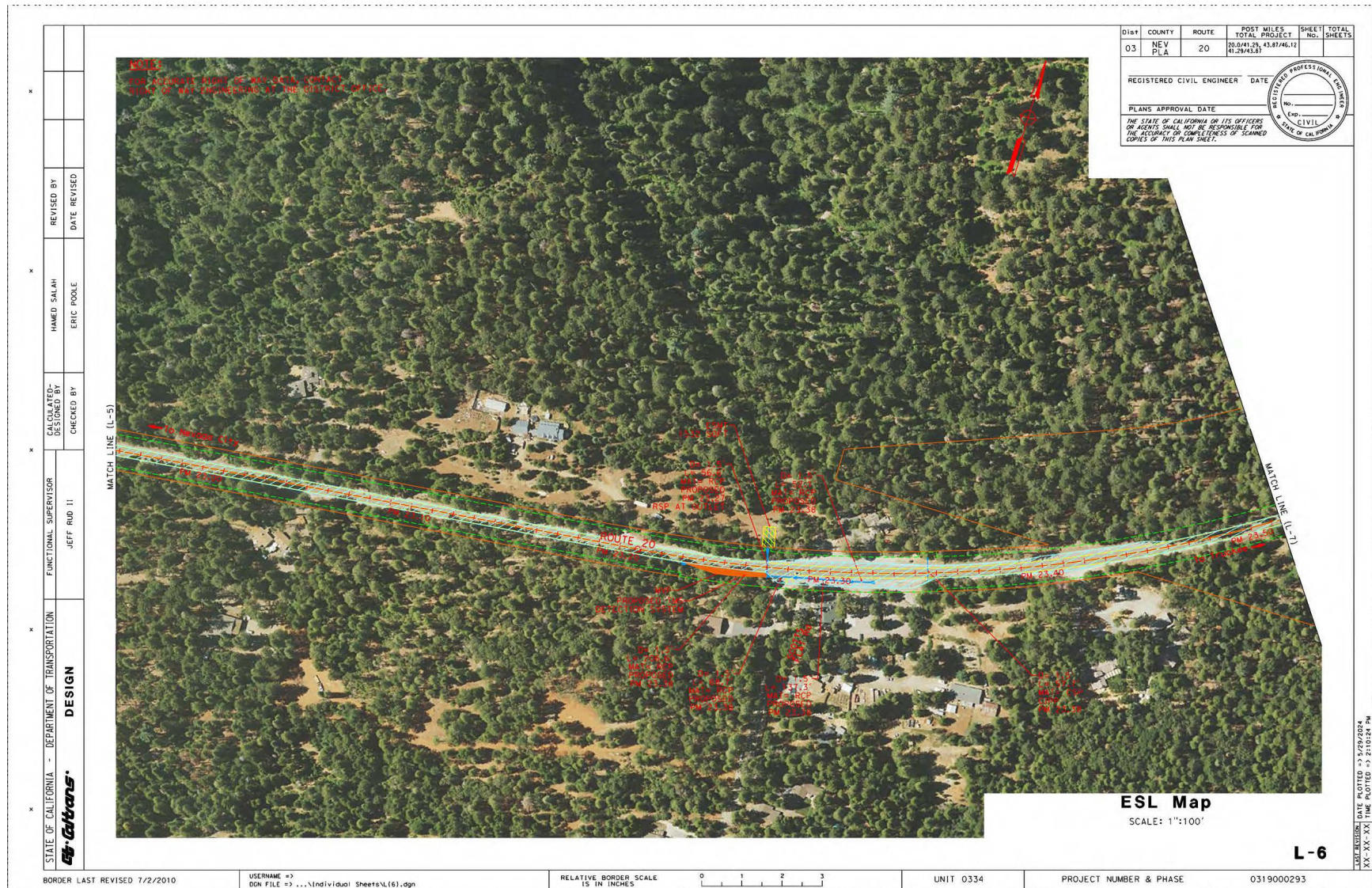


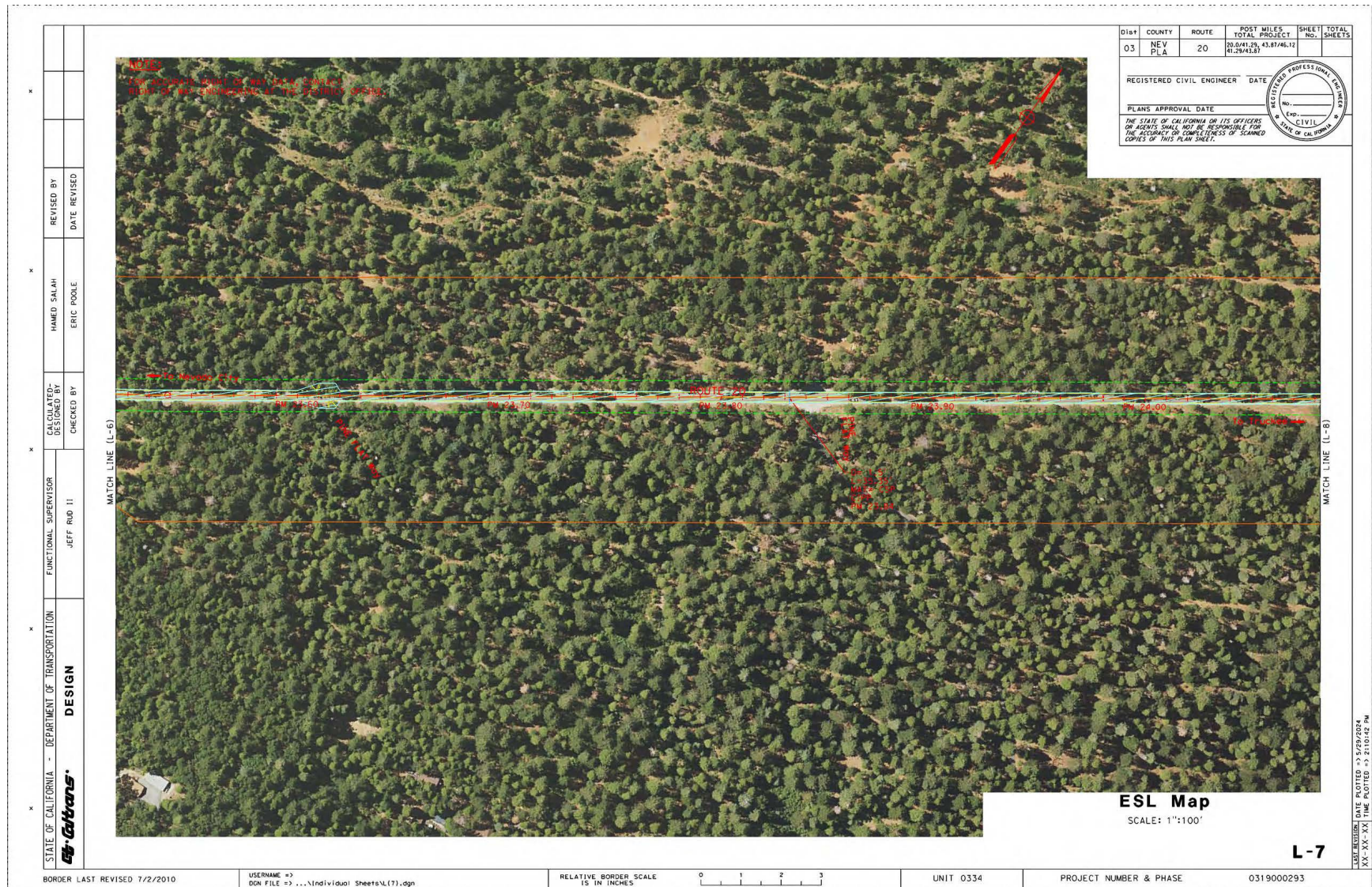


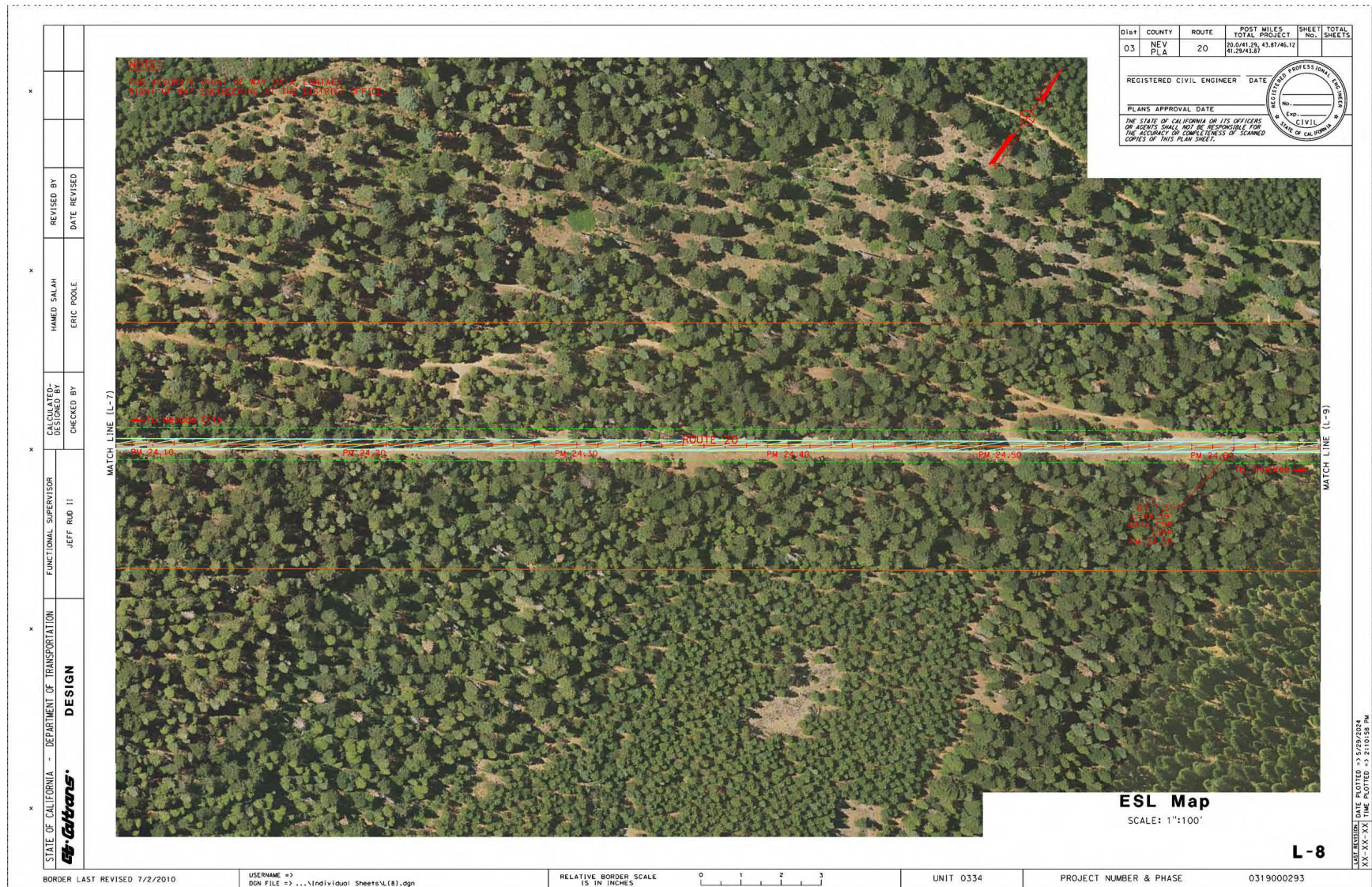


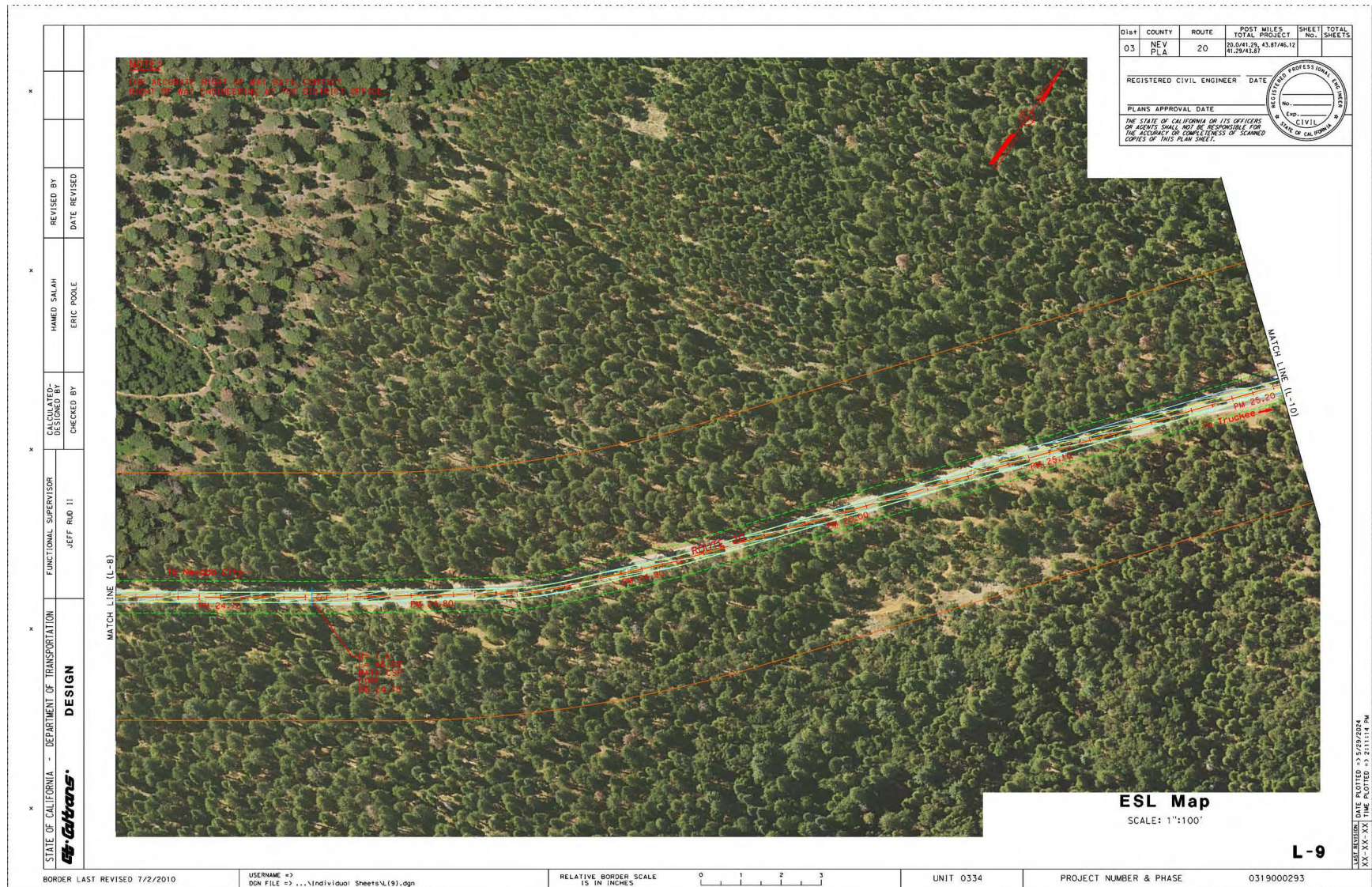




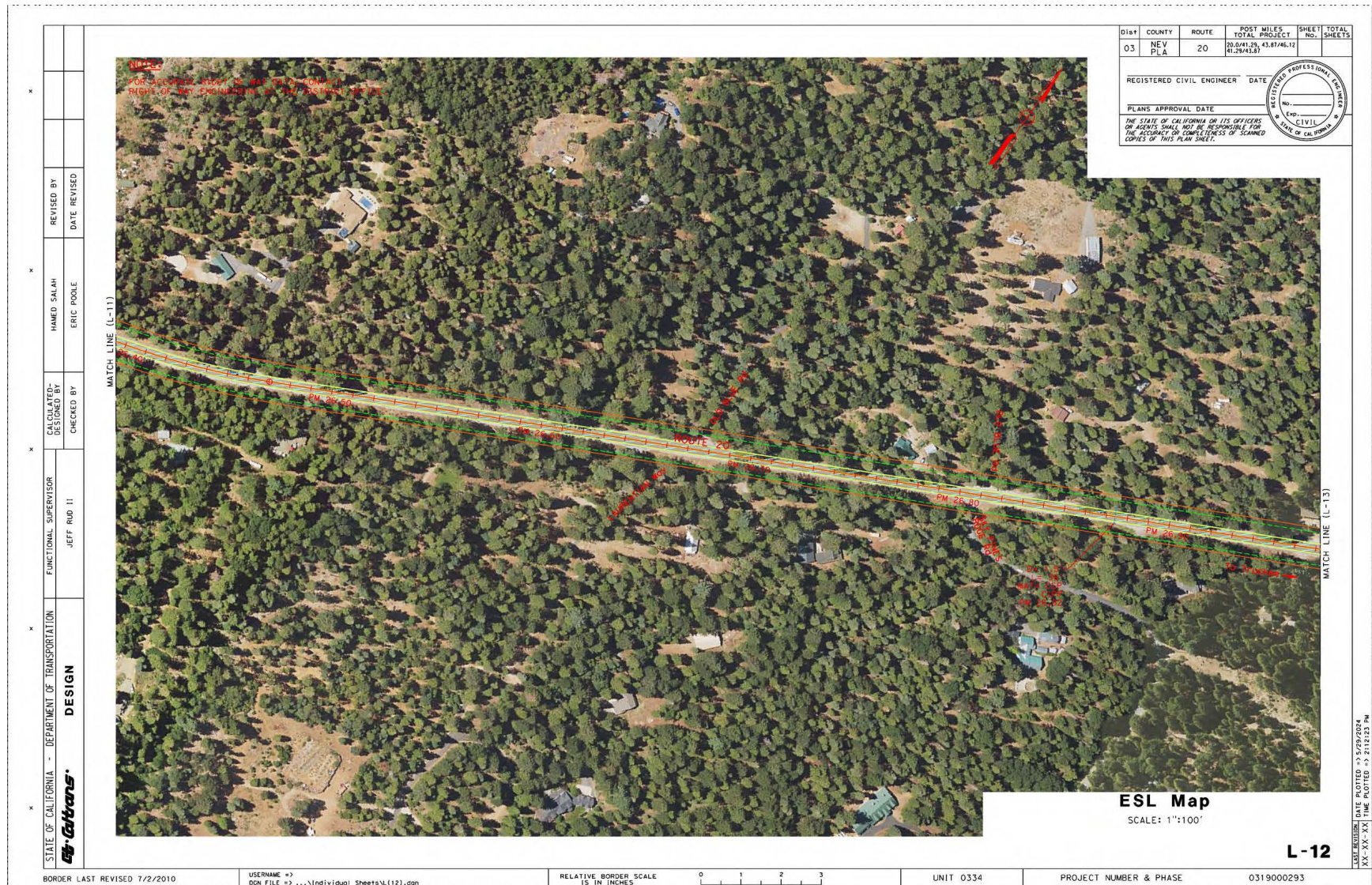




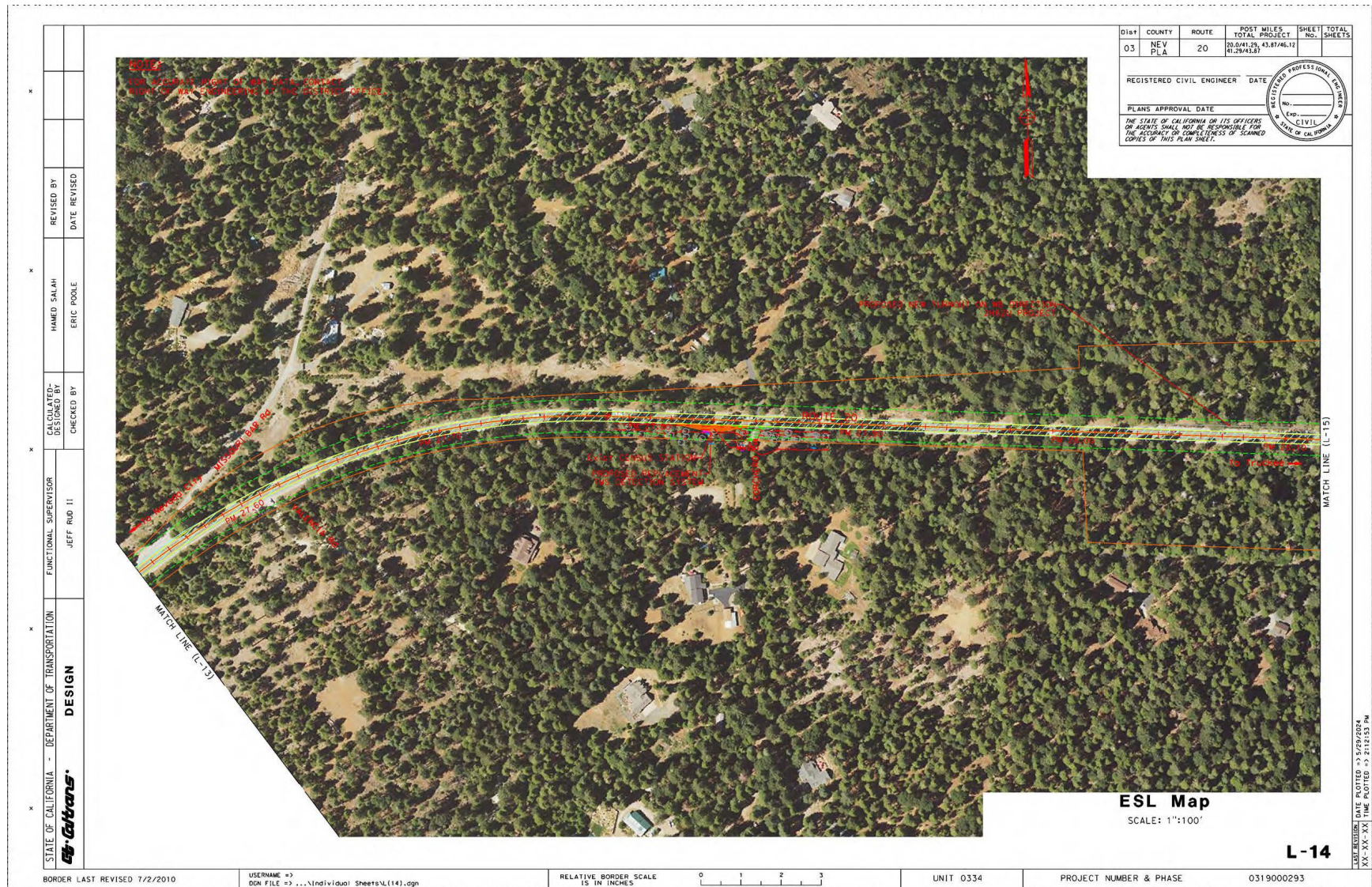




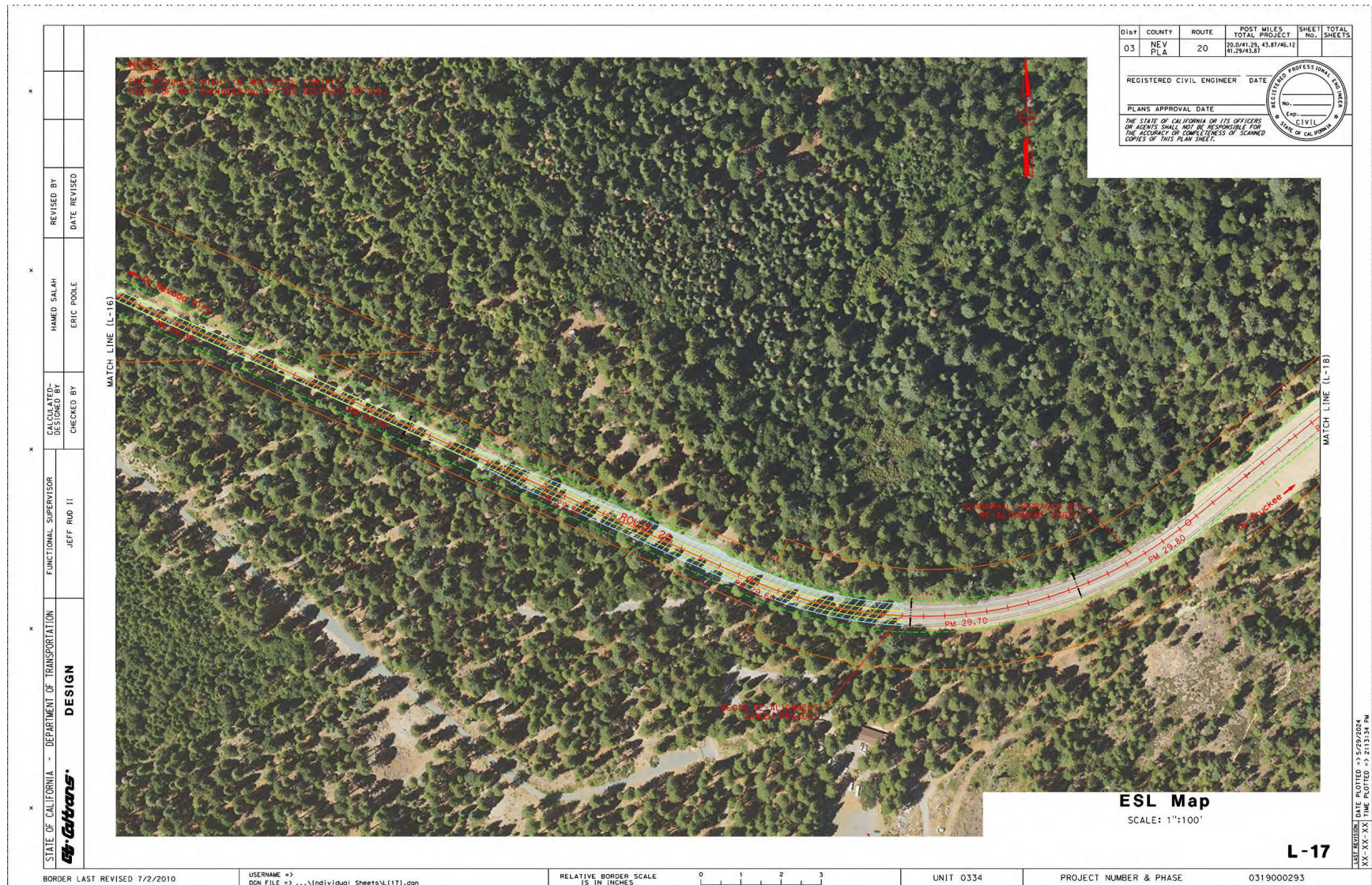




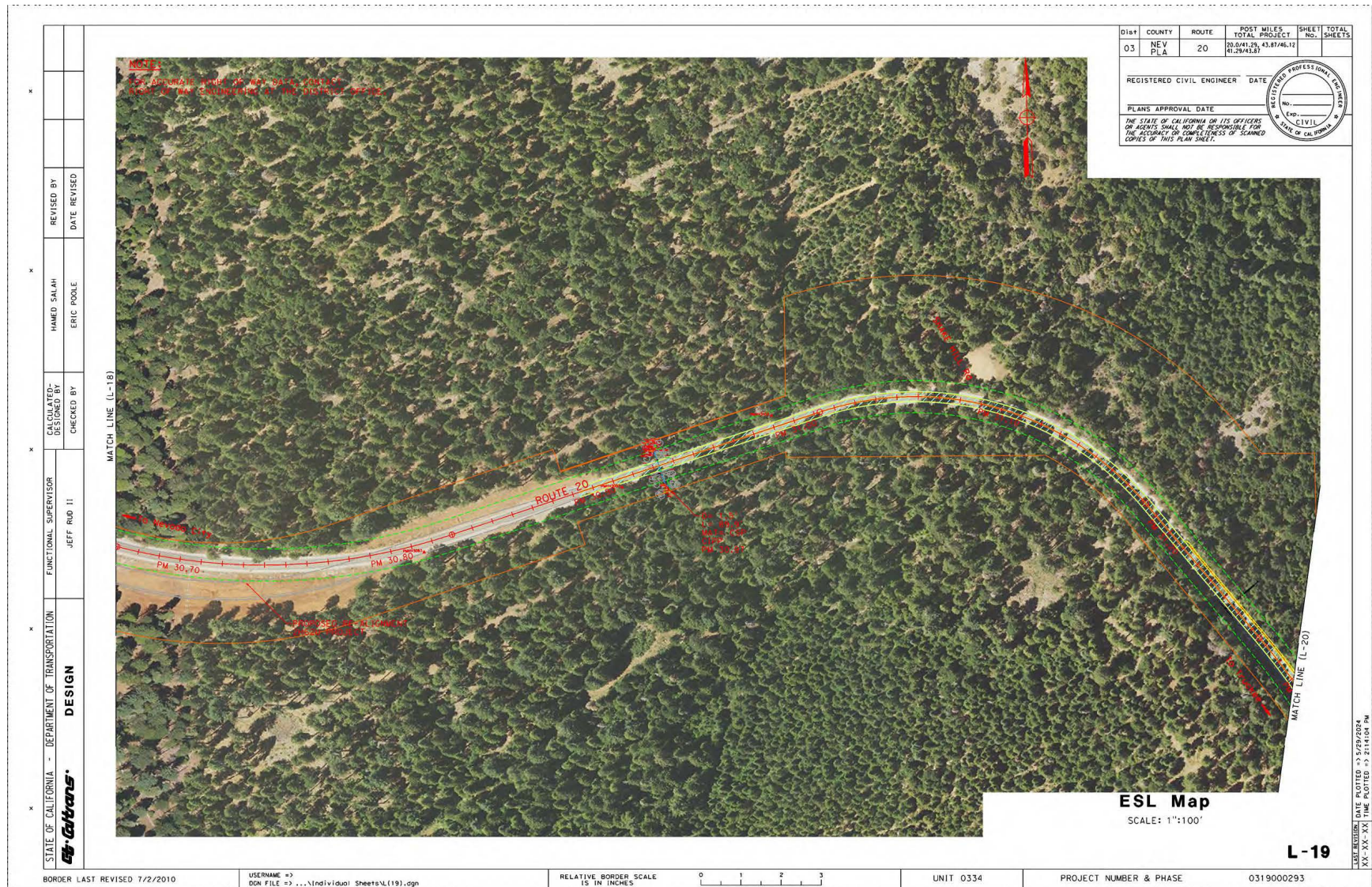


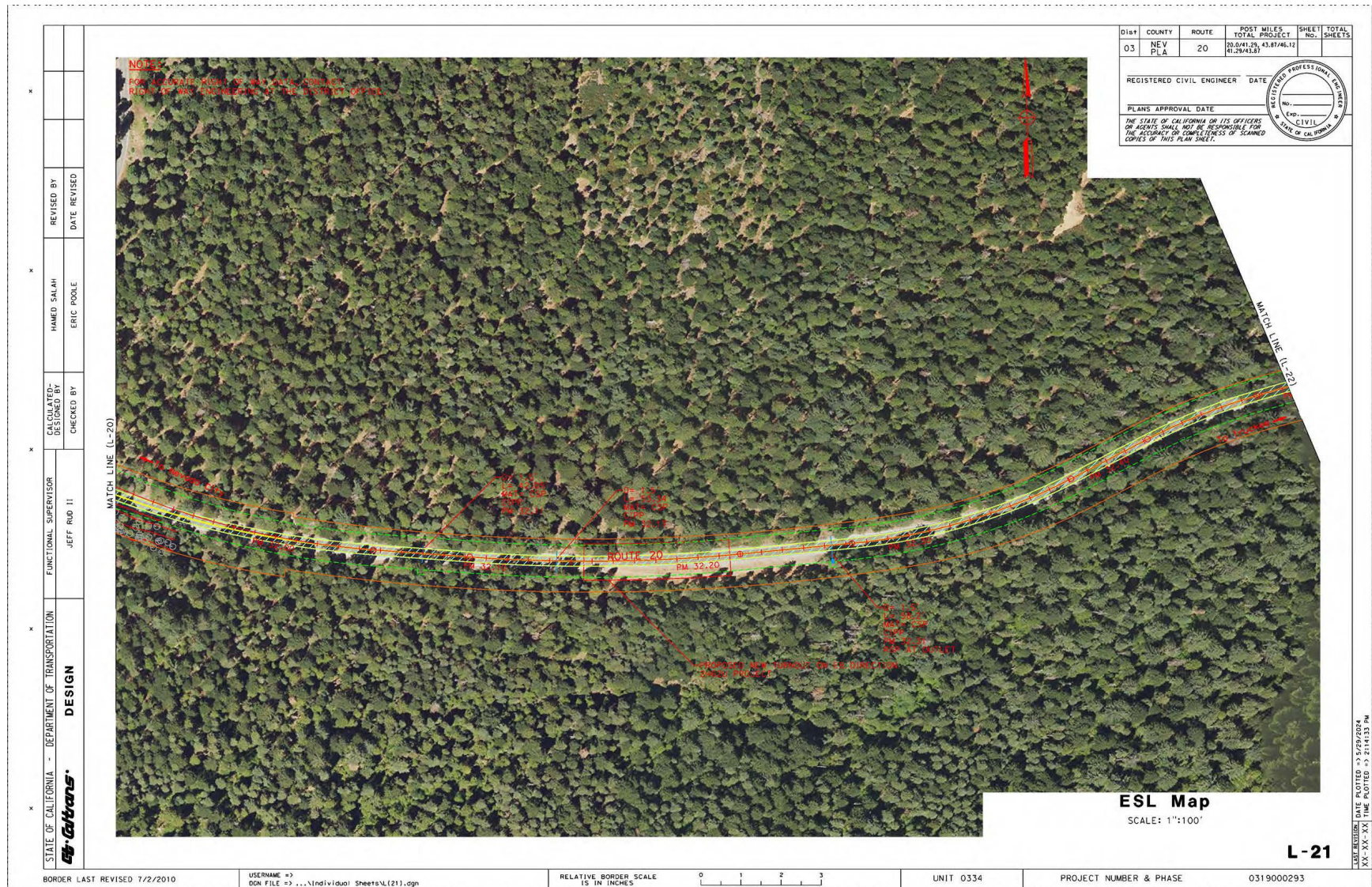


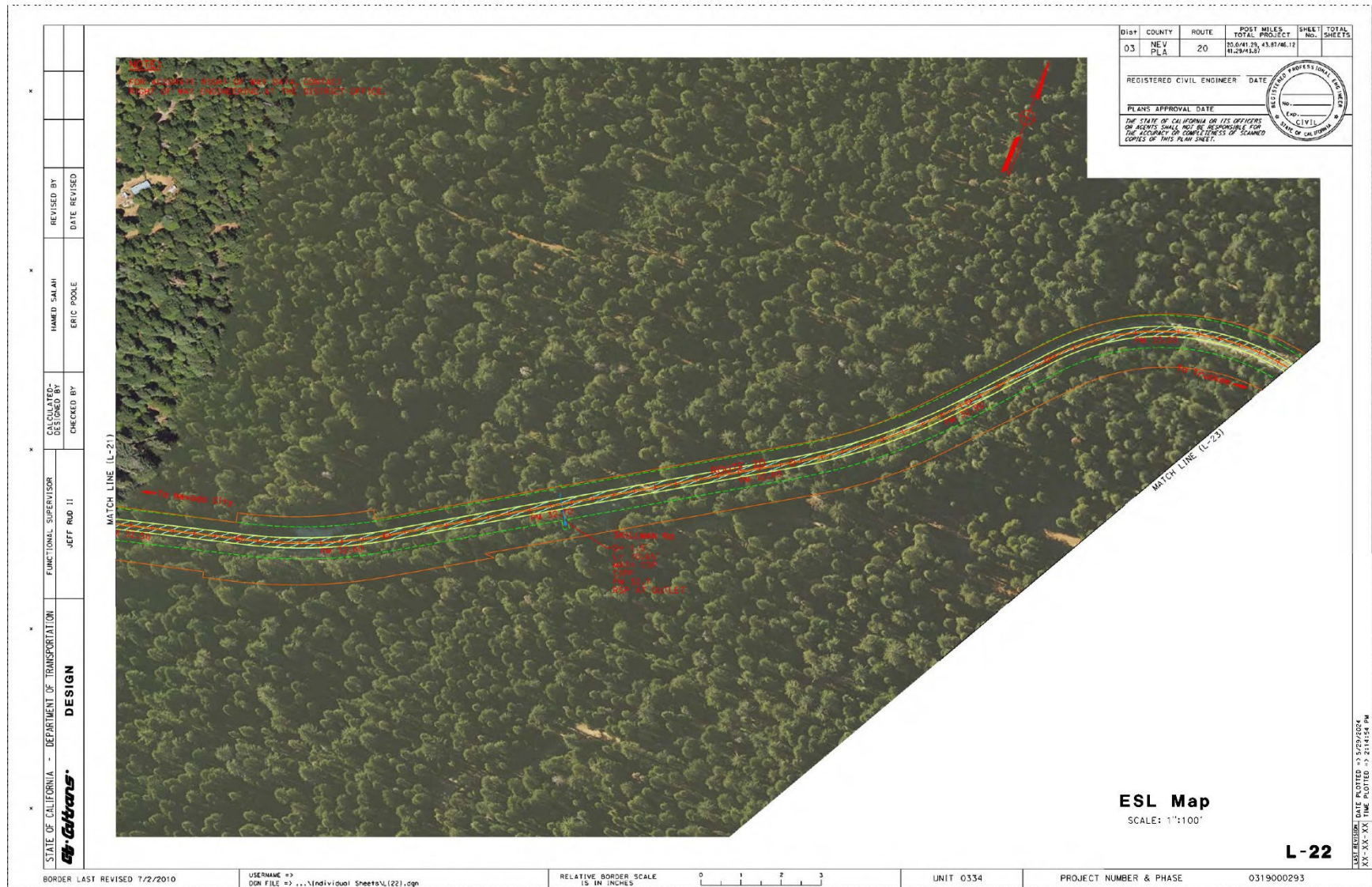




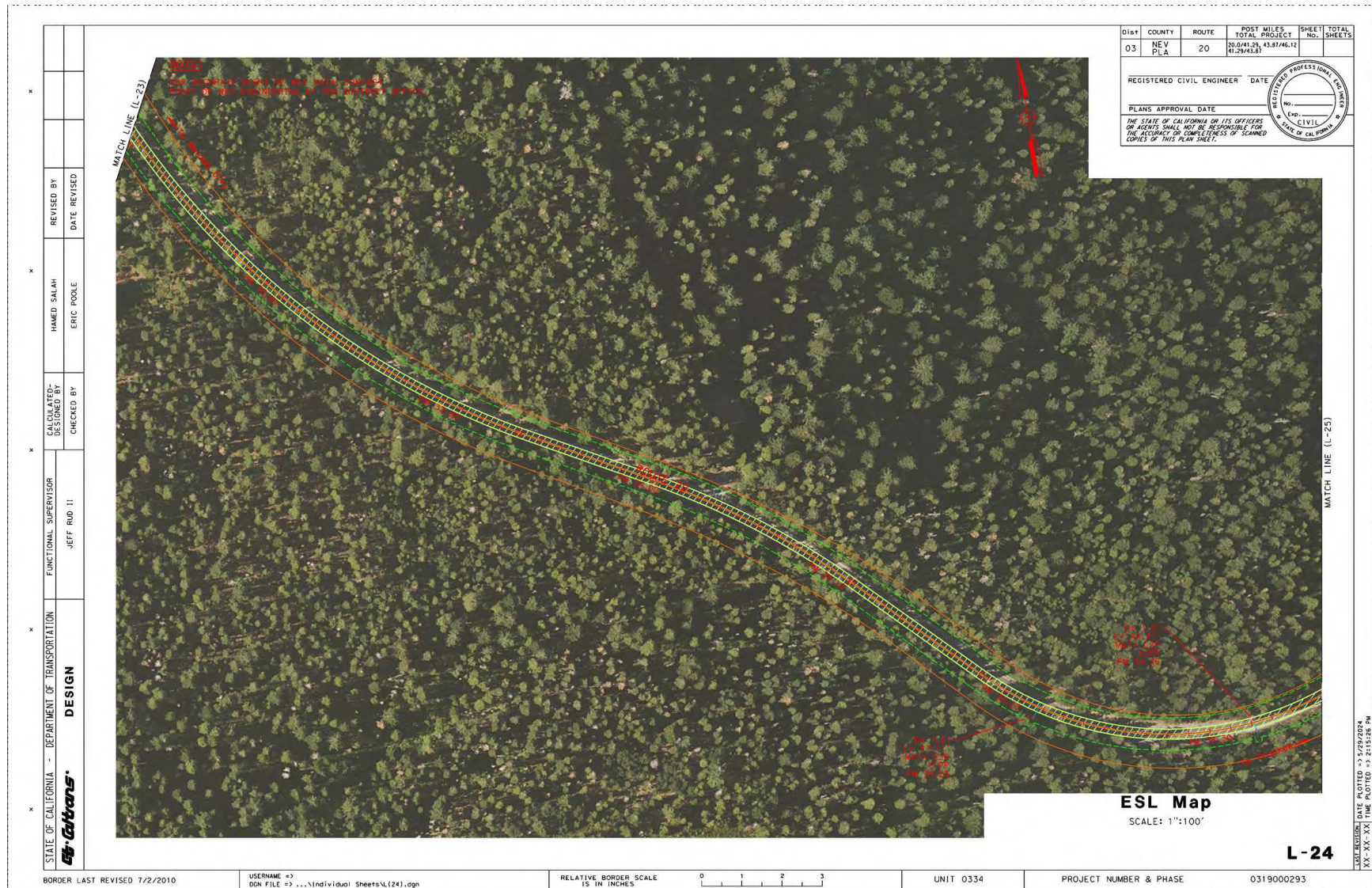


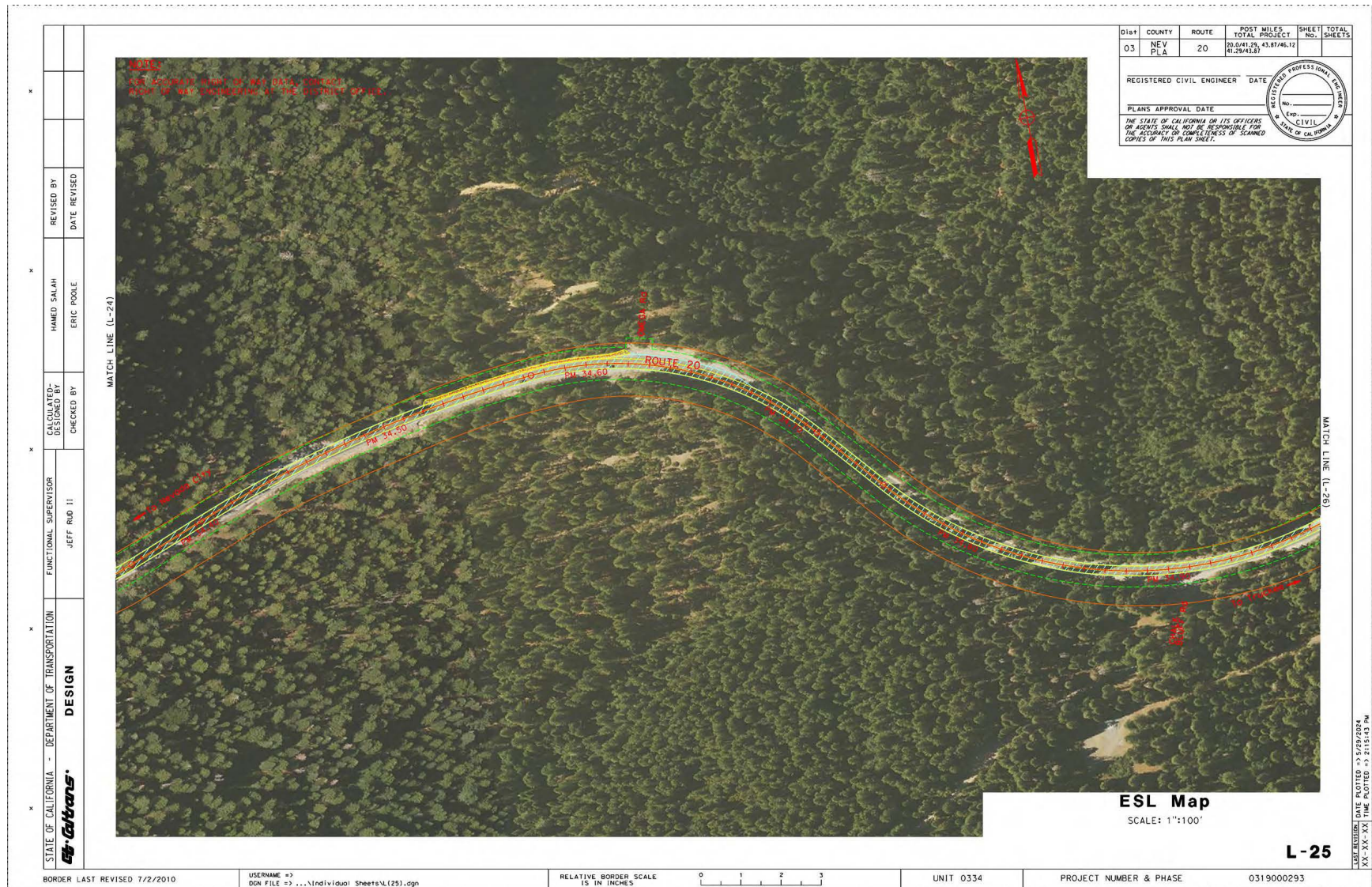


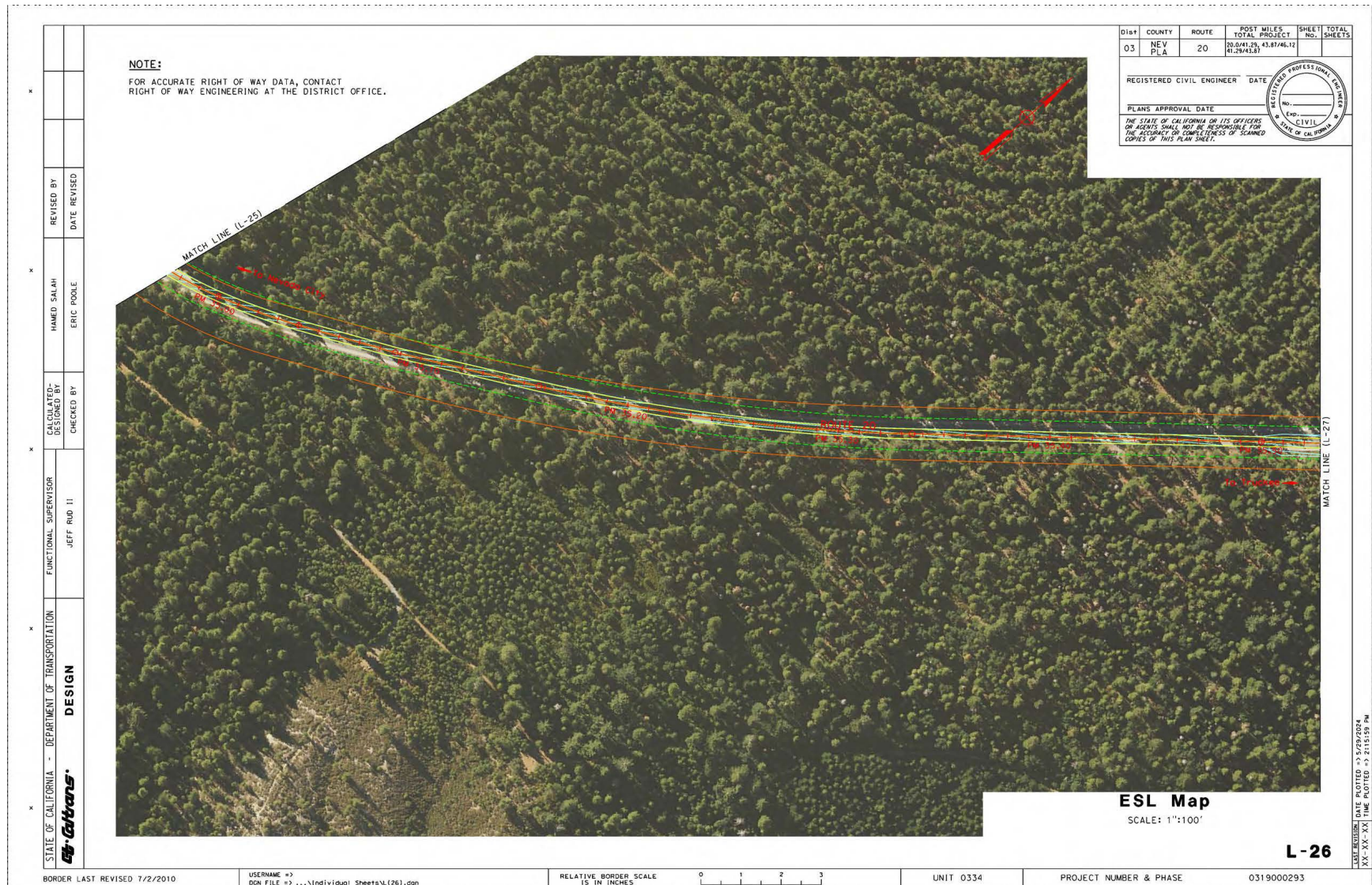


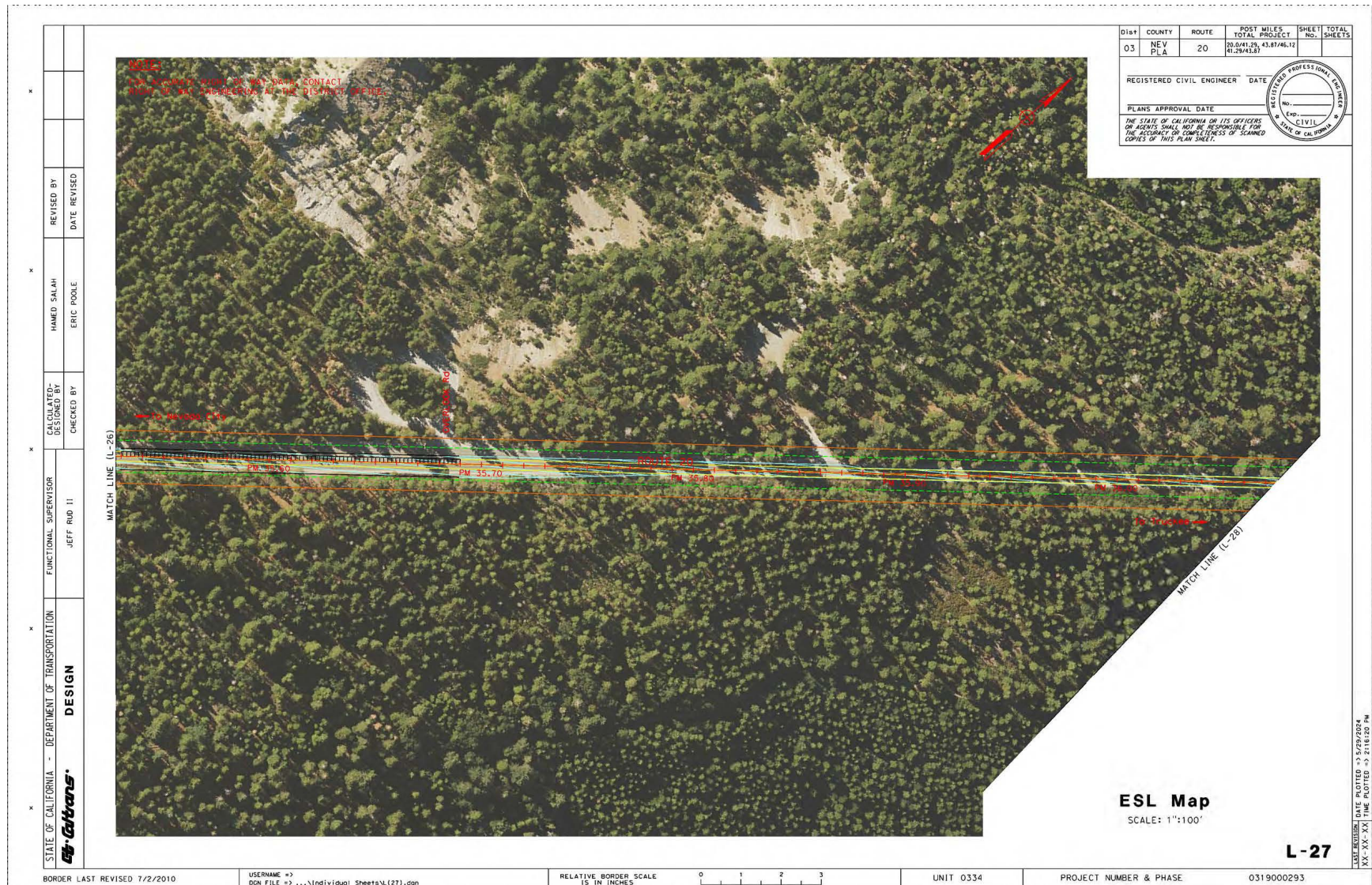






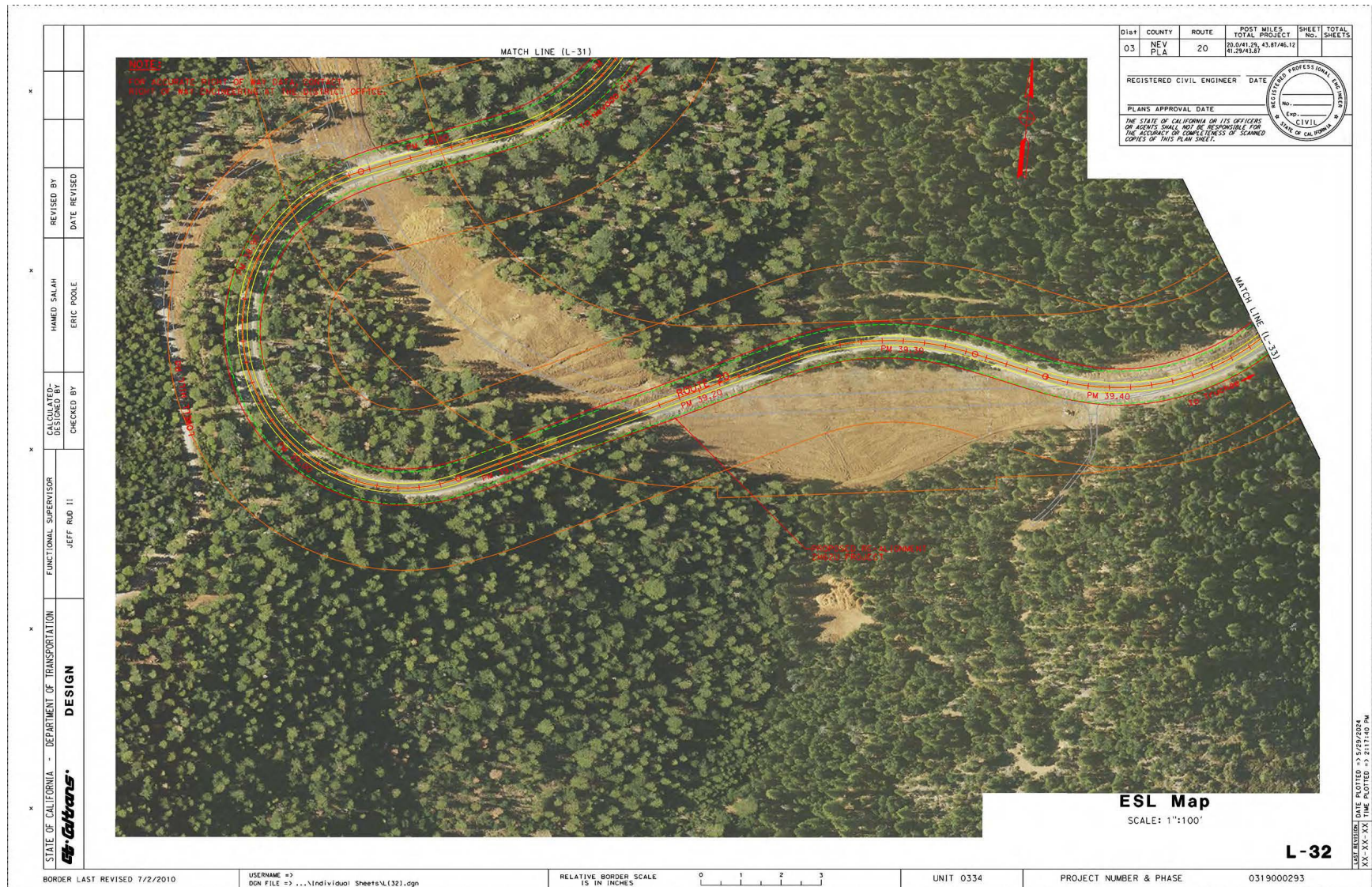


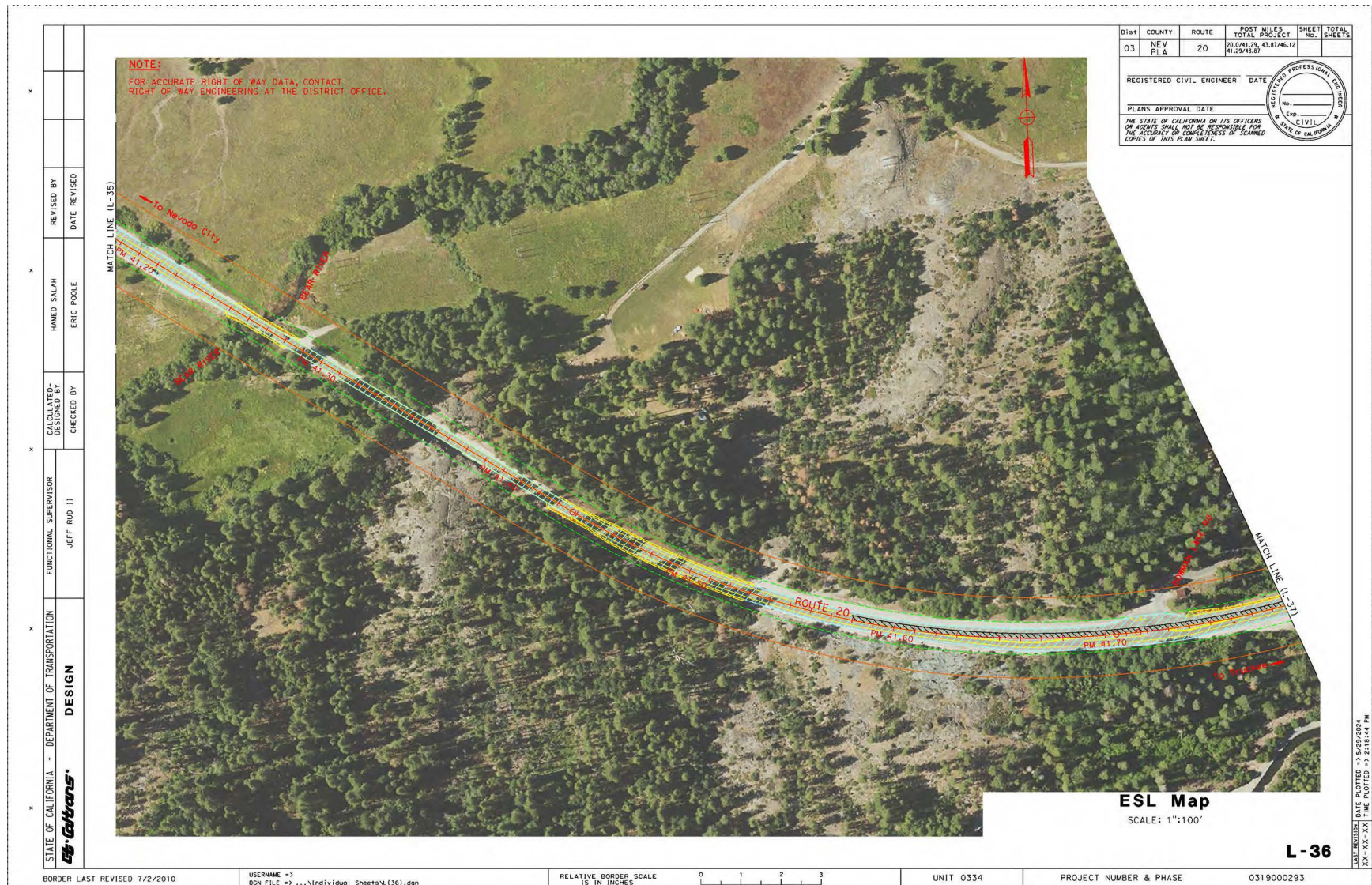


























Appendix B. Title VI Policy Statement



California Department of Transportation

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
P.O. BOX 942873, MS-49 | SACRAMENTO, CA 94273-0001
(916) 654-6130 | FAX (916) 653-5776 TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



September 2022

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The California Department of Transportation, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ensures *"No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."*

Caltrans will make every effort to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its services, programs and activities, whether they are federally funded or not, and that services and benefits are fairly distributed to all people, regardless of race, color, or national origin. In addition, Caltrans will facilitate meaningful participation in the transportation planning process in a nondiscriminatory manner.

Related federal statutes, remedies, and state law further those protections to include sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and age.

For information or guidance on how to file a complaint, or obtain more information regarding Title VI, please contact the Title VI Branch Manager at (916) 324-8379 or visit the following web page: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/title-vi>.

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille or in a language other than English, please contact the California Department of Transportation, Office of Civil Rights, at PO Box 942874, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 94274-0001; (916) 324-8379 (TTY 711); or at Title.VI@dot.ca.gov.

TONY TAVARES
Director

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment"



Appendix C. USFWS, NMFS, CNDDDB, and CNPS Species Lists





United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Sacramento Fish And Wildlife Office

Federal Building

2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605

Sacramento, CA 95825-1846

Phone: (916) 414-6600 Fax: (916) 414-6713



In Reply Refer To:

February 19, 2024

Project Code: 2024-0051226

Project Name: Caltrans D3 TO 3 NEV 20

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through IPaC by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2))

(c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at: <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/endangered-species-consultation-handbook.pdf>

Migratory Birds: In addition to responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), there are additional responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) to protect native birds from project-related impacts. Any activity, intentional or unintentional, resulting in take of migratory birds, including eagles, is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)). For more information regarding these Acts, see [Migratory Bird Permit | What We Do | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service \(fws.gov\)](#).

The MBTA has no provision for allowing take of migratory birds that may be unintentionally killed or injured by otherwise lawful activities. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with these Acts by identifying potential impacts to migratory birds and eagles within applicable NEPA documents (when there is a federal nexus) or a Bird/Eagle Conservation Plan (when there is no federal nexus). Proponents should implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize the production of project-related stressors or minimize the exposure of birds and their resources to the project-related stressors. For more information on avian stressors and recommended conservation measures, see <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/threats-birds>.

In addition to MBTA and BGEPA, Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of Executive Order 13186, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/partner/council-conservation-migratory-birds>.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Code in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Sacramento Fish And Wildlife Office
Federal Building
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605
Sacramento, CA 95825-1846
(916) 414-6600

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2024-0051226

Project Name: Caltrans D3 TO 3 NEV 20

Project Type: Road/Hwy - Maintenance/Modification

Project Description: Road Improvements

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@39.2989652,-120.9207073,1866437,14z>



Counties: Nevada and Placer counties, California

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 5 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

BIRDS

NAME	STATUS
California Spotted Owl <i>Strix occidentalis occidentalis</i> Population: Sierra Nevada No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7266	Proposed Threatened

REPTILES

NAME	STATUS
Northwestern Pond Turtle <i>Actinemys marmorata</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1111	Proposed Threatened

AMPHIBIANS

NAME	STATUS
California Red-legged Frog <i>Rana draytonii</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/2891	Threatened
Sierra Nevada Yellow-legged Frog <i>Rana sierrae</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9529	Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: California Department of Transportation District 3

Name: Kelly Bayne

Address: 980 9th Street

City: Sacramento

State: CA

Zip: 95814

Email: kebuja@gmail.com

Phone: 9167373000

Quad Name **Cisco Grove**

Quad Number **39120-C5**

ESA Anadromous Fish

SONCC Coho ESU (T) -
CCC Coho ESU (E) -
CC Chinook Salmon ESU (T) -
CVSR Chinook Salmon ESU (T) -
SRWR Chinook Salmon ESU (E) -
NC Steelhead DPS (T) -
CCC Steelhead DPS (T) -
SCCC Steelhead DPS (T) -
SC Steelhead DPS (E) -
CCV Steelhead DPS (T) -
Eulachon (T) -
sDPS Green Sturgeon (T) -

ESA Anadromous Fish Critical Habitat

SONCC Coho Critical Habitat -
CCC Coho Critical Habitat -
CC Chinook Salmon Critical Habitat -
CVSR Chinook Salmon Critical Habitat -
SRWR Chinook Salmon Critical Habitat -
NC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
CCC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
SCCC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
SC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
CCV Steelhead Critical Habitat -
Eulachon Critical Habitat -
sDPS Green Sturgeon Critical Habitat -

Essential Fish Habitat

Coho EFH -
Chinook Salmon EFH - **X**
Groundfish EFH -
Coastal Pelagics EFH -

Highly Migratory Species EFH -

Quad Name **Blue Canyon**

Quad Number **39120-C6**

ESA Anadromous Fish

SONCC Coho ESU (T) -
CCC Coho ESU (E) -
CC Chinook Salmon ESU (T) -
CVSR Chinook Salmon ESU (T) -
SRWR Chinook Salmon ESU (E) -
NC Steelhead DPS (T) -
CCC Steelhead DPS (T) -
SCCC Steelhead DPS (T) -
SC Steelhead DPS (E) -
CCV Steelhead DPS (T) -
Eulachon (T) -
sDPS Green Sturgeon (T) -

ESA Anadromous Fish Critical Habitat

SONCC Coho Critical Habitat -
CCC Coho Critical Habitat -
CC Chinook Salmon Critical Habitat -
CVSR Chinook Salmon Critical Habitat -
SRWR Chinook Salmon Critical Habitat -
NC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
CCC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
SCCC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
SC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
CCV Steelhead Critical Habitat -
Eulachon Critical Habitat -
sDPS Green Sturgeon Critical Habitat -

Essential Fish Habitat

Coho EFH -

Chinook Salmon EFH - **X**
Groundfish EFH -
Coastal Pelagics EFH -
Highly Migratory Species EFH -

Quad Name **Washington**
Quad Number **39120-C7**

ESA Anadromous Fish

SONCC Coho ESU (T) -
CCC Coho ESU (E) -
CC Chinook Salmon ESU (T) -
CVSR Chinook Salmon ESU (T) -
SRWR Chinook Salmon ESU (E) -
NC Steelhead DPS (T) -
CCC Steelhead DPS (T) -
SCCC Steelhead DPS (T) -
SC Steelhead DPS (E) -
CCV Steelhead DPS (T) -
Eulachon (T) -
sDPS Green Sturgeon (T) -

ESA Anadromous Fish Critical Habitat

SONCC Coho Critical Habitat -
CCC Coho Critical Habitat -
CC Chinook Salmon Critical Habitat -
CVSR Chinook Salmon Critical Habitat -
SRWR Chinook Salmon Critical Habitat -
NC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
CCC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
SCCC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
SC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
CCV Steelhead Critical Habitat -
Eulachon Critical Habitat -
sDPS Green Sturgeon Critical Habitat -

Essential Fish Habitat

Coho EFH -
Chinook Salmon EFH - **X**
Groundfish EFH -
Coastal Pelagics EFH -
Highly Migratory Species EFH -

Quad Name **North Bloomfield**
Quad Number **39120-C8**

ESA Anadromous Fish

SONCC Coho ESU (T) -
CCC Coho ESU (E) -
CC Chinook Salmon ESU (T) -
CVSR Chinook Salmon ESU (T) -
SRWR Chinook Salmon ESU (E) -
NC Steelhead DPS (T) -
CCC Steelhead DPS (T) -
SCCC Steelhead DPS (T) -
SC Steelhead DPS (E) -
CCV Steelhead DPS (T) -
Eulachon (T) -
sDPS Green Sturgeon (T) -

ESA Anadromous Fish Critical Habitat

SONCC Coho Critical Habitat -
CCC Coho Critical Habitat -
CC Chinook Salmon Critical Habitat -
CVSR Chinook Salmon Critical Habitat -
SRWR Chinook Salmon Critical Habitat -
NC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
CCC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
SCCC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
SC Steelhead Critical Habitat -
CCV Steelhead Critical Habitat -

Eulachon Critical Habitat -
sDPS Green Sturgeon Critical Habitat -

Essential Fish Habitat

Coho EFH -
Chinook Salmon EFH - 
Groundfish EFH -
Coastal Pelagics EFH -
Highly Migratory Species EFH -

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF

FISH and WILDLIFE **RareFind**

Query Summary:

Qued IS (Nevada City (3912131) OR North Bloomfield (3912036) OR Weehington (3912037) OR Blue Canyon (3912038) OR Claco Grove (3912035) OR Grass Valley (3912121) OR Plisa (3912048) OR English Mtn. (3912045) OR Camptsville (3912141) OR Allegheny (3912047) OR Chicago Park (3912028) OR Dutch Flat (3912027) OR Westville (3912028) OR Dunsm Peak (3912025))

[Print](#) [Close](#)

CHDS Element Query Results

Scientific Name	Common Name	Taxonomic Group	Element Code	Total Occs	Returned Occs	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	CA Rare Plant Rank	Other Status	Habitats
<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	American goshawk	Birds	ABNKC12081	438	6	None	None	G6	S3	null	BLM_S-Sensitive, CDF_S-Sensitive, CDFW_SSC-Species of Special Concern, USFS_S-Sensitive	North coast coniferous forest, Subalpine coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest
<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	Cooper's hawk	Birds	ABNKC12040	116	1	None	None	G6	S4	null	CDFW_WL-Watch List, IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Clematis woodland, Riparian forest, Riparian woodland, Upper montane coniferous forest
<i>Ambystoma macrodactylum</i>	southern long-toed salamander	Amphibians	AAAAA1065	811	16	None	None	G5T4	S2	null	CDFW_SSC-Species of Special Concern	null
<i>Aptodontia rufa</i>	Sierra Nevada mountain beaver	Mammals	AMAFAD1018	131	4	None	None	G5T3T4	S2S3	null	CDFW_SSC-Species of Special Concern, IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Riparian forest, Riparian scrub, Riparian woodland
<i>Ardea herodias</i>	great blue heron	Birds	ABNGA04010	168	1	None	None	G6	S4	null	CDF_S-Sensitive, IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Brackish marsh, Estuary, Freshwater marsh, Marsh & swamp, Riparian forest, Wetland
<i>Bombus occidentalis</i>	western bumble bee	Insects	IHYM24252	306	1	None	Candidate Endangered	G3	S1	null	IUCN_VU-Vulnerable, USFS_S-Sensitive	null
<i>Botrychium anemulatum</i>	scalloped moonwort	Ferns	PPOPH010L0	166	4	None	None	G4	S3	2B.2	USFS_S-Sensitive	Bog & fen, Lower montane coniferous forest, Marsh & swamp, Meadow & seep, Upper montane coniferous forest, Wetland
<i>Botrychium nigrum</i>	Mingen moonwort	Ferns	PPOPH010R0	161	1	None	None	G6	S4	4.2	USFS_S-Sensitive	Bog & fen, Lower montane coniferous forest, Meadow & seep, Upper montane coniferous forest, Wetland
<i>Brassica schreberi</i>	waterfield	Dicots	PDCAB01010	43	1	None	None	G6	S3	2B.3	IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Marsh & swamp, Wetland
<i>Calyptegia stebbinsii</i>	Stebbins' morning-glory	Dicots	PDCON040H0	15	5	Endangered	Endangered	G1	S1	1B.1	SB_CalBGR&SABG-California/Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden	Chaparral, Clematis woodland, Upland
<i>Calyptegia varzevskii</i>	Van Zuu's morning-glory	Dicots	PDCON046Q0	13	4	None	None	G2Q	S2	1B.3	BLM_S-Sensitive, SB_UCSC-UC Santa Cruz	Chaparral, Clematis woodland, Upland
<i>Carex devyl</i>	Devyl's sedge	Monocots	PMCYP033H0	34	1	None	None	G3	S3	1B.3	SB_UCSC-UC Santa Cruz	Subalpine coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest
<i>Carex lasiocarpa</i>	woolly-fruited sedge	Monocots	PMCYP03720	20	2	None	None	G6	S2	2B.3	IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Bog & fen, Freshwater

<https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/rarefind/view/QuickElementListView.html>

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												marsh, Marsh & swamp, Wetland
Carex limosa	mud sedge	Monocots	PMCYP037K0	40	1	None	None	G5	S3	2B.2	IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Bog & fen, Freshwater marsh, Lower montane coniferous forest, Marsh & swamp, Meadow & seep, Upper montane coniferous forest, Wetland
Carex sheldonii	Sheldon's sedge	Monocots	PMCYP03CE0	48	1	None	None	G4	S2	2B.2	null	Freshwater marsh, Lower montane coniferous forest, Marsh & swamp, Riparian scrub, Wetland
Carex xerophila	chaparral sedge	Monocots	PMCYP03M60	15	3	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2	BLM_S-Sensitive, SB_UCSC-UC Santa Cruz	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest, Ultramafic
Clarkia biloba ssp. brandegeae	Brandegee's clarkia	Dicots	PDONA05053	89	20	None	None	G4G5T4	S4	4.2	SB_UCSC-UC Santa Cruz	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest
Corynorhinus townsendii	Townsend's big-eared bat	Mammals	AMACC08010	635	2	None	None	G4	S2	null	BLM_S-Sensitive, CDFW_SSC-Species of Special Concern, IUCN_LC-Least Concern, USFS_S-Sensitive	Broadleaved upland forest, Chaparral, Chenopod scrub, Great Basin grassland, Great Basin scrub, Joshua tree woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest, Meadow & seep, Mojavean desert scrub, Riparian forest, Riparian woodland, Sonoran desert scrub, Sonoran thorn woodland, Upper montane coniferous forest, Valley & foothill grassland
Darlingtonia Seep	Darlingtonia Seep	Marsh	CTT51120CA	70	1	None	None	G4	S3.2	null	null	Bog & fen, Wetland
Emys marmorata	western pond turtle	Reptiles	ARAAD02030	1559	4	Proposed Threatened	None	G3G4	S3	null	BLM_S-Sensitive, CDFW_SSC-Species of Special Concern, IUCN_VU-Vulnerable, USFS_S-Sensitive	Aquatic, Artificial flowing waters, Klamath/North coast flowing waters, Klamath/North coast standing waters, Marsh & swamp, Sacramento/San Joaquin flowing waters, Sacramento/San Joaquin standing waters, South coast flowing waters, South coast standing waters, Wetland
Erethizon dorsatum	North American porcupine	Mammals	AMAFJ01010	523	3	None	None	G5	S3	null	IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Broadleaved upland forest, Cismontane woodland, Closed-cone coniferous forest, Lower montane coniferous forest, North coast coniferous

												forest, Upper montane coniferous forest
Erigeron miser	starved daisy	Dicots	PDAST3M2K0	34	2	None	None	G3?	S3?	1B.3	SB_UCSC-UC Santa Cruz, USFS_S-Sensitive	Upper montane coniferous forest
Eriogonum umbellatum var. torreyanum	Donner Pass buckwheat	Dicots	PDPGN086U9	23	2	None	None	G5T2	S2	1B.2	SB_UCSC-UC Santa Cruz, USFS_S-Sensitive	Meadow & seep, Upper montane coniferous forest
Fen	Fen	Marsh	CTT51200CA	6	1	None	None	G2	S1.2	null	null	Bog & fen, Wetland
Fremontodendron decumbens	Pine Hill flannelbush	Dicots	PDSTE03030	12	3	Endangered	Rare	G1	S1	1B.2	SB_CalBG/RSABG-California/Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, SB_UCBG-UC Botanical Garden at Berkeley	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Ultramafic
Fritillaria eastwoodiae	Butte County fritillary	Monocots	PMLIL0V060	235	7	None	None	G3Q	S3	3.2	USFS_S-Sensitive	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest, Ultramafic
Gulo gulo	wolverine	Mammals	AMAJF03010	174	2	Threatened	Threatened	G4	S1	null	CDFW_FP-Fully Protected, IUCN_LC-Least Concern, USFS_S-Sensitive	Alpine, Alpine dwarf scrub, Meadow & seep, Montane dwarf scrub, North coast coniferous forest, Riparian forest, Subalpine coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest, Wetland
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	bald eagle	Birds	ABNKC10010	333	2	Delisted	Endangered	G5	S3	null	BLM_S-Sensitive, CDF_S-Sensitive, CDFW_FP-Fully Protected, IUCN_LC-Least Concern, USFS_S-Sensitive	Lower montane coniferous forest, Oldgrowth
Icteria virens	yellow-breasted chat	Birds	ABPBX24010	101	1	None	None	G5	S4	null	CDFW_SSC-Species of Special Concern, IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Riparian forest, Riparian scrub, Riparian woodland
Juncus digitatus	finger rush	Monocots	PMJUN013E0	3	1	None	None	G1	S1	1B.1	null	Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest, Vernal pool, Wetland
Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus	California black rail	Birds	ABNME03041	304	3	None	Threatened	G3T1	S2	null	BLM_S-Sensitive, CDFW_FP-Fully Protected, IUCN_EN-Endangered	Brackish marsh, Freshwater marsh, Marsh & swamp, Salt marsh, Wetland
Lathyrus sulphureus var. argillaceus	dubious pea	Dicots	PDFAB25101	7	1	None	None	G5T1T2Q	S1S2	3	null	Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest
Lepus americanus tahoensis	Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare	Mammals	AMAE03012	15	1	None	None	G5T3T4Q	S2	null	CDFW_SSC-Species of Special Concern	Riparian woodland
Lewisia cantelovii	Cantelow's lewisia	Dicots	PDPOR04020	73	14	None	None	G3	S3	1B.2	BLM_S-Sensitive, SB_UCSC-UC Santa Cruz, USFS_S-Sensitive	Broadleaved upland forest, Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest, Ultramafic
Lewisia serrata	saw-toothed lewisia	Dicots	PDPOR040E0	11	1	None	None	G2	S2	1B.1	USFS_S-Sensitive	Broadleaved upland forest, Lower montane coniferous

												forest, Riparian forest
<i>Lycopodiella inundata</i>	inundated bog-clubmoss	Ferns	PPLYC03060	3	2	None	None	G5	S1	2B.2	IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Bog & fen, Lower montane coniferous forest, Marsh & swamp, Wetland
<i>Margaritifera falcata</i>	western pearlshell	Mollusks	IMBIV27020	78	2	None	None	G5	S1S2	null	IUCN_NT-Near Threatened	Aquatic
<i>Martes caurina sierrae</i>	Sierra marten	Mammals	AMAJF01014	149	11	None	None	G4G5T3	S3	null	USFS_S-Sensitive	null
<i>Mielichhoferia elongata</i>	elongate copper moss	Bryophytes	NBMUS4Q022	20	3	None	None	G5	S3S4	4.3	USFS_S-Sensitive	Cismontane woodland
<i>Monadenia momonium buttoni</i>	Button's Sierra sideband	Mollusks	IMGASC7071	5	1	None	None	G2T1	S1S2	null	IUCN_DD-Data Deficient	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Valley & foothill grassland
<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>	fringed myotis	Mammals	AMACC01090	86	1	None	None	G4	S3	null	BLM_S-Sensitive, IUCN_LC-Least Concern, USFS_S-Sensitive	null
<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii henshawi</i>	Lahontan cutthroat trout	Fish	AFCHA02081	27	1	Threatened	None	G5T3	S2	null	AFS_TH-Threatened	Aquatic, Great Basin flowing waters
<i>Packera layneae</i>	Layne's ragwort	Dicots	PDAST8H1V0	48	1	Threatened	Rare	G2	S2	1B.2	SB_CalBG/RSABG-California/Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, SB_UCBG-UC Botanical Garden at Berkeley, SB_UCSC-UC Santa Cruz	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Ultramafic
<i>Pekania pennanti</i>	Fisher	Mammals	AMAJF01020	555	3	None	None	G5	S2S3	null	BLM_S-Sensitive, CDFW_SSC-Species of Special Concern, IUCN_LC-Least Concern, USFS_S-Sensitive	North coast coniferous forest, Oldgrowth, Riparian forest
<i>Phacelia stebbinsii</i>	Stebbins' phacelia	Dicots	PDHYD0C4D0	79	18	None	None	G3	S3	1B.2	USFS_S-Sensitive	Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest, Meadow & seep
<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>	coast horned lizard	Reptiles	ARACF12100	841	7	None	None	G4	S4	null	BLM_S-Sensitive, CDFW_SSC-Species of Special Concern, IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Coastal bluff scrub, Coastal wash, Pinon & juniper woodlands, Riparian scrub, Riparian woodland, Valley & foothill grassland
<i>Poa sierrae</i>	Sierra blue grass	Monocots	PMPOA4Z310	129	40	None	None	G3	S3	1B.3	BLM_S-Sensitive, USFS_S-Sensitive	Lower montane coniferous forest
<i>Potamogeton praelongus</i>	white-stemmed pondweed	Monocots	PMPOT030V0	12	1	None	None	G5	S2	2B.3	IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Marsh & swamp, Wetland
<i>Pyrrocoma lucida</i>	sticky pyrrocoma	Dicots	PDASTDT0E0	76	1	None	None	G3	S3	1B.2	BLM_S-Sensitive, SB_UCSC-UC Santa Cruz, USFS_S-Sensitive	Great Basin scrub, Lower montane coniferous forest, Meadow & seep
<i>Rana boylei</i> pop. 3	foothill yellow-legged frog - north Sierra DPS	Amphibians	AAABH01053	237	122	None	Threatened	G3T2	S2	null	BLM_S-Sensitive, USFS_S-Sensitive	Aquatic, Riparian forest, Riparian scrub, Riparian woodland, Sacramento/San Joaquin flowing waters
<i>Rana draytonii</i>	California red-legged frog	Amphibians	AAABH01022	1764	1	Threatened	None	G2G3	S2S3	null	CDFW_SSC-Species of Special Concern, IUCN_VU-Vulnerable	Aquatic, Artificial flowing waters, Artificial standing waters, Freshwater marsh, Marsh &

												swamp, Riparian forest, Riparian scrub, Riparian woodland, Sacramento/San Joaquin flowing waters, Sacramento/San Joaquin standing waters, South coast flowing waters, South coast standing waters, Wetland
Rana sierrae	Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog	Amphibians	AAABH01340	659	16	Endangered	Threatened	G1	S2	null	CDFW_WL-Watch List, IUCN_EN-Endangered, USFS_S-Sensitive	Aquatic
Rhamnus alnifolia	alder buckthorn	Dicots	PDRHA0C010	27	1	None	None	G5	S3	2B.2	SB_UCSC-UC Santa Cruz	Lower montane coniferous forest, Meadow & seep, Riparian scrub, Upper montane coniferous forest, Wetland
Rhynchospora alba	white beaked-rush	Monocots	PMCYP0N010	17	1	None	None	G5	S2	2B.2	IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Bog & fen, Marsh & swamp, Meadow & seep, Wetland
Rhynchospora capitellata	brownish beaked-rush	Monocots	PMCYP0N080	25	5	None	None	G5	S1	2B.2	IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Lower montane coniferous forest, Marsh & swamp, Meadow & seep, Upper montane coniferous forest, Wetland
Schoenoplectus subterminalis	water bulrush	Monocots	PMCYP0Q1G0	32	3	None	None	G5	S3	2B.3	IUCN_LC-Least Concern	Bog & fen, Marsh & swamp, Wetland
Sidalcea stipularis	Scadden Flat checkerbloom	Dicots	PDMAL110R0	2	2	None	Endangered	G1	S1	1B.1	SB_CalBG/RSABG-California/Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden	Freshwater marsh, Marsh & swamp, Wetland
Streptanthus tortuosus ssp. truel	True's mountain jewelflower	Dicots	PDBRA2G108	4	4	None	None	G5T1T2	S1S2	1B.1	null	Lower montane coniferous forest
Strix nebulosa	great gray owl	Birds	ABNSB12040	79	1	None	Endangered	G5	S1	null	CDF_S-Sensitive, IUCN_LC-Least Concern, USFS_S-Sensitive	Lower montane coniferous forest, Oldgrowth, Subalpine coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest
Viola tomentosa	felt-leaved violet	Dicots	PDVIO04280	54	6	None	None	G3	S3	4.2	null	Lower montane coniferous forest, Subalpine coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest











CNPS Rare Plant Inventory





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▲ SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	FAMILY	LIFEFORM	BLOOMING PERIOD	FED LIST	STATE LIST	CA RARE PLANT RANK	GENERAL HABITATS	MICROHABITATS	LOWEST ELEVATION (FT)	HIGHEST ELEVATION (FT)	PHOTO
<i>Allium sanbornii</i> var. <i>congdonii</i>	Congdon's onion	Alliaceae	perennial bulbiferous herb	Apr-Jul	None	None	4.3	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland	Serpentine, Volcanic	985	4575	 © 2008 Steven Penny
<i>Allium sanbornii</i> var. <i>sanbornii</i>	Sanborn's onion	Alliaceae	perennial bulbiferous herb	May-Sep	None	None	4.2	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest	Gravelly, Serpentine (usually)	855	4955	 ©2018 Steven Penny
<i>Arctostaphylos mewukka</i> ssp. <i>truei</i>	True's manzanita	Ericaceae	perennial evergreen shrub	Feb-Jul	None	None	4.2	Chaparral, Lower montane coniferous forest	Roadsides (sometimes)	1395	4560	 © 2008 George W. Hartwell
<i>Botrychium crenulatum</i>	scalloped moonwort	Ophioglossaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	Jun-Sep	None	None	28.2	Bogs and fens, Lower montane coniferous forest, Marshes and swamps (freshwater), Meadows and seeps, Upper montane coniferous forest		4160	10760	 © 2016 Steve Matson







<i>Botrychium minganense</i>	Mingan moonwort	Ophloglossaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	Jul-Sep(Oct)	None	None	4.2	Bogs and fens, Lower montane coniferous forest, Meadows and seeps (edges), Upper montane coniferous forest	Mesic	3905	10795	 © 2011 Aaron E. Sims
<i>Brasenia schreberi</i>	watershield	Cabombaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb (aquatic)	Jun-Sep	None	None	28.3	Marshes and swamps (freshwater)		0	7220	 ©2014 Kirsten Bovee
<i>Brodiaea sierrae</i>	Sierra foothills brodiaea	Themidaceae	perennial bulbiferous herb	May-Aug	None	None	4.3	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest	Gabbroic, Serpentine (usually)	165	3215	 © 2006 George W. Hartwell
<i>Bulbosylis capillaris</i>	thread-leaved beakseed	Cyperaceae	annual herb	Jun-Aug	None	None	4.2	Lower montane coniferous forest, Meadows and seeps, Upper montane coniferous forest		1295	6810	 ©2016 Ryan Batten
<i>Calystegia stebbinsii</i>	Stebbins' morning-glory	Convolvulaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	Apr-Jul	FE	CE	18.1	Chaparral (openings), Cismontane woodland	Gabbroic (sometimes), Seeps (sometimes)	605	3575	No Photo Available
<i>Calystegia vanzuukiae</i>	Van Zuuik's morning-glory	Convolvulaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	May-Aug	None	None	18.3	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland	Gabbroic, Serpentine	1640	3870	No Photo Available
<i>Carex cyrtostachya</i>	Sierra arching sedge	Cyperaceae	perennial herb	May-Aug	None	None	18.2	Lower montane coniferous forest (mesic), Marshes and swamps, Meadows and seeps, Riparian forest (margins)		2000	4460	No Photo Available





<u><i>Carex davyi</i></u>	Davy's sedge	Cyperaceae	perennial herb	May-Aug	None	None	18.3	Subalpine coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest	4920	10500	No Photo Available
<u><i>Carex lasiocarpa</i></u>	woolly-fruited sedge	Cyperaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	Jun-Jul	None	None	28.3	Bogs and fens, Marshes and swamps (freshwater, lake margins)	5580	6890	 © 2011 Sierra Pacific Industries
<u><i>Carex limosa</i></u>	mud sedge	Cyperaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	Jun-Aug	None	None	28.2	Bogs and fens, Lower montane coniferous forest, Marshes and swamps, Meadows and seeps, Upper montane coniferous forest	3935	8860	 Steve Matson 2009
<u><i>Carex sheldonii</i></u>	Sheldon's sedge	Cyperaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	May-Aug	None	None	28.2	Lower montane coniferous forest (mesic), Marshes and swamps (freshwater), Riparian scrub	3935	6600	 ©2015 Steve Matson
<u><i>Carex xerophila</i></u>	chaparral sedge	Cyperaceae	perennial herb	Mar-Jun	None	None	18.2	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest	1445	2525	 © 2023 Steven Penny
<u><i>Ceanothus fresnensis</i></u>	Fresno ceanothus	Rhamnaceae	perennial evergreen shrub	(Apr)May-Jul	None	None	4.3	Cismontane woodland (openings), Lower montane coniferous forest	2955	7250	No Photo Available
<u><i>Clarkia biloba</i> ssp. <i>brandegeeae</i></u>	Brandegee's clarkia	Onagraceae	annual herb	(Mar)May-Jul	None	None	4.2	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest	245	3000	No Photo Available






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<i>Clarkia virgata</i>	Sierra clarkia	Onagraceae	annual herb	May-Aug	None	None	4.3	Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest		1310	5510	No Photo Available
<i>Cypripedium californicum</i>	California lady's-slipper	Orchidaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	Apr-Aug(Sep)	None	None	4.2	Bogs and fens, Lower montane coniferous forest	Seeps, Serpentine (usually), Streambanks	100	9025	 © 2012 Barry Rice
<i>Cypripedium fasciculatum</i>	clustered lady's-slipper	Orchidaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	Mar-Aug	None	None	4.2	Lower montane coniferous forest, North Coast coniferous forest	Seeps (usually), Serpentine (usually), Streambanks	330	7990	 © 2013 Scot Loring
<i>Darlingtonia californica</i>	California pitcherplant	Sarracenaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb (carnivorous)	Apr-Aug	None	None	4.2	Bogs and fens, Meadows and seeps	Mesic, Seeps (usually), Serpentine (usually)	0	8480	 © 2021 Scot Loring
<i>Engellaria obtusa</i>	obtus starwort	Caryophyllaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	May-Sep(Oct)	None	None	4.3	Lower montane coniferous forest, Riparian woodland, Upper montane coniferous forest	Mesic, Streambanks	490	7515	 ©2014 Kirsten Bovee
<i>Erigeron miser</i>	starved daisy	Asteraceae	perennial herb	Jun-Oct	None	None	18.3	Upper montane coniferous forest (rocky)		6035	8595	No Photo Available
<i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i> var. <i>torreyanum</i>	Donner Pass buckwheat	Polygonaceae	perennial herb	Jul-Sep	None	None	18.2	Meadows and seeps, Upper montane coniferous forest	Rocky, Volcanic	6085	8595	No Photo Available
<i>Fremontodendron decumbens</i>	Pine Hill flannelbush	Malvaceae	perennial evergreen shrub	Apr-Jul	FE	CR	18.2	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland	Gabbroic (sometimes), Rocky, Serpentine (sometimes)	1395	2495	No Photo Available
<i>Fritillaria eastwoodiae</i>	Butte County fritillary	Liliaceae	perennial bulbiferous herb	Mar-Jun	None	None	3.2	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest (openings)	Serpentine (sometimes)	165	4920	 ©2009 Sierra Pacific Industries

<u><i>Hartmaniella sierrae</i></u>	Sierra starwort	Caryophyllaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	May-Aug	None	None	4.2	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest	4020	7200	No Photo Available
<u><i>Jensia yosemitana</i></u>	Yosemite tarplant	Asteraceae	annual herb	(Apr)May-Jul	None	None	3.2	Lower montane coniferous forest, Meadows and seeps	3935	7545	No Photo Available
<u><i>Juncus digitatus</i></u>	finger rush	Juncaceae	annual herb	(Apr)May-Jun	None	None	18.1	Cismontane woodland (openings), Lower montane coniferous forest (openings), Vernal pools (xeric)	2165	3600	 Image by Wendy Boes
<u><i>Lathyrus sulphureus</i> var. <i>argillaceus</i></u>	dubious pea	Fabaceae	perennial herb	Apr-May	None	None	3	Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest	490	3050	No Photo Available
<u><i>Lewisia cantelovii</i></u>	Cantelow's lewisia	Montiaceae	perennial herb	May-Oct	None	None	18.2	Broadleaved upland forest, Seeps (sometimes), Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest	1085	4495	 ©2005 Steve Mason
<u><i>Lewisia kelloggii</i> ssp. <i>hutchisonii</i></u>	Hutchison's lewisia	Montiaceae	perennial herb	(Apr)May-Aug	None	None	3.2	Upper montane coniferous forest	2510	7760	 Dean Wm. Taylor 2006
<u><i>Lewisia kelloggii</i> ssp. <i>kelloggii</i></u>	Kellogg's lewisia	Montiaceae	perennial herb	(Apr)May-Aug	None	None	3.2	Upper montane coniferous forest	4805	7760	 © 2019 Berry Brackling

<i>Lewisia serrata</i>	saw-toothed lewisia	Montiaceae	perennial herb	May-Jun	None	None	18.1	Broadleafed upland forest, Lower montane coniferous forest, Riparian forest	Mesic, Rocky, Slopes	2525	4710	 © 2002 Steve Tyron
<i>Lilium humboldtii</i> <i>ssp. humboldtii</i>	Humboldt lily	Liliaceae	perennial bulbiferous herb	May- Jul(Aug)	None	None	4.2	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest	Openings	295	4200	 © 2008 Sierra Pacific Industries
<i>Lycopodiella inundata</i>	inundated bog- clubmoss	Lycopodiaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	Jun-Sep	None	None	28.2	Bogs and fens (coastal), Lower montane coniferous forest (mesic), Marshes and swamps (lake margins)		15	3280	 © 2021 Scot Loring
<i>Lycopus uniflorus</i>	northern bugleweed	Lamiaceae	perennial herb	Jul-Sep	None	None	4.3	Bogs and fens, Marshes and swamps		15	6560	 © 2021 Scot Loring
<i>Meesia triquetra</i>	three-ranked hump moss	Meesiaceae	moss	Jul	None	None	4.2	Bogs and fens, Meadows and seeps, Subalpine coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest (mesic)		4265	9690	 Steve Matson 2008
<i>Mielichhoferia elongata</i>	elongate copper moss	Mielichhoferiaceae	moss		None	None	4.3	Broadleafed upland forest, Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Coastal scrub, Lower montane coniferous forest, Meadows and seeps, Subalpine coniferous forest	Acidic (usually), Carbonate (sometimes), Metamorphic, Roadsides (often), Vernally Mesic (usually)	0	6430	 © 2012 John Game

<i>Mielichhoferia shevockii</i>	Shevock's copper moss	Mielichhoferiaceae	moss		None	None	18.2	Cismontane woodland (mesic, metamorphic, rock)		2460	4595	No Photo Available
<i>Packera layneae</i>	Layne's ragwort	Asteraceae	perennial herb	Apr-Aug	FT	CR	18.2	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland	Gabbroic (sometimes), Rocky, Serpentine (sometimes)	655	3560	No Photo Available
<i>Peltigera gowardii</i>	western waterfan lichen	Peltigeraceae	foliose lichen (aquatic)		None	None	4.2	Riparian forest		3495	8595	 © 2021 Scot Loring
<i>Perideridia bacigalupii</i>	Bacigalupi's yampah	Apiaceae	perennial herb	Jun-Aug	None	None	4.2	Chaparral, Lower montane coniferous forest	Serpentine	1475	4120	No Photo Available
<i>Phacelia stebbinsii</i>	Stebbins' phacelia	Hydrophyllaceae	annual herb	May-Jul	None	None	18.2	Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest, Meadows and seeps		2000	6595	No Photo Available
<i>Poa sierrae</i>	Sierra blue grass	Poaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	Apr-Jul	None	None	18.3	Lower montane coniferous forest	Openings	1200	4920	 © 2012 Belinda Lo
<i>Potamogeton epiphyticus</i>	Nuttall's ribbon-leaved pondweed	Potamogetonaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb (aquatic)	(Jun)Jul-Sep	None	None	28.2	Marshes and swamps (shallow freshwater)		1210	7125	 Louis-M. Landry, 2010
<i>Potamogeton praelongus</i>	white-stemmed pondweed	Potamogetonaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb (aquatic)	Jul-Aug	None	None	28.3	Marshes and swamps (lakes, deep water)		5905	9845	 ©2011 Sierra Pacific Industries
<i>Pyrocoma lucida</i>	sticky pyrocoma	Asteraceae	perennial herb	Jul-Oct	None	None	18.2	Great Basin scrub, Lower montane coniferous forest, Meadows and seeps	Alkaline, Clay	2295	6400	No Photo Available

<u><i>Rhamnus</i></u> <u><i>alnifolia</i></u>	alder buckthorn	Rhamnaceae	perennial deciduous shrub	May-Jul	None	None	28.2	Lower montane coniferous forest, Meadows and seeps, Riparian scrub, Upper montane coniferous forest	4495	6990	No Photo Available
<u><i>Rhynchospora</i></u> <u><i>alba</i></u>	white beaked-rush	Cyperaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	Jun-Aug	None	None	28.2	Bogs and fens, Marshes and swamps (freshwater), Meadows and seeps	195	6695	 © 2021 Scot Loring
<u><i>Rhynchospora</i></u> <u><i>capitellata</i></u>	brownish beaked-rush	Cyperaceae	perennial herb	Jul-Aug	None	None	28.2	Lower montane coniferous forest, Marshes and swamps, Meadows and seeps, Upper montane coniferous forest	150	6560	 ©2004 Dean Wm. Taylor
<u><i>Schoenoplectus</i></u> <u><i>subterminalis</i></u>	water bulrush	Cyperaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb (aquatic)	Jun- Aug(Sep)	None	None	28.3	Bogs and fens, Marshes and swamps (montane lake margins)	2460	7380	 Dean Wm. Taylor (1996)
<u><i>Sidalcea</i></u> <u><i>gigantea</i></u>	giant checkerbloom	Malvaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	(Jan- Jun)Jul- Oct	None	None	4.3	Lower montane coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest	2200	6400	 ©2018 Sierra Pacific Industries
<u><i>Sidalcea</i></u> <u><i>stipularis</i></u>	Scadden Flat checkerbloom	Malvaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	Jul-Aug	None	CE	18.1	Marshes and swamps (montane freshwater)	2295	2395	No Photo Available
<u><i>Sparganium</i></u> <u><i>natans</i></u>	small bur- reed	Typhaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb (emergent)	Jun-Sep	None	None	4.3	Bogs and fens, Marshes and swamps (lake margins), Meadows and seeps	5330	8205	 © 2009 Kair Morse

<i>Streptanthus longisiliquus</i>	long-fruit jewelflower	Brassicaceae	perennial herb	Apr-Sep	None	None	4.3	Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest	Openings	2345	4920	 ©2008 Sierra Pacific Industries
<i>Streptanthus tortuosus</i> ssp. <i>truel</i>	True's mountain jewelflower	Brassicaceae	perennial herb	Jun-Jul(Sep)	None	None	18.1	Lower montane coniferous forest	Rocky, Slopes	2510	2820	 © 2021 Robert E. Preston, Ph.D
<i>Vaccinium coccineum</i>	Siskiyou Mountains huckleberry	Ericaceae	perennial deciduous shrub	Jun-Aug	None	None	3.3	Lower montane coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest	Serpentine (often)	3595	7005	No Photo Available
<i>Viola tomentosa</i>	felt-leaved violet	Violaceae	perennial herb	(Apr)May-Oct	None	None	4.2	Lower montane coniferous forest, Subalpine coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest	Gravelly	4710	6560	No Photo Available

Showing 1 to 60 of 60 entries

Suggested Citation:

California Native Plant Society, Rare Plant Program. 2024. Rare Plant Inventory (online edition, v9.5). Website <https://www.rareplants.cnps.org> [accessed 19 February 2024].

Appendix D. Mitigation and Monitoring Reporting Program

The project does not require a Mitigation and Monitoring Reporting Program as all mitigation is required as a condition of obtaining permits. Impacts to wetlands, waters of the United States, and riparian woodlands would be addressed from the following permits:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement
- Regional Water Quality Control Board
 - Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - Section 404 Nationwide Permit 14 for work in Waters of the United States



Appendix E. Response to Comments

The Initial Study with proposed Negative Declaration (IS/ND) was circulated for public review from April 19, 2024, to May 20, 2024. During the public circulation period, four comment letters were received. The comment letters and responses to comments can be found on the following pages.



Comment Letter 1

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

From: [Xiong, Mary@Wildlife](mailto:Xiong.Mary@Wildlife)
To: NEV.PLA20.CAPM@DOT; [Greenwood, Caitlin@DOT](mailto:Greenwood.Caitlin@DOT)
Cc: [Stanfield, Melissa@Wildlife](mailto:Stanfield.Melissa@Wildlife); [Sheya, Tanya@Wildlife](mailto:Sheya.Tanya@Wildlife); [Kilgour, Morgan@Wildlife](mailto:Kilgour.Morgan@Wildlife); [Wildlife R2 CEOA](mailto:Wildlife.R2.CEOA)
Subject: CDFW Comments on the ND for 03-0J520 State Route Nevada/Placer 20 Capital Preventative Maintenance (CAPM) Project
Date: Tuesday, May 7, 2024 11:24:16 AM

EXTERNAL EMAIL. Links/attachments may not be safe.

Dear Caitlin Greenwood:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) received a Notice of Intent to adopt a Negative Declaration (ND) from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for the 03-0J520 State Route Nevada Placer 20 Capital Preventative Maintenance (CAPM) Project (Project) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) statute and guidelines.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding those activities involved in the Project that may affect California fish, wildlife, native plants, and their habitat. Likewise, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments regarding those aspects of the Project that CDFW, by law, may need to exercise its own regulatory authority under the Fish and Game Code.

CDFW ROLE

CDFW is California's **Trustee Agency** for fish and wildlife resources and holds those resources in trust by statute for all the people of the State (Fish & G. Code, §§ 711.7, subd. (a) & 1802; Pub. Resources Code, § 21070; CEQA Guidelines § 15386, subd. (a)). CDFW, in its trustee capacity, has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species. (*Id.*, § 1802.) Similarly, for purposes of CEQA, CDFW is charged by law to provide, as available, biological expertise during public agency environmental review efforts, focusing specifically on projects and related activities that have the potential to adversely affect fish and wildlife resources.

CDFW may also act as a **Responsible Agency** under CEQA. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21069; CEQA Guidelines, § 15381.) CDFW expects that it may need to exercise regulatory authority as provided by the Fish and Game Code. To the extent implementation of the Project as proposed may result in "take" as defined by State law of any species protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.), the Project proponent may seek related take authorization as provided by the Fish and Game Code.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The Project proposes pavement rehabilitation along State Route 20 (SR 20) in Nevada and Placer Counties at the locations in Table 1 below. The proposed Project consists of cold plane and overlay of existing pavement, shoulder backing, pavement digouts, striping and rumble strips, rehabilitation of 24 existing drainage systems, and installation of one new drainage system consisting of five culverts and five drainage inlets to address flooding issues at the intersection of SR 20 and Scotts Flat Road

(post mile 23.38). Other work includes upgrading Transportation Management System (TMS) elements, replacing non-standard Metal Beam Guardrail (MBGR) with Midwest Guardrail System (MGS), vegetation control, and fire hardening.

Table 1. Project Locations

Location	County	Location Detail
1	Nevada	Near Nevada City and Emigrant Gap from east of Dow Road to the Placer County line between post mile (PM) 20.0 to 41.28, excluding PM 25.6 to 25.9, 29.7 to 30.9, 31.7 to 31.9, and 37.0 to 39.8
2	Placer	From the Nevada County line to east of Lake Spaulding Road between PM 41.28 to 43.87
3	Nevada	From east of Lake Spaulding Road to Route 80 between PM 43.87 to 46.12

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW offers the comments and recommendations below to assist Caltrans in adequately identifying and, where appropriate, mitigating the Project's significant, or potentially significant, direct, and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources.

Comment 1: *Chapter 1.6 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Alternatives, Page 8*

Section 15370 of the CEQA Guidelines defines mitigation as:

- a. Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action;
- b. Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation;
- c. Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the impacted environment;
- d. Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action; and
- e. Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments, including through permanent protection of such resources in the form of conservation easements.

Issue: This section of the ND states the standard measures and best management practices for biological resources and water quality, among other environmental factors, included in this document are not considered mitigation measures because they are prescriptive and sufficiently standardized to be generally applicable. The ND also states these general measures result from laws, permits, agreements,

guidelines, and resource management plans that predate the Project's proposal. General measures in documents like these, including, but not limited to Lake and Streambed Alteration (LSA) Agreements and California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Incidental Take Permits (ITP), are typically required to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate impacts caused by projects that could significantly affect the environment.

Recommendation: CDFW believes that these measures should be considered mitigation under CEQA when the ND analyzes the effects of the Project with these measures in place. CDFW also recommends this document be identified as a "Mitigated Negative Declaration" considering the incorporation of measures that serve to avoid, minimize, and reduce/eliminate the effects of the Project to a point where no significant effect on the environment would occur. Subsequently, the Initial Study/Negative Declaration checklist should be updated to reflect which environmental factors would have impacts determined to be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Comment 2: *Chapter 1.6 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Alternatives, Wetlands and Other Waters Section, Page 11*

Issue: The (Biological Resources) BR-5 Wetlands and Other Waters standard measure A in Chapter 1.6 refers to an Aquatic Species Relocation Plan that is in BR-2, but there is no discussion of aquatic species nor an aquatic species relocation plan in BR-2.

Recommendation: CDFW recommends that the BR-2 measure includes a measure about the aquatic species likely to occur within the Project and aquatic relocation plan details.

Comment 3: *Chapter 2.4 Biological Resources, Animal Species Section, Page 42, and Chapter 2.4a Biological Resources, Animal Species Section, Page 52*

Issue: The section on Page 42 provides a list of fully protected species and species of special concern in the CEQA document and states that there will be no impact to said species because there is no suitable habitat for the species within the environmental study limit or the Project is out of the geographical range of the species. Page 52 does not discuss the southern long-toed salamander (*Ambystoma macrodactylum sigillatum*), a species of special concern, as a potential species that can occur within the Project area when there is suitable habitat present. A desktop review shows there is potential for the southern long-toed salamander to occur either near or within the Project site at locations PM 41.08, 41.1, and 41.27 due to the potential habitat present.

Recommendation: CDFW recommends that the CEQA document discuss the species and include an amphibian pre-construction survey measure in the Biological Resources Animal Section on page 9, including that the survey should be conducted immediately prior to the start of construction, to avoid and minimize take of this species.

Comment 4: *Chapter 1.4 Proposed Project, Fire Hardening Section, Page 6, and Chapter 2.4b Biological Resources, Sensitive Natural Communities Section, Pages 46-47 and 53*

Issue: The Fire Hardening section in Chapter 1.4 identifies activities related to fire fuel reduction and states that vegetation management strips, in the form of vegetation removal, would be created at three structures (Bear River Bridge, South Yuba Canal, and Drum Canal) to potentially reduce threat of fire. The post mile provided for the Bear River and South Yuba Canal are switched. The post mile for Bear River Bridge should be PM 41.27, and the post mile for South Yuba Canal should be PM 40.74.

Although vegetation removal is anticipated to occur at these three locations where there are streams, the temporary and permanent impacts to riparian habitat are not discussed in the Sensitive Natural Communities sections of Chapter 2.4b.

Recommendation: CDFW recommends that Chapter 2.4b discuss the temporary and permanent impacts to riparian habitat as a result of vegetation removal for fire hardening and be included in Table 3, which identifies the estimated maximum permanent and temporary impacts on riparian habitat.

Comment 5: *Chapter 1.4 Proposed Project, Drainage Section, Pages 4-5 and Chapter 2.4 and 2.4b Biological Resources, Wetlands and Other Waters Section, Pages 47-48 and 53*

Issue: The Drainage section in Chapter 1.4 states that one new drainage system will be installed to address flooding issues at Scotts Flat Road (PM 23.25), which consists of the installation of five 18-inch reinforced concrete pipe culverts and five drainage inlets. Chapter 2.4 does not include a discussion on the permanent and temporary impacts to the watercourses and associated riparian habitat caused by the installation of the culverts, inlets, and associated appurtenances. Although the location of the new drainage system is shown in Appendix A (Project Layouts), the map does not provide enough detail to adequately analyze potential biological impacts.

Recommendation: CDFW recommends that the CEQA document clarify if there will be temporary and permanent impacts to any watercourses and riparian habitat due to the installation of five culverts and five inlets. The appropriate sections in Chapter 2.4 and Table 4, which provide an estimate of the maximum permanent and temporary impacts on aquatic resources, should be updated to reflect any changes. CDFW also recommends that the CEQA document include a more detailed map that delineates the watercourse and impacts. If further analysis indicates that there will be additional permanent impacts to any watercourses and associated riparian habitat, additional mitigation may be required to reduce Project impacts to a less than significant level.

Comment 6: *Chapter 2.10 Hydrology and Water Quality c), Lake and Streambed Alteration, Pages 102-103*

Issue: This section has a “No Impact” determination on the question c) “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..." however a temporary creek diversion system plan and dewatering are mentioned in BR-5(A) and Water Quality-1.

Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code requires an entity to notify CDFW prior to commencing any activity that may do one or more of the following:

- substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream or lake;
- substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel or bank of any river, stream, or lake;
- or deposit debris, waste or other materials that could pass into any river, stream, or lake.

Please note that "any river, stream or lake" includes those that are episodic (i.e., those that are dry for periods of time) as well as those that are perennial (i.e., those that flow year-round). This includes ephemeral streams and watercourses with a subsurface flow.

If CDFW determines that the Project activities may substantially adversely affect an existing fish or wildlife resource, an LSA Agreement will be issued which will include reasonable measures necessary to protect the resource. Early consultation with CDFW is recommended, since modification of the Project may avoid or reduce impacts to fish and wildlife resources.

Recommendations: CDFW recommends that the "No Impact" determination be changed to "Less Than Significant Impact" due to the potential installation and removal of temporary water diversion systems and dewatering and discuss how the impacts to the drainage pattern of the site and alteration of the course of the streams will be reduced and minimized to less than significant.

CDFW recommends the lead agency provide more description of the construction activities in relation to the watercourses in the ND, more detailed maps, permanent and temporary impact quantities, and review the requirements under Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code to determine if Notification is warranted. For more information on CDFW's LSA program including the online permitting portal, please visit <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/LSA>.

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

CEQA requires that information developed in environmental impact reports and negative declarations be incorporated into a database which may be used to make subsequent or supplemental environmental determinations (Pub. Resources Code, § 21003, subd. (e)). Accordingly, please report any special-status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to the CNDDDB. The CNDDDB field survey form can be found at the following link: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Submitting-Data>. The completed form can be submitted online or mailed electronically to CNDDDB at the following email address: CNDDDB@wildlife.ca.gov.

FILING FEES

The Project, as proposed, would have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of filing fees is necessary. Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW. Payment of the fee is required in order for the underlying project approval to be operative, vested, and final. (Cal. Code Regs, tit. 14, § 753.5; Fish & G. Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089.)

CONCLUSION

Pursuant to Public Resources Code §21092 and §21092.2, CDFW requests written notification of proposed actions and pending decisions regarding the proposed project. Written notifications shall be directed to: California Department of Fish and Wildlife North Central Region, 1701 Nimbus Road, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670 or emailed to r2CEQA@wildlife.ca.gov.

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the ND to assist in identifying and mitigating Project impacts on biological resources. CDFW personnel are available for consultation regarding biological resources and strategies to minimize and/or mitigate impacts. Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Mary Xiong, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), at (916) 212-3876 or mary.xiong@wildlife.ca.gov.

Thank you,

Mary Xiong
Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)
North Central Region (Region 2)
1701 Nimbus Rd., Suite A
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
P: 916-212-3876
mary.xiong@wildlife.ca.gov

Response to CDFW–Comment Letter 1

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NORTH REGION ENVIRONMENTAL
 703 B Street
 Marysville, CA 95901
 (530) 812-4937
www.dot.ca.gov
 TTY 711



Making Conservation
 a California Way of Life.

May 24, 2024

Ms. Mary Xiong
 California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 North Central Region
 1701 Nimbus Rd., Suite A
 Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Dear Ms. Xiong:

Thank you for providing comments on the Nevada Placer 20 CAPM Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration (IS/ND) SCH NO. 2024040843.

Response to Comment 1 Thank you for your recommendation that the measures listed under *Chapter 1.6 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices* should be considered mitigation. As stated in the environmental document, Caltrans has determined that the measures included are prescriptive and sufficiently standardized to be generally applicable, and therefore are not considered mitigation. The use of these measures will not change the level of significance of project impacts. Therefore, no changes have been made and the document will remain an IS/ND.

Response to Comment 2 In comment two, it was noted that measure BR-5 in Chapter 1.6 refers to an Aquatic Species Relocation Plan included in measure BR-2. The reason there is no Aquatic Species Relocation Plan in measure BR-2 is because Caltrans will not be responsible for the Aquatic Species Relocation Plan. Once the contractor supplied biologist is brought onto the project during construction, they will be responsible for the Aquatic Species Relocation Plan. The text in BR-5 referring to the Aquatic Species Relocation Plan was removed from the document.

Response to Comment 3 This comment stated that the southern long-toed salamander (*Ambystoma macrodactylum sigillatum*) is present within the project area and that suitable habitat exists at post miles 41.08, 41.10, and 41.27. CDFW recommends that a discussion of the species be included in *Chapter 2.4 Biological Resources, Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences*. In *Chapter 2.4* under *Animal Species*, information about the

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California Department of Transportation—North Region Environmental

District 1	District 2	District 3
1656 Union Street, Eureka, CA 95501	1657 Riverside Drive, Redding, CA 96001 (DO) 1031 Butte Street, Redding, CA 96001 (W. Venture)	703 B Street, Marysville, CA 95901

southern long-toed salamander (*Ambystoma macrodactylum sigillatum*) was not included in the discussion of species of special concern as there will be no impact to this species (page 42 of the Draft Initial Study). Caltrans has determined that no impact will occur to this species from field reviews, the seasonal migratory window not coinciding with the construction window, and because it is unlikely that in water work will be required as construction will occur when ephemeral streams are expected to be dry. In the event that in water work will occur during construction activities at post miles 41.08 and 41.10, the contractor supplied biologist will perform pre-construction surveys for southern long-toed salamander. This has been added to *Chapter 1.6 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices*. The vegetation removal included as a part of fire hardening at the Bear River Bridge (PM 41.27) has been removed from the scope of the project as it is within the jurisdiction of Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) and an encroachment permit would be required. Due to schedule limitations, Caltrans is unable to pursue an encroachment permit and therefore the vegetation removal at the Bear River Bridge will no longer be included in this project.

Response to Comment 4 In comment 4 it was noted that the post mile locations of the Bear River Bridge and the South Yuba Canal has been switched in *Chapter 1.4 Proposed Project*. This section has been amended so that the correct post mile is shown at the South Yuba Canal.

In addition, it was also noted that temporary and permanent impacts to riparian as a result of vegetation removal for fire hardening were not discussed in *Chapter 2.4 Biological Resources* under *Sensitive Natural Communities*. Initially, it was anticipated that temporary and permanent impacts to riparian habitat would occur at two locations; during the creation of vegetation management strips at the Bear River Bridge (41.27) and during vegetation removal to access the inlet or outlet of the culvert at PM 41.10 for CIPP lining. As noted in the response to comment 3, the vegetation removal at the Bear River Bridge would require an encroachment permit from CVFPB, but due to time constraints Caltrans is unable to obtain the encroachment permit for this work; therefore, the vegetation removal at Bear River Bridge has been removed. The impacts to *Riparian Woodland* in *Chapter 2.4 Biological Resources, Sensitive Natural Communities* has been updated to document the changes in impacts to riparian habitat. Temporary impacts of 0.002 acres to riparian habitat will occur as a result of the culvert work at PM 41.10.

Response to Comment 5 Comment number 5 requested more clarity on the new drainage system to be installed at Scotts Flat Road (PM 23.35). The existing drainages at this location serve to transmit roadside drainage. The additional drainages to be installed at this location will improve the drainage of water from the roadway, therefore reducing the likelihood of flooding. The new drainages and associated appurtenances will be installed in a disturbed and developed

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area, including in the road shoulder and underneath State Route 20. There are no watercourses or associated riparian habitat that would be impacted by the installation of culverts, inlets, and associated appurtenances from the installation of the new culverts. There are no watercourses that will be going into or crossing the new system. The closest watercourse to this location is an ephemeral watercourse approximately 0.05 miles north of the proposed system, however it terminates in a meadow on private property outside of the Environmental Study Limits and the Caltrans right of way. Because the drainages will be installed in previously disturbed areas and connected to existing drainages that only convey roadside drainage and stormwater, there are no temporary or permanent impacts to aquatic resources or riparian habitat from the work at this location.

Thank you for the recommendation to include additional mapping of the drainages at this location. However, because there are no impacts to aquatic resources due to the installation of these new drainages, Caltrans has determined that the addition of more detailed mapping of this location will not substantially improve the environmental document and will therefore not be included.

Response to Comment 6 In comment 6, it was noted that a “No Impact” determination was made for question c of *Chapter 2.10 Hydrology and Water Quality*. CDFW disagrees that there would be “No Impact” to question c for hydrology and water quality as there may be temporary dewatering or water diversion during construction. Caltrans wants to note that question c of *Chapter 2.10 Hydrology and Water Quality* is broken into four subsections. Caltrans has determined that there will be a “Less Than Significant Impact” for question c (ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite. However, for question c (i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site, (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, and (iv) impede or redirect flood flows, Caltrans has determined that the project will have “No Impact” as the limited scope of work will not impact these areas. Caltrans believes that the CEQA impact determinations made in *Chapter 2.10 Hydrology and Water Quality* of the draft IS/ND accurately portray the impacts of the project and will therefore make no changes.

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To Mary Xiong, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Nevada Placer 20 CAPM
May 24, 2024
Page 4

If you have further questions or need additional information, please contact Caitlin Greenwood at **Caitlin.Greenwood@dot.ca.gov** or at (530) 821-8296.

Sincerely,

Veronica Wilson

Veronica Wilson
Acting Environmental Branch Chief
California Department of Transportation

c: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse

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Comment Letter 2

California Highway Patrol

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

Grass Valley Area
11363 McCourtney Road
Grass Valley, CA 95949
(530) 477-4900
(800) 735-2929 (TT/TDD)
(800) 735-2922 (Voice)



May 23, 2024

File No.: 230.19746

Caltrans District 3
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901

RE: SCH #2024040843

I recently received the above referenced Notice of Completion environmental impact document from the State Clearinghouse (SCH). After review, I have concerns with the potential impact this project could have.

My concern relates to the proposed Capital Preventative Maintenance project on State Route 20 (SR-20) located at three locations from East of Dow Road to Interstate 80 (I-80) from Post Mile (PM) 20.0 to PM 46.12. State Route 20, east of Nevada City, is an arterial route, accessing Nevada County and Placer County. The construction project would likely result in increased congestion and crashes, east and west of the construction zone during construction hours. Since I-80 historically shuts down during the winter season due to severe weather conditions, there will be increased congestion on the SR-20 corridor during this time of year as well. Additionally, the construction project will likely result in delayed law enforcement response times to incidents due to the construction and congestion.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (530) 477-4900.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "N. Hawkins".

N. HAWKINS, Lieutenant
Commander
Grass Valley Area



Safety, Service, and Security

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Response to California Highway Patrol–Comment Letter 2

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NORTH REGION ENVIRONMENTAL
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901
(530) 812-4937
www.dot.ca.gov
TTY 711



*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.*

May 24, 2024

Mr. Noah Hawkins
California Highway Patrol
Grass Valley Area
11363 McCourtney Road
Grass Valley, CA 95949

Dear Mr. Hawkins:

Thank you for providing comments on the Nevada Placer 20 CAPM Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration (IS/ND) SCH NO. 2024040843. In your comment letter, you noted that construction of the project could lead to increased congestion and crashes to the east and west of the construction zone, increased congestion on State Route 20 during the winter season when Interstate 80 shuts down due to severe winter weather, and delays in law enforcement response times.

In an effort to reduce congestion and crashes to the east and west of the project, traffic control will be placed in a way that drivers have ample warning prior to entering the construction site.

The construction of this project will mainly occur during the summer season. The project will be in winter suspension before severe winter weather can shut down Interstate 80. This will help alleviate congestion on State Route 20 when Interstate 80 is shut down in the winter. If for any reason Interstate 80 is shut down during the active construction of the project, construction operations will be shut down as soon as possible on State Route 20 to open State Route 20 as a detour for Interstate 80. In addition, a transportation management plan (TMP) will be prepared to help reduce congestions and maintain access for emergency services throughout construction.

To reduce delays in law enforcement response times, the Caltrans construction office will work with local emergency response agencies during construction. Plans of how to accommodate an emergency response during construction are typically discussed prior to construction. These accommodations will be included in the TMP.

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To Noah Hawkins
Nevada Placer 20 CAPM
May 24, 2024
Page 2

If you have further questions or need additional information, please contact Caitlin Greenwood at **Caitlin.Greenwood@dot.ca.gov** or at (530) 821-8296.

Sincerely,

Veronica Wilson

Veronica Wilson
Acting Environmental Branch Chief
California Department of Transportation

c: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse

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Comment Letter 3

Central Valley Flood Protection Board

STATE OF CALIFORNIA – CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY

GAVIN NEWSOM, GOVERNOR

CENTRAL VALLEY FLOOD PROTECTION BOARD

3310 El Camino Ave., Ste. 170
SACRAMENTO, CA 95821
(916) 574-0609



May 3, 2024

Caitlin Greenwood
Caltrans, District 3
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901
Caitlin.Greenwood@dot.ca.gov

Subject: Comments for the Negative Declaration, Nevada Placer 20 CAPM Project, SCH# 2024040843, Nevada and Placer Counties

The Central Valley Flood Protection Board (Board) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Negative Declaration (ND) for the proposed Nevada Placer 20 CAPM Project (proposed project).

A portion of the proposed project is located on California State Route 20's Bear River Bridge, crossing the Bear River, and involves creating vegetation management strips at this crossing. Bear River is a Board regulated stream, thereby requiring an encroachment permit for project activities.

Responsibility of the Central Valley Flood Protection Board

The Board is the State's regulatory agency responsible for enforcing appropriate standards for the construction, maintenance, and operation of the flood control system that protects life, property, and habitat in California's Central Valley. The Board serves as the State coordinator between local flood management agencies and the federal government, with the goal of providing the highest level of flood protection possible to California's Central Valley.

The Board operates under authorities as described in California Water Code (Water Code), which requires the Board to oversee future modifications or additions to facilities of the State Plan of Flood Control (SPFC). In addition, pursuant to assurances provided to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) by the Board on behalf of the State, the USACE Operation and Maintenance Manuals, Code of Federal Regulations, Title 33, Section 208.10, and United States Code, Title 33, Section 408, the Board is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the SPFC facilities. The USACE requires the Board to serve as the lead non-Federal sponsor for projects to improve or alter facilities of the SPFC pursuant to Code of Federal Regulations, Title 33, Section 408. The State's objectives include fulfilling the USACE's expectations pursuant to the assurances provided to the USACE.

Encroachment Permit

Per California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Waters, Division 1 (Title 23), Section 6, approval by the Board is required for all proposed work or uses, including the alteration of levees within any area for which there is an Adopted Plan of Flood Control within the Board's jurisdiction. In addition, Board approval is required for all proposed encroachments within a floodway, on

Caltrans, District 3
May 3, 2024
Page 2

adjacent levees, and within any Regulated Stream identified in Title 23, Table 8.1. Specifically, Board jurisdiction includes the levee section, the waterward area between project levees, a minimum 10-foot-wide strip adjacent to the landward levee toe, the area within 30 feet from the top of bank(s) of Regulated Streams, and inside Board's Designated Floodways. Activities outside of these limits which could adversely affect Federal-State flood control facilities, as determined by Board staff, are also under the Board's jurisdiction. Permits may also be required for existing unpermitted encroachments or where it is necessary to establish the conditions normally imposed by permitting, including where responsibility for the encroachment has not been clearly established or ownership or uses have been changed.

Federal permits, including USACE Section 404 and Section 10 regulatory permits and Section 408 Permission, in conjunction with a Board permit, may be required for the proposed project. In addition to federal permits, state and local agency permits, certification, or approvals may also be required. State approvals may include, but are not limited to, California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement and Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's Section 401 Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirement. The Applicant must obtain all authorizations that the proposed project may require.

Flood Impacts Analysis

Pursuant to Section 15 of Title 23, the Board may deny an encroachment permit if the proposed project could:

- Jeopardize directly or indirectly the physical integrity of levees or other works
- Obstruct, divert, redirect, or raise the surface level of design floods or flows, or the lesser flows for which protection is provided
- Cause significant adverse changes in water velocity or flow regimen
- Impair the inspection of floodways or project works
- Interfere with the maintenance of floodways or project works
- Interfere with the ability to engage in flood fighting, patrolling, or other flood emergency activities
- Increase the damaging effects of flood flows
- Be injurious to, or interfere with, the successful execution, functioning, or operation of any adopted plan of flood control
- Adversely affect the State Plan of Flood Control, as defined in the California Water Code

Closing

The potential risks to public safety, including increased flood risks, need to be considered when developing proposed projects that seek to modify flood control works or the hydrology of the water ways. Board staff is available to discuss any questions you have regarding the above

Caltrans, District 3
May 3, 2024
Page 3

comments. Please contact Jordan Robbins at (916) 524-3454, or via email at Jordan.Robbins@CVFlood.ca.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Andrea Buckley

Andrea Buckley
Environmental Services and Land Management Branch Manager

cc: Office of Planning and Research
State.Clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov



Response to Central Valley Flood Protection Board–Comment Letter 3

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NORTH REGION ENVIRONMENTAL
 703 B Street
 Marysville, CA 95901
 (530) 812-4937
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 TTY 711



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May 24, 2024

Ms. Andrea Buckley
 Attention: Jordan Robbins
 Central Valley Flood Protection Board
 3310 El Camino Ave., Ste. 170
 Sacramento, CA 95821

Dear Ms. Buckley:

Thank you for providing comments on the Nevada Placer 20 CAPM Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration (IS/ND) SCH NO. 2024040843. In the comment letter dated May 3, 2024, it was noted that the proposed vegetation management strip at the Bear River Bridge (PM 41.27) would require an encroachment permit from Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) as Bear River is a Regulated Stream identified in Title 23, Table 8.1. It was also noted that federal permits, including USACE Section 404 and Section 10 regulatory permits and Section 408 Permission, in conjunction with a Board permit, may be required for the proposed project. In addition to federal permits, state and local agency permits, certification, or approvals may also be required. State approvals may include, but are not limited to, California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement and Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's Section 401 Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirement.

Based on the comment from CVFPB, the vegetation management strip at the Bear River Bridge has been removed from the scope of work for this project. Due to time constraints with the project schedule, Caltrans will not be able to accommodate obtaining an encroachment permit from CVFPB. As the vegetation management strip at the Bear River Bridge has been removed from the project, additional federal and state permits as well as other approvals will not be needed for this location. This change has been made in the project description of the final IS/ND, as well as throughout the document as necessary. As stated in *Chapter 1.5 Permits and Approvals Needed* of the IS/ND, Caltrans is still pursuing a USACE section 404 permit, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Section 401 Water Quality Certification, and a California Department of Fish and Wildlife 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement for other work throughout the project.

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To Andrea Buckley, Central Valley Flood Protection Board
Nevada Placer 20 CAPM
May 24, 2024
Page 2

If you have further questions or need additional information, please contact Caitlin Greenwood at **Caitlin.Greenwood@dot.ca.gov** or at (530) 821-8296.

Sincerely,

Veronica Wilson

Veronica Wilson
Acting Environmental Branch Chief
California Department of Transportation

c: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse

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Comment Letter 4

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board



Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

20 May 2024

Caitlin Greenwood
California Department of Transportation, District 3
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901
caitlin.greenwood@dot.ca.gov

COMMENTS TO REQUEST FOR REVIEW FOR THE NEGATIVE DECLARATION, NEVADA PLACER 20 CAPM PROJECT, SCH#2024040843, NEVADA AND PLACER COUNTIES

Pursuant to the State Clearinghouse's 19 April 2024 request, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) has reviewed the *Request for Review for the Negative Declaration* for the Nevada Placer 20 CAPM Project, located in Nevada and Placer Counties.

Our agency is delegated with the responsibility of protecting the quality of surface and groundwaters of the state; therefore our comments will address concerns surrounding those issues.

I. Regulatory Setting

Basin Plan

The Central Valley Water Board is required to formulate and adopt Basin Plans for all areas within the Central Valley region under Section 13240 of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Each Basin Plan must contain water quality objectives to ensure the reasonable protection of beneficial uses, as well as a program of implementation for achieving water quality objectives with the Basin Plans. Federal regulations require each state to adopt water quality standards to protect the public health or welfare, enhance the quality of water and serve the purposes of the Clean Water Act. In California, the beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and the Antidegradation Policy are the State's water quality standards. Water quality standards are also contained in the National Toxics Rule, 40 CFR Section 131.36, and the California Toxics Rule, 40 CFR Section 131.38.

The Basin Plan is subject to modification as necessary, considering applicable laws, policies, technologies, water quality conditions and priorities. The original Basin Plans were adopted in 1975, and have been updated and revised periodically as required, using Basin Plan amendments. Once the Central Valley Water Board has adopted a Basin Plan amendment in noticed public hearings, it must be approved by

MARK BRADFORD, CHAIR | PATRICK PULUPA, ESQ., EXECUTIVE OFFICER

11020 Sun Center Drive #200, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670 | www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley

the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), Office of Administrative Law (OAL) and in some cases, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Basin Plan amendments only become effective after they have been approved by the OAL and in some cases, the USEPA. Every three (3) years, a review of the Basin Plan is completed that assesses the appropriateness of existing standards and evaluates and prioritizes Basin Planning issues. For more information on the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins*, please visit our website:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/basin_plans/

Antidegradation Considerations

All wastewater discharges must comply with the Antidegradation Policy (State Water Board Resolution 68-16) and the Antidegradation Implementation Policy contained in the Basin Plan. The Antidegradation Implementation Policy is available on page 74 at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/basin_plans/sacsjr_2018_05.pdf

In part it states:

Any discharge of waste to high quality waters must apply best practicable treatment or control not only to prevent a condition of pollution or nuisance from occurring, but also to maintain the highest water quality possible consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of the State.

This information must be presented as an analysis of the impacts and potential impacts of the discharge on water quality, as measured by background concentrations and applicable water quality objectives.

The antidegradation analysis is a mandatory element in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and land discharge Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) permitting processes. The environmental review document should evaluate potential impacts to both surface and groundwater quality.

II. Permitting Requirements

Construction Storm Water General Permit

Dischargers whose project disturb one or more acres of soil or where projects disturb less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acres, are required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit), Construction General Permit Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ. Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, grubbing, disturbances to the ground, such as stockpiling, or excavation, but does not include regular maintenance activities performed to restore the original line, grade, or capacity of the facility. The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). For more information on the Construction General Permit, visit the State Water Resources Control Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/constpermits.shtml

Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit

If the project will involve the discharge of dredged or fill material in navigable waters or wetlands, a permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act may be needed from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). If a Section 404 permit is required by the USACE, the Central Valley Water Board will review the permit application to ensure that discharge will not violate water quality standards. If the project requires surface water drainage realignment, the applicant is advised to contact the Department of Fish and Game for information on Streambed Alteration Permit requirements. If you have any questions regarding the Clean Water Act Section 404 permits, please contact the Regulatory Division of the Sacramento District of USACE at (916) 557-5250.

Clean Water Act Section 401 Permit – Water Quality Certification

If an USACE permit (e.g., Non-Reporting Nationwide Permit, Nationwide Permit, Letter of Permission, Individual Permit, Regional General Permit, Programmatic General Permit), or any other federal permit (e.g., Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act or Section 9 from the United States Coast Guard), is required for this project due to the disturbance of waters of the United States (such as streams and wetlands), then a Water Quality Certification must be obtained from the Central Valley Water Board prior to initiation of project activities. There are no waivers for 401 Water Quality Certifications. For more information on the Water Quality Certification, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/water_quality/certification/

Waste Discharge Requirements – Discharges to Waters of the State

If USACE determines that only non-jurisdictional waters of the State (i.e., “non-federal” waters of the State) are present in the proposed project area, the proposed project may require a Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR) permit to be issued by Central Valley Water Board. Under the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, discharges to all waters of the State, including all wetlands and other waters of the State including, but not limited to, isolated wetlands, are subject to State regulation. For more information on the Waste Discharges to Surface Water NPDES Program and WDR processes, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/waste_to_surface_water/

Projects involving excavation or fill activities impacting less than 0.2 acre or 400 linear feet of non-jurisdictional waters of the state and projects involving dredging activities impacting less than 50 cubic yards of non-jurisdictional waters of the state may be eligible for coverage under the State Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ (General Order 2004-0004). For more information on the General Order 2004-0004, visit the State Water Resources Control Board website at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2004/wqo/wqo2004-0004.pdf

Dewatering Permit

If the proposed project includes construction or groundwater dewatering to be discharged to land, the proponent may apply for coverage under State Water Board General Water Quality Order (Low Threat General Order) 2003-0003 or the Central Valley Water Board's Waiver of Report of Waste Discharge and Waste Discharge Requirements (Low Threat Waiver) R5-2018-0085. Small temporary construction dewatering projects are projects that discharge groundwater to land from excavation activities or dewatering of underground utility vaults. Dischargers seeking coverage under the General Order or Waiver must file a Notice of Intent with the Central Valley Water Board prior to beginning discharge.

For more information regarding the Low Threat General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2003/wqo/wqo2003-0003.pdf

For more information regarding the Low Threat Waiver and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/waivers/r5-2018-0085.pdf

Limited Threat General NPDES Permit

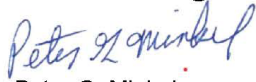
If the proposed project includes construction dewatering and it is necessary to discharge the groundwater to waters of the United States, the proposed project will require coverage under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Dewatering discharges are typically considered a low or limited threat to water quality and may be covered under the General Order for *Limited Threat Discharges to Surface Water* (Limited Threat General Order). A complete Notice of Intent must be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board to obtain coverage under the Limited Threat General Order. For more information regarding the Limited Threat General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/general_orders/r5-2016-0076-01.pdf

NPDES Permit

If the proposed project discharges waste that could affect the quality of surface waters of the State, other than into a community sewer system, the proposed project will require coverage under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. A complete Report of Waste Discharge must be submitted with the Central Valley Water Board to obtain a NPDES Permit. For more information regarding the NPDES Permit and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at: <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/help/permit/>

If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (916) 464-4684
or Peter.Minkel2@waterboards.ca.gov.



Peter G. Minkel
Engineering Geologist

cc: State Clearinghouse unit, Governor's Office of Planning and Research,
Sacramento

Response to Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board– Comment Letter 4

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NORTH REGION ENVIRONMENTAL
 703 B Street
 Marysville, CA 95901
 (530) 812-4937
www.dot.ca.gov
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May 24, 2024

Mr. Peter G. Minkel
 Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
 11020 Sun Center Drive #200
 Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Dear Mr. Minkel:

Thank you for providing comments on the Nevada Placer 20 CAPM Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration (IS/ND) SCH NO. 2024040843.

In the comment letter, Central Valley Water Board recommends that the environmental document evaluate potential impacts to both surface and groundwater quality. *Chapter 2.10 Hydrology and Water Quality* of the IS/ND evaluates the potential impacts of the Nevada Placer 20 CAPM project on both surface and groundwater quality.

In regards to the section in the letter about permit requirements, Caltrans is required to adhere to the following activities in order to reduce or eliminate water quality impacts and achieve NPDES permit compliance for the duration of project activities:

1. Project work and operations within the State's right-of-way are required to follow the conditions of Caltrans' Statewide NPDES Permit, issued by the State Water Resources Control Board (Order No. 2022-0003-DWQ, NPDES Permit No. CAS000003). This statewide permit regulates storm water and non-storm water discharges from Caltrans' properties and facilities, and discharges associated with operation and maintenance of the State highway system. Caltrans facilities include, but are not limited to, maintenance stations/yards, equipment storage areas, storage facilities, fleet vehicle parking and maintenance areas and warehouses with material storage areas.
2. Projects that disturb one or more acres of land surface or are part of a larger common plan of development or sale that disturbs more than one acre of land surface are regulated under the Statewide NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with

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To Andrea Buckley, Central Valley Flood Protection Board
Nevada Placer 20 CAPM
May 24, 2024
Page 2

Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002 and adopted amendments), also referred to as the CGP. The CGP contains a risk-based permitting approach by establishing three levels of risk possible for a construction site. Risk levels are determined during the planning, design, and construction phases, and are based on project risk of generating sediments and receiving water risk of becoming impaired.

The contractor is also required to prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan or Water Pollution Control Program which will incorporate appropriate temporary Construction Site BMPs to implement effective handling, storage, use and disposal practices during construction activities.

The project will also involve the discharge of dredged or fill material in navigable waters or wetlands and will therefore require a permit pursuant to section 404 of the Clean Water Act and a 401 Water Quality Certification, as stated in *Table 2* in *Chapter 1.5 Permits and Approvals Needed*. Caltrans will also obtain a section 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

If you have further questions or need additional information, please contact Caitlin Greenwood at **Caitlin.Greenwood@dot.ca.gov** or at (530) 821-8296.

Sincerely,

Veronica Wilson

Veronica Wilson
Acting Environmental Branch Chief
California Department of Transportation

c: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse

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Appendix F. SHPO Concurrence on the Finding of No Adverse Effect





**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Armando Quintero, Director

Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95816-7100
Telephone: (916) 445-7000 FAX: (916) 445-7053
calshpo.ohp@parks.ca.gov www.ohp.parks.ca.gov

June 4, 2024

VIA EMAIL

In reply refer to: FHWA_2024_0514_001

Ms. Julia Prince-Buitenhuis, Acting Section 106 Coordinator
Cultural Studies Office
Division of Environmental Analysis
1120 N Street, PO Box 942873, MS-27
Sacramento, CA 94273-0001

Subject: Finding of No Adverse Effect for the Proposed NEV/PLA 20, Capital Preventative Maintenance Project, Nevada and Placer Counties, California

Dear Ms. Prince-Buitenhuis:

Caltrans is initiating consultation regarding the above project in accordance with the 2014 *First Amended Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and California Department of Transportation Regarding Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as it Pertains to the Administration of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in California* (106 PA). As part of your documentation, Caltrans submitted a Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR), Archaeological Survey Report (ASR), and a Finding of No Adverse Effect Report for the project.

Caltrans, District 3 proposes a CAPM project on SR 20 in Nevada and Placer counties, California. The proposed project will improve the existing pavement condition and extend the life of transportation infrastructure, restore existing drainage systems, bring Traffic Management System and Metal Beam Guard Rail elements, and roadway signs up to current standards.

Identification and consultation efforts for the Undertaking resulted in the identification of nine properties located within the area of potential effect for the project.

The Drum Spaulding Hydroelectric Project Historic District was previously determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

Caltrans, in accordance with Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the 106 PA, is assuming the following properties eligible for the NRHP for the purposes of this project.

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- Blue Tent Ditch
- Emigrant Trail
- Ridge Ditch
- Snow Mountain Ditch

Caltrans is also assuming the following archaeological properties eligible in accordance with Stipulation VIII.C.3 of the 106 PA:

- P-29-002274
- P-29-003054
- P-29-003070

Caltrans applied the criteria of adverse effect and proposes that a finding of no adverse effect is appropriate for this undertaking. The unnamed ditch associated with the Emigrant Gap Mining District and the three archeological historic properties listed above will be protected in their entirety with an Environmental Sensitive Area per Stipulation VIII.C.3 of the 106 PA. The other properties will not be adversely affected via imposed conditions or due to the nature of the property and project activity.

Based on my review of the submitted documentation, I have no objections to Caltrans' finding of no adverse effect for this undertaking.

If you have any questions, please contact Natalie Lindquist at natalie.lindquist@parks.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer