School House Road over Owens Creek Bridge Replacement Project (Bridge Number 40C0053)

Mariposa County, California

Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Mariposa County Public Works Department
4639 Ben Hur Road
Mariposa, CA 95338
Contact: Matiel Holloway, P.E., Senior Civil Engineer
Phone: (209) 966-5356
Email: mholloway@mariposacounty.org

July 2024

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Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration
Mariposa County, California
School House Road over Owens Creek Bridge Replacement Project
(Bridge Number 40C0053)

INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared to evaluate the School House Road over Owens Creek Bridge Replacement Project (also referred to as "proposed Project" or "Project") for compliance under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The County of Mariposa (County) is the lead agency responsible for complying with the provisions of CEQA.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The County is proposing to replace the existing School House Road Bridge over Owens Creek (Bridge Number 40C0053) (Project), located in the southwestern portion of Mariposa County, roughly 1.2 miles southwest of the community of Catheys Valley and 8 miles southwest of the Town of Mariposa. The Project would replace the existing 27-foot-long, 20-foot-wide, single-span, reinforced concrete (RC) slab bridge with a new single-span, cast-in-place (CIP), post-tensioned concrete slab bridge that is approximately 40 feet long and 29 feet, 6 inches wide. The road approaches to the bridge would be widened to accommodate two 10-foot travel lanes and two 3-foot paved shoulders. These roadway transitions are anticipated to occur approximately 250 feet west and 350 feet east of the ends of the bridge.

FINDINGS

As lead agency for compliance with CEQA requirements, the County finds that the proposed Project would be implemented without causing a significant adverse impact on the environment, based on the analysis presented in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). Mitigation measures for potential impacts associated with biological resources, cultural resources, geology & soils, hazardous materials, noise, and transportation, would be implemented as part of the proposed Project through adoption of a mitigation monitoring and reporting program.

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this evaluation, the County concludes:

- The proposed Project does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal

community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

- The proposed Project would not achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals.
- The proposed Project would not have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable.
- The proposed Project would not have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.
- No substantial evidence exists to demonstrate that the proposed Project would have a substantive negative effect on the environment.

This document has been prepared to provide an opportunity for interested agencies and the public to provide comment. Pending public review and approval by the County Planning Commission, this MND will be filed pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15075. Written comments should be submitted to the Mariposa County Public Works Department at 4639 Ben Hur Road, Mariposa, CA 95338, attention: Matiel Holloway, by 5:00 p.m. on August 16, 2024**.**

Matiel Holloway

Signature
Matiel Holloway, P.E.
Senior Civil Engineer

07/15/2024

Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Appendices

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
AC	asphalt concrete
ACM	asbestos containing material
ADL	aerially deposited lead
ADI	Area of Direct Impact
ADT	Average daily traffic
AMBIENT	AMBIENT Air Quality & Noise Consulting
amsl	above mean sea level
APE	Area of Potential Effects
AWE	Area West Environmental, Inc.
BMPs	Best Management Practices
BSA	Biological Study Area
CAAQS	Clean Ambient Air Quality Standards
CalFire	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CCaIC	Central California Information Center
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CDOC	California Department of Conservation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFGC	California Fish and Game Code
CIP	cast-in-place
Corps	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
County	Mariposa County
CV Plan	Catheys Valley Community Plan
CVRWQCB	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
CWA	Clean Water Act
dBA	A-weighted decibel
dbh	diameter at breast height
EDR	Environmental Data Resources
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area
FE	Federally Endangered
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map

FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FT	Federally Threatened
GHG	greenhouse gas
HBP	Highway Bridge Program
HUC	Hydrologic Unit Code
ISA	Initial Site Assessment
IS/MND	Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
LBP	lead-based paint
L_{max}	maximum sound level
MCAPCD	Mariposa County Air Pollution Control District
MCUSD	Mariposa County Unified School District
MH	Mountain Home
MLD	Most Likely Descendant
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
mph	miles per hour
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NES	Natural Environment Study
NOI	Notice of Intent
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	National Resources Conservation Service
OHWM	ordinary high water mark
OPR	Office of Planning and Research
PC	Precast
Project	School House Road Bridge over Owens Creek Project
PT	Proposed Threatened
RC	reinforced concrete
REC	recognized environmental condition
ROW	Right of Way
RSP	rock slope protection
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SE	State Endangered
SJVAPCD	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
SMARA	Surface Mining and Reclamation Act
SR	State Route
SSC	Species of Special Concern
SSMN	Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation
ST	State Threatened
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan

SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TCE	temporary construction easement
TDS	total dissolved solids
TMP	Traffic Management Plan
Type ESA	Temporary Fencing
U.S.	United States
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VMT	vehicle miles travelled
XPI	Extended Phase I

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

The County of Mariposa (County) Public Works Department is proposing to replace the existing School House Road Bridge (Br. No. 40C0053) over Owens Creek (Project) with a wider bridge that meets current design standards. The Project would replace the existing 27-foot-long, 20-foot-wide, single-span, reinforced concrete (RC) slab bridge with a new 2-lane, 40-foot-long, single-span, cast-in-place (CIP) concrete, post-tensioned slab bridge. The Project would construct the bridge substructure (foundations and abutment walls) to accommodate an ultimate bridge width of 29 feet-6 inches. The road approaches to the bridge would be widened to accommodate two 10-foot travel lanes and two 3-foot paved shoulders. These roadway transitions are anticipated to occur approximately 250 feet west and 350 feet east of the ends of the bridge. The Project is located in the southwestern portion of Mariposa County, roughly 1.2 miles southwest of the community of Catheys Valley.

1.2 Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) is to disclose environmental impacts that may result from the proposed Project. This IS/MND assesses the environmental effects of the proposed Project, as required by California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and is in compliance with state CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 15000, et seq.), which requires that all state and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before acting on those projects.

1.3 Public Review Process

This IS/MND is being circulated for a 30-day public review period to all individuals who have requested a copy and appropriate resource agencies. This report has been filed with the State Clearinghouse and is available on the County's website (https://www.mariposacounty.org/1129/Current-Projects). A Notice of Intent (NOI) is also being distributed to all property owners of record identified by the Assessor's office as having property within 300 feet of the proposed Project. The NOI identifies where the document is available for public review and invites interested parties to provide written comments for incorporation into the final IS/MND.

1.4 County Approval Process

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, the County Board of Supervisors must adopt the IS/MND and approve the mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP) (Appendix A) before it can approve the proposed Project.

1.5 Organization of the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

This IS/MND is organized into the following chapters:

Chapter 1 – Project Overview and Background: provides summary information about the proposed Project, describes the public review process for the IS/MND, and includes the CEQA determination for the proposed Project.

Chapter 2 – Project Description: contains a detailed description of the proposed Project.

Chapter 3 – Environmental Checklist: provides an assessment of proposed Project impacts by resource topic. The Environmental Checklist form, from Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, is used to make one of the following conclusions for impacts from the proposed Project:

- A conclusion of ***no impact*** is used when it is determined that the proposed Project would have no impact on the resource area under evaluation.
- A conclusion of ***less than significant impact*** is used when it is determined that the proposed Project's adverse impacts to a resource area would not exceed established thresholds of significance.
- A conclusion of ***less than significant impact with mitigation*** is used when it is determined that mitigation measures would be required to reduce the proposed Project's adverse impacts below established thresholds of significance.
- A conclusion of ***potentially significant impact*** is used when it is determined that the proposed Project's adverse impacts to a resource area potentially cannot be mitigated to a level that is less than significant.

Mitigation measures, if necessary, are noted following each impact discussion.

Chapter 4 – List of Preparers: identifies the individuals who contributed to the environmental document.

Chapter 5 – References Cited: identifies the information sources used in preparing this document.

Appendices – Contains the MMRP, design drawings, and representative photos.

1.6 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

Impacts to the environmental factors below are evaluated using the checklist included in Chapter 3. The County determined that the environmental factors checked below would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures. It was determined that the unchecked factors would have a less-than-significant impact or no impact.

☐	Aesthetics	☐	Agriculture and Forestry	☐	Air Quality
☒	Biological Resources	☒	Cultural Resources	☐	Energy
☒	Geology/Soils	☐	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☒	Hazards and Hazardous Materials
☐	Hydrology/Water Quality	☐	Land Use/Planning	☐	Mineral Resources
☐	Noise	☐	Population/Housing	☐	Public Services
☐	Recreation	☐	Transportation/Traffic	☒	Tribal Cultural Resources
☒	Utilities/Service Systems	☐	Wildfire	☒	Mandatory Findings of Significance

DETERMINATION: On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ I find that although the proposed Project COULD have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the proposed Project have been made by or agreed to by the proposed Project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that the proposed Project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed Project, nothing further is required.

Matiel Holloway, P.E.
Senior Civil Engineer

07/15/2024
Date

2.0 Project Description

The proposed Project would replace the School House Road Bridge over Owens Creek in Mariposa County, as described in detail below.

2.1 Project Location

The Project is located in the southwestern portion of Mariposa County, roughly 1.2 miles southwest of the community of Catheys Valley (Figure 1). The Project is located within the *Catheys Valley, California.* U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle map (Figure 2). Elevation of the Project area ranges from approximately 1,150 to 1,170 feet above mean sea level (amsl) (Figure 2).

2.2 Background and Setting

School House Road is a narrow paved rural road that connects rural unincorporated residents to the Community of Catheys Valley and the regional transportation network via State Route (SR) 140. The Project area is located approximately 0.70 miles east of SR 140, with surrounding land uses consisting of scattered low-density residential uses, livestock grazing, and open space uses. Adjoining properties are predominantly undeveloped, wooded lands with scattered rural residences. The topography within the Project area is relatively flat between gently rolling hills. Natural features include Owens Creek, and intermittent creek, and riparian vegetation (Figure 3). Outside of the riparian zone, the vegetation is comprised of blue oak woodland habitats.

The existing School House Road Bridge over Owens Creek, built in 1936 and widened in 1970, is a single-span, RC slab bridge with encased steel I-beams and railroad rails. The bridge is approximately 27 feet long and 22 feet wide on RC abutments with RC wingwalls. The bridge support foundation is assumed to be spread footings. The existing roadway approaches are two-lane paved roadways approximately 20 feet in width. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Bridge Inspection Report (2022) lists the average daily traffic (ADT) to be 380 (2004), with a future ADT to be 843 (2040) vehicles per day. No speed limit signs were observed in the vicinity of the bridge, however, a 35-miles per hour (mph) posted speed is anticipated for this section of School House Road. The minimum clear roadway width for bridges according to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) for an ADT greater than 400 is 28 feet. Based on this ADT, the functional classification, and terrain, 35 mph is considered an appropriate design speed for this roadway per AASHTO's *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets* (2018).

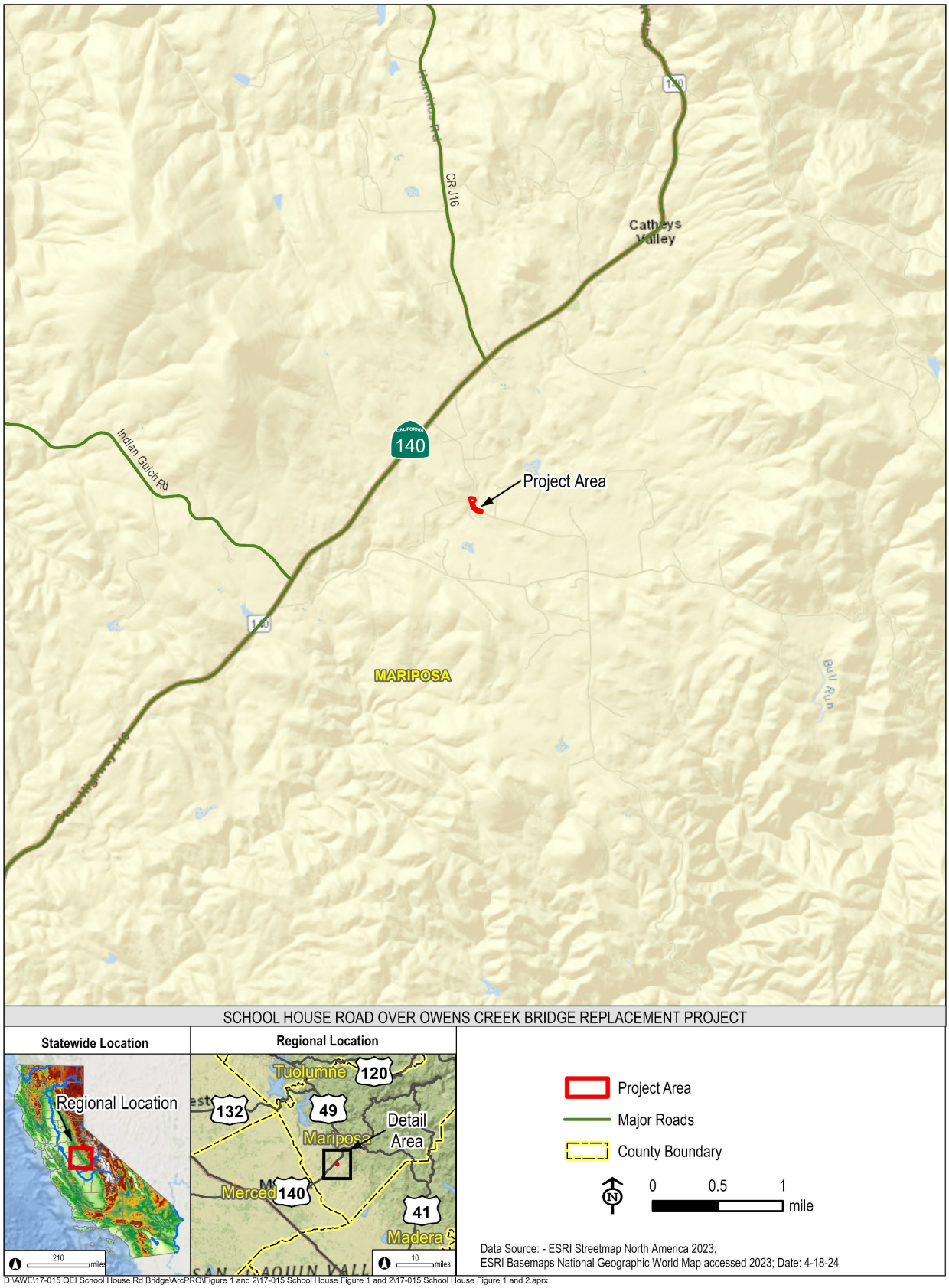
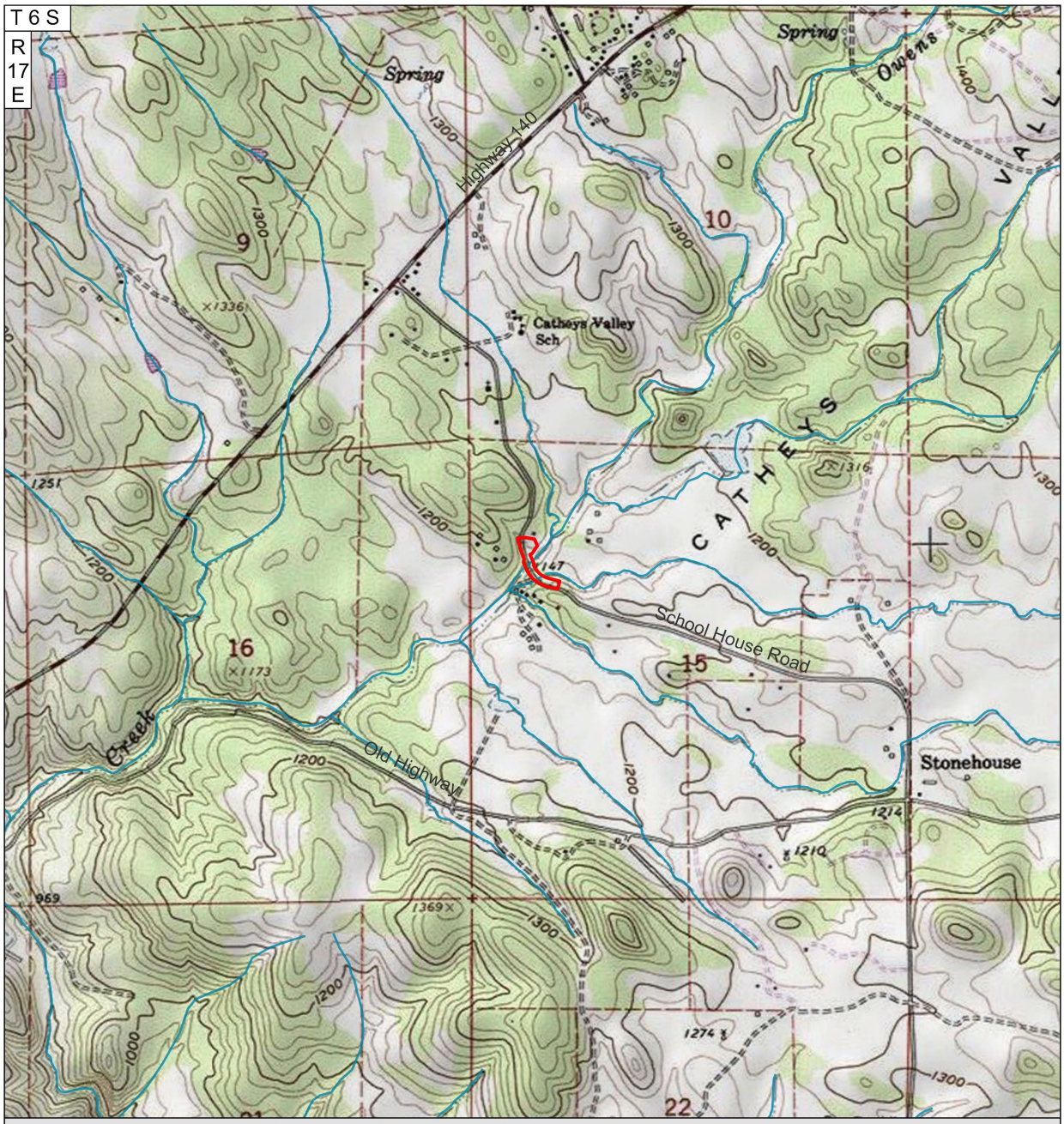


Figure 1. Project Vicinity



SCHOOL HOUSE ROAD OVER OWENS CREEK BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

The Project Area is located entirely within the Cathey's Valley USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle map. The Project Area occurs in Township 6 South, Range 17 East, Section 15. The Project Area encompasses 2.19 acres.

Coordinates for the center point of the Project Area:
UTM Zone 10S N: 4144971 E: 756579
Latitude: 37.416026, Longitude: -120.100765

Project Area

0 1,000 2,000 feet

Data Source:
- ESRI USA Topo basemap accessed 2023;
Date: 4-18-24

Document Path: D:\AWE\17-015 QEI School House Rd Bridge\ArcPRO\Figure 1 and 2\17-015 School House Figure 1 and 2\17-015 School House Figure 1 and 2.aprx

Figure 2. Project Location

Figure 3. Project Area

2.3 Project Purpose and Need

The existing bridge is in poor condition. Caltrans Structures Maintenance and Investigations Division inspects local agency bridges every two years and subsequently writes a report summarizing the bridge's status.

Currently the existing bridge is experiencing several structural deficiencies (including timber girders with checks and white rot). Additionally, the narrow width of the bridge has contributed to difficulties in evacuating the area during past fire events. At the time the County submitted an application to Caltrans for the bridge to receive funding from the Highway Bridge Program (HBP), the Caltrans Bridge Inspection Report (2022) gave the bridge a sufficiency rating of 48.6 and a status of "Structurally Deficient." This made the bridge eligible for rehabilitation as part of the HBP. However, the County provided justification for replacement, which Caltrans subsequently approved.

Overall, the purpose of this Project is to:

- Remove the existing structure, deemed functionally obsolete, and reconstruct a bridge that would accommodate safe vehicular and pedestrian access;
- Provide a new structure that is wider to meet current design standards;
- Widen bridge approaches to accommodate wider structure;
- Improve the roadway profile; and
- Improve hydraulic conveyance in the creek.

2.4 Project Description

The following sections describe the proposed Project. Project components and bridge design are shown on Figure 4 and 5.

2.4.1 Bridge Design

It is anticipated that the replacement structure would be a single span, CIP concrete, post-tensioned slab bridge (Figure 5). The bridge would have two 10-foot-wide lanes with 3-foot-wide shoulders and a 1 foot-9 inch-wide concrete barrier, for a total width of 29 feet-6 inches. The total length of the replacement bridge would be 40 feet. Based on the shallow bedrock conditions in the Project area, it is anticipated that the bridge would be founded on spread footings.

Table 1 identifies the anticipated timing and duration of this and other construction activities associated with the Project.

Table 1. Construction Work Order and Schedule

Activity	Approximate Duration	Estimated Dates
Clearing and grubbing	1 week	June
Install environmental fencing	1 week	Midsummer
Water diversion (if necessary)	1 week	Midsummer
Remove existing bridge	1 week	Midsummer
Construct bridge	12 weeks*	Mid to Late Summer
Erosion control/scour countermeasures	1 week	Early Fall
Reconstruct approaches	15 weeks	Late Summer/Early Fall

**Bridge Construction:*

- *Spread footing construction at abutments 1-2 weeks*
- *Abutment construction 2 weeks*
- *Place cast in place slab & post-tension slab 6 weeks*
- *Finish bridge deck and complete barriers 2 weeks*

2.4.2 Bridge Abutments

Construction of the new bridge abutments would require two excavation areas approximately 30 feet wide by 15 feet long by 10 feet deep.

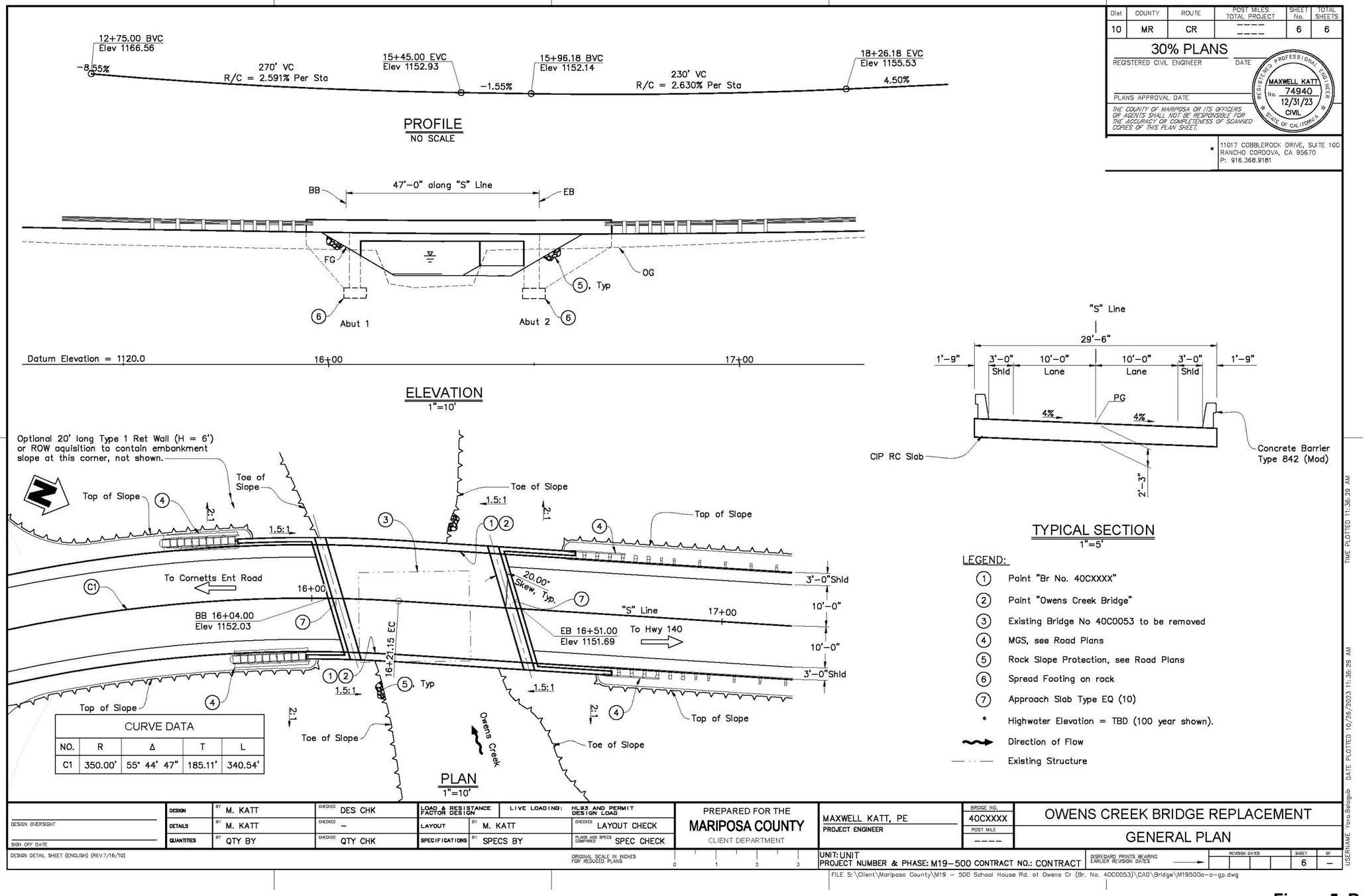
2.4.3 Vertical Profile

Preliminary hydraulic analysis suggests the existing bridge profile does not meet minimum hydraulic clearance requirements. Projects utilizing federal funds must conform to the Caltrans/Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) design criteria, which requires bridges to be designed to pass the 100-year design discharge and the 50-year design discharge with sufficient freeboard to accommodate debris (Caltrans design criteria recommends 2 feet of freeboard). The existing bridge does not pass the 100-year or the 50-year water surface elevation. To increase the hydraulic capacity and to improve the roadway approach grades, the profile at the bridge would be raised approximately 4 feet (Figure 5).

2.4.4 Roadway Approaches

With the existing roadway only being approximately 20 feet wide including shoulders, the Project would include a widening of the roadway on both sides of the bridge to transition from the narrow road to the wider bridge (Figure 4). These roadway transitions are anticipated to occur approximately 250 feet west and 350 feet east of the ends of the bridge.

Figure 4. Project Components



Dist	COUNTY	ROUTE	POST MILES TOTAL PROJECT	SHEET No.	TOTAL SHEETS
10	MR	CR	---- ----	6	6

30% PLANS

REGISTERED CIVIL ENGINEER — DATE

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER — MAXWELL KATT — No. 74940 — 12/31/23 — CIVIL — STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PLANS APPROVAL DATE

THE COUNTY OF MARIPOSA OR ITS OFFICERS OR AGENTS SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF SCANNED COPIES OF THIS PLAN SHEET.

11017 COBBLEROCK DRIVE, SUITE 100
RANCHO CORDOVA, CA 95670
P: 916.368.9181

DESIGN OVERSIGHT	DESIGN	BY M. KATT	CHECKED DES CHK	LOAD & RESISTANCE FACTOR DESIGN	LIVE LOADING: HL93 AND PERMIT DESIGN LOAD	PREPARED FOR THE MARIPOSA COUNTY CLIENT DEPARTMENT	MAXWELL KATT, PE PROJECT ENGINEER
SIGN OFF DATE	DETAILS	BY M. KATT	CHECKED –	LAYOUT	BY M. KATT	CHECKED LAYOUT CHECK	
	QUANTITIES	BY QTY BY	CHECKED QTY CHK	SPECIFICATIONS	BY SPECS BY	PLANS AND SPECS COMPARED SPEC CHECK	

DESIGN DETAIL SHEET (ENGLISH) (REV.7/16/10)

ORIGINAL SCALE IN INCHES FOR REDUCED PLANS 0 1 2 3

UNIT: UNIT
PROJECT NUMBER & PHASE: M19-500 CONTRACT NO.: CONTRACT

BRIDGE NO. 40CXXXX
POST MILE ----

OWENS CREEK BRIDGE REPLACEMENT
GENERAL PLAN

DISREGARD PRINTS BEARING EARLIER REVISION DATES

REVISION DATES | SHEET 6 | OF –

FILE S:\Client\Mariposa County\M19 - 500 School House Rd. at Owens Cr (Br. No. 40C0053)\CAD\Bridge\M19500a-a-gp.dwg

USERNAME Yora.Belagub DATE PLOTTED 10/26/2023 11:36:29 AM TIME PLOTTED 11:36:29 AM

Figure 5. Bridge Design

The approaches would be widened to accommodate two 10-foot travel lanes and two 3-foot paved shoulders. An additional two feet of unpaved/graded shoulder backing is required per Mariposa County standards and would widen to 4 feet at the bridge approach guard railings.

2.4.5 Culvert Replacement

The Project would replace an existing box culvert under the road south of the existing bridge. The existing concrete box culvert carries seasonal flow in an ephemeral drainage tributary to Owens Creek. This culvert must be replaced to accommodate the wider approach roadway. The new box culvert would be a 24-foot long, 4.3-by-4.3-foot, concrete box culvert with concrete headwalls and rock revetment at the culvert inlet and outlet to dissipate energy and minimize scour and erosion (Figure 4).

2.4.6 Utilities

The Project would not require the relocation of any existing utilities at the site.

2.4.7 Right of Way (ROW)

Currently, the County ROW is an approximatly 60-foot-wide corridor centered on School House Road. A temporary construction easement for staging is proposed to the north of the bridge. It is further anticipated that the Project would require temporary construction easements from adjacent properties (Table 2, Figure 4):

Table 2. Temporary Construction Easement (TCE) Requirements

APN	Local Address	Estimated TCE Size (Square Feet)	Purpose
016-210-014-000	4996 Owens Creek Rd	2,067	Access for fencing and creek diversion
016-260-003-000	4850 Schoolhouse Rd	24,295	Staging area and creek diversion
016-260-004-000	4830 Schoolhouse Rd	5,815	Access for fencing

Permanent ROW may be required from adjacent properties to accommodate earthwork for the southern bridge approach and around the culvert. Depending on final design, ROW acquisition may not be required, and locations of potential ROW may become temporary construction easements (Table 3).

Table 3. Potential ROW or TCE Requirements

APN	Local Address	Estimated Acquisition or TCE Size (Square Feet)	Purpose
016-210-014-000	4996 Owens Creek Rd	516	Earthwork for bridge approach
016-250-059-000	4799 School House Rd	441	Earthwork for bridge approach
016-250-003-000	4831 School House Rd	407	Earthwork around culvert outlet
016-260-004-000	4830 Schoolhouse Rd	1,520	Earthwork around culvert inlet

2.4.8 Construction Approach and Staging Areas

Both existing bridge demolition and new bridge construction activities would require temporary access to the creek channel to remove the existing bridge pier/abutments. A temporary creek diversion system may be necessary for the demolition of the existing bridge and the construction of the new bridge, as well as for the culvert replacement (Figure 4). The water diversion system may also include screened pumps, a temporary pipe network, siltation baffles, and cofferdams to route flow through and around the immediate work area, maintain dewatered conditions, and return flow to the downstream channel network without causing harm to biological resources or affecting water quality. Impacted waters located in the work area would either be treated per Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) requirements or disposed of per Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) requirements.

Overall, Project construction activities are anticipated to occur during the summer and fall months when water levels are at their lowest. Construction staging areas are anticipated to be located north of the existing bridge on a private parcel (Figure 4) and within the closed road ROW.

It is anticipated that excavators, dozers, cranes, pavers, dump trucks, concrete trucks, and concrete pumps may be required to demolish and construct the Project (Table 4). The list of equipment is not exhaustive; other equipment may also be necessary during Project construction.

Table 4. Construction Equipment

Equipment	Construction Purpose
Asphalt Concrete Paver	Paving roadways
Backhoe	Soil manipulation and drainage work
Bobcat	Fill distribution
Bulldozer/Loader	Earthwork construction, cleaning and grubbing
Crane	Removal of bridge girders, forms, and rebar
Dump Truck	Fill material delivery/surplus removal
Excavator	Soil manipulation
Front-end Loader	Dirt or gravel manipulation
Grader	Ground leveling

Equipment	Construction Purpose
Haul Truck	Earthwork construction; clearing and grubbing
Paver	Roadway paving
Roller	Earthwork and compacting
Scraper	Earthwork construction; clearing and grubbing
Truck with Seed Sprayer (hydroseeded)	Erosion control and landscaping
Water Truck	Earthwork construction; clearing and grubbing
Screen pumps	Equipment for dewatering
Pipe network	Equipment for dewatering
Siltation baffles	Equipment for dewatering
Cofferdam	Equipment for dewatering
Culvert	Equipment for dewatering

2.4.9 Traffic Diversion

The Project would require School House Road within the Project area to be closed to through traffic during construction. Therefore, during construction, a temporary detour would need to be utilized (Figure 6). The detour length is approximately 5 miles, and the anticipated travel duration is approximately 7 minutes. Residents to the west of the Project would utilize School House Road to access SR 140. Residents to the east of the Project would travel east on School House Road to Old Highway Road and west to SR 140. The Project would be constructed in stages between bridge and culvert replacement to accommodate access for one property owner. The closure of School House Road during construction would be coordinated with emergency response officials. A preliminary detour plan is shown in Figure 6. This detour would remain for the duration of Project construction.

2.5 Other Build Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Consideration

The following section describes alternatives that were considered during Project planning but were eliminated from further consideration.

2.5.1 Bridge Rehabilitation Alternative

A Caltrans Bridge Inspection Report (2022) designates the bridge as “Structurally Deficient” with a sufficiency rating of 48.6. Some critical issues called out in the report include randomly spalled soffit, rusted I-beams, cracks on abutment walls, asphalt concrete (AC) approach settlement, insufficient hydraulic clearance, and scour critical foundations. Due to the bridge’s current condition, the difficulty and cost associated with rehabilitating the existing structure, and the improved hydraulics that a new bridge provides, replacement of the bridge is favored over rehabilitation. Therefore, a rehabilitation-only alternative was rejected from further consideration.

2.5.2 Temporary Bridge Upstream (East) for Traffic during Construction

The Project design was modified after initial cultural and biological investigations in 2016. The bridge construction had been designed to include a temporary bridge upstream (east) of the existing bridge to keep the road open during construction. The design modification was completed in an effort to minimize impacts to identified cultural resources and to minimize temporary habitat impacts. Therefore, the alternative that included a temporary bridge was rejected due to impacts on sensitive cultural and biological resources.

2.5.3 Precast (PC) Concrete Superstructure

This alternative is similar to the proposed Project but would use a precast bridge slab element instead of a cast-in-place bridge. This alternative would not require falsework, the structure depth would be shallower than the favored CIP option and would be quicker to construct since the slab units can be fabricated off site. However, large cranes would be needed to erect the slab units, increasing the Project work area, and higher cost. For these reasons, the PC option was rejected.

2.6 No-Build Alternative (No Project)

The No-Build Alternative (No Project) maintains the existing bridge on School House Road over Owens Creek. The existing bridge has been experiencing several structural deficiencies and is deemed functionally deficient. Under the No-Build Alternative, the existing issues at the bridge would likely worsen, could pose a threat to roadway safety, and may result in bridge or road materials entering the waterways.

2.7 Permits and Approvals Needed

Upon completion of final design for the proposed Project, the following agencies would be contacted to obtain permits or approvals.

- RWQCB – Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) – Clean Water Act Section 404 Nationwide Permit 14
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) – California Fish and Game Code (CFGC) Section 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement

NOTES:
1. THIS PLAN ACCURATE FOR CONSTRUCTION AREA SIGN WORK ONLY.
2. LOCATION OF CONSTRUCTION AREA SIGNS ARE APPROXIMATE. EXACT LOCATIONS WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE ENGINEER.
3. ACCESS TO DRIVEWAYS SHALL BE MAINTAINED AT ALL TIMES.

THE STANDARD PLANS LIST APPLICABLE TO THIS CONTRACT IS INCLUDED IN THE NOTICE TO BIDDERS AND SPECIAL PROVISIONS BOOK.

LEGEND:
- CONSTRUCTION AREA SIGN
- WORK AREA
- (X) CONSTRUCTION AREA SIGN (CAS) NUMBER

Dist	COUNTY	ROUTE	POST MILES TOTAL PROJECT	SHEET No.	TOTAL SHEETS
10	MAR	CR	-- --	10	X

REGISTERED CIVIL ENGINEER DATE

65% PLANS
PLANS APPROVAL DATE

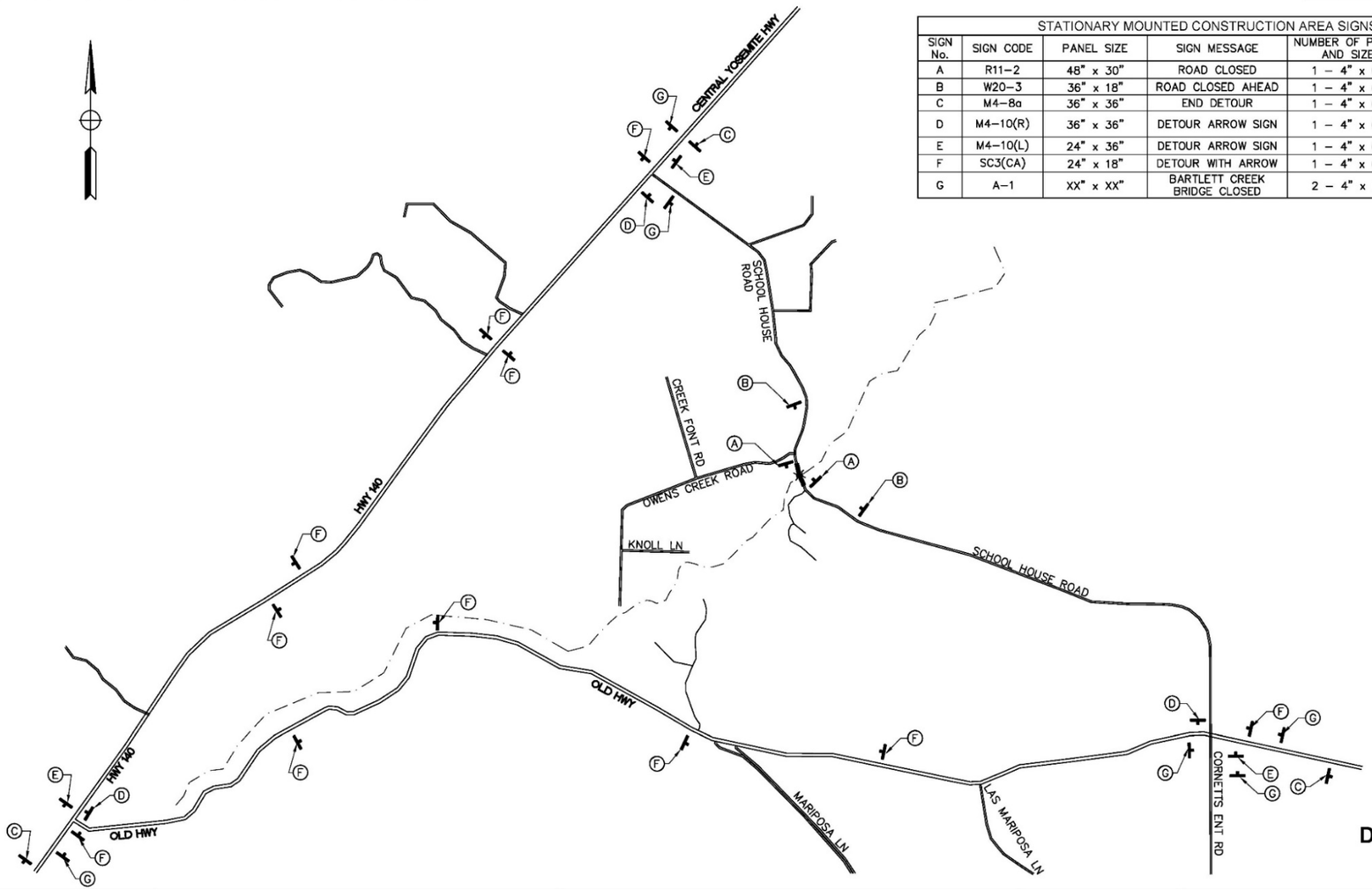
THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA OR ITS OFFICERS OR AGENTS SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF SCANNED COPIES OF THIS PLAN SHEET.

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER — CAROLYN DAVIS — No. 58440 — Exp. 12/31/20 — CIVIL — STATE OF CALIFORNIA

QUINCY ENGINEERING
11017 COBBLEROCK DRIVE, SUITE 100
RANCHO CORDOVA, CA 95670
P: 916.368.9181

STATIONARY MOUNTED CONSTRUCTION AREA SIGNS

SIGN No.	SIGN CODE	PANEL SIZE	SIGN MESSAGE	NUMBER OF POSTS AND SIZE	NUMBER OF SIGNS
A	R11-2	48" x 30"	ROAD CLOSED	1 - 4" x 6"	2
B	W20-3	36" x 18"	ROAD CLOSED AHEAD	1 - 4" x 6"	2
C	M4-8a	36" x 36"	END DETOUR	1 - 4" x 6"	2
D	M4-10(R)	36" x 36"	DETOUR ARROW SIGN	1 - 4" x 6"	2
E	M4-10(L)	24" x 36"	DETOUR ARROW SIGN	1 - 4" x 6"	2
F	SC3(CA)	24" x 18"	DETOUR WITH ARROW	1 - 4" x 6"	2
G	A-1	XX" x XX"	BARTLETT CREEK BRIDGE CLOSED	2 - 4" x 6"	2



DETOUR PLAN
NO SCALE
DE-1

MARIPOSA COUNTY – CLIENT DEPARTMENT
OWENS CREEK BRIDGE REPLACEMENT
CONSULTANT FUNCTIONAL SUPERVISOR
FUNCTIONAL SUPERVISOR
CALCULATED–DESIGNED BY
CHECKED BY
ARIANA CASTILLO
DET CHK
REVISED BY
DATE REVISED
9/12/19
LAST REVISION
DATE PLOTTED: Tuesday, November 12, 2019
TIME PLOTTED: 8:55:51 AM, Sejin Oh

BORDER LAST REVISED 7/2/2010
USERNAME Sejino
DWG FILE S:\Client\Mariposa County\M19 – 500 School House Rd. at Owens Cr (Br. No.
RELATIVE BORDER SCALE IS IN INCHES 0 1 2 3
UNIT UNIT
PROJECT NUMBER & PHASE M19-500 – PROJECT PHASE

Figure 6. School House Road Detour Plan

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3.0 Environmental Checklist

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 projects will indicate that there are no impacts to a particular resource. A “No Impact” answer in the “CEQA Determination” column of the impact summary tables at the beginning of each resource category section in this chapter reflects this determination. The words "significant" and "significance" used throughout this IS/MND are related to CEQA impacts. The questions in each impact summary table are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

Sections 3.1 through 3.20 present the CEQA determinations under Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. The CEQA determinations depend on the level of potential environmental impact that would result from the proposed Project. The level of significance determinations is defined as follows:

- ***No Impact***: Indicates no physical environmental change from existing conditions.
- ***Less than Significant Impact***: Indicates the potential for an environmental impact that is not significant.
- ***Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated***: Indicates the potential for a significant environmental impact that would be mitigated with the implementation of mitigation measures to a level of less than significant.
- ***Potentially Significant Impact***: Indicates the potential for a significant and unavoidable environmental impact.

Mitigation measures, if necessary, are noted following each impact discussion.

3.1 Aesthetics

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	No Impact
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	No Impact
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?	Less than Significant Impact
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	No Impact

Environmental Setting

The proposed Project is located in rural Mariposa County and is governed by the County of Mariposa General Plan (County of Mariposa 2006) and Catheys Valley Community Plan (2012). Both plans aim to maintain the rural character of the area. The proposed Project area is located within the community of Catheys Valley, along a narrow, rural road, adjacent to Owens Creek. It is approximately 0.7 miles from State Route 140, which brings tourists from the Central Valley to Yosemite National Park. Views in Catheys Valley consist of rolling hills with oak woodlands and shallow valleys with few obstructions to the distant Sierra Mountain peaks. School House Road is part of the local major road system, but there is no commercial district or recreational area to draw tourists from State Route 140 south onto this road. Lands within and surrounding the Project area are rural residential and agricultural.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

School House Road is not a designated Scenic Road and does not provide scenic vistas. The Project would have ***no impact*** on a scenic vista.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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

The Project is not within a state scenic highway. The nearest "officially designated" scenic highway, a segment of State Route 140 in Mariposa, is located more than 8 miles northeast of the

Project (Caltrans 2018). The Project would not affect scenic resources within a state scenic highway. The Project would have ***no impact*** on a state scenic highway.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

c. Would the project, in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or the quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

The proposed Project would result in minor visual changes to the existing School House Road corridor. These changes would include lane widening at the approaches, a higher vertical clearance over Owens Creek, and removal of approximately 20 trees. More than half of the trees to be removed are small trees with a diameter at breast height (dbh) of 3 inches and most are tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), an invasive species. These changes would have a negligible impact on the existing visual character of the School House Road corridor. The viewer groups affected by these changes include local roadway travelers and nearby residents. Therefore, the Project would not substantially degrade the quality of views in the Project area. ***The impact would be less than significant***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

d. Would the Project create a new substantial source of light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

The proposed Project would not include installation of new lighting elements. Night construction work is not planned. Therefore, the Project would have ***no impact*** on light or glare.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.2 Agriculture and Forestry 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 and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	No Impact
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	No Impact
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, 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
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	No Impact
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

Environmental Setting

The California Department of Conservation's (CDOC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) produces maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts to California's agricultural resources. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and irrigation status. Using these factors, the highest quality land is categorized as Prime Farmland. There is no Prime Farmland in the Project area or surrounding land (Figure 7). The CDOC's 2020 FMMP "Important Farmland" map identifies the following land use categories in the vicinity of the Project:

• GRAZING LAND (G): Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. The minimum mapping unit for Grazing Land is 40 acres.

• OTHER LAND (X): Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry, or aquaculture facilities; strip mines, borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than 40 acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.

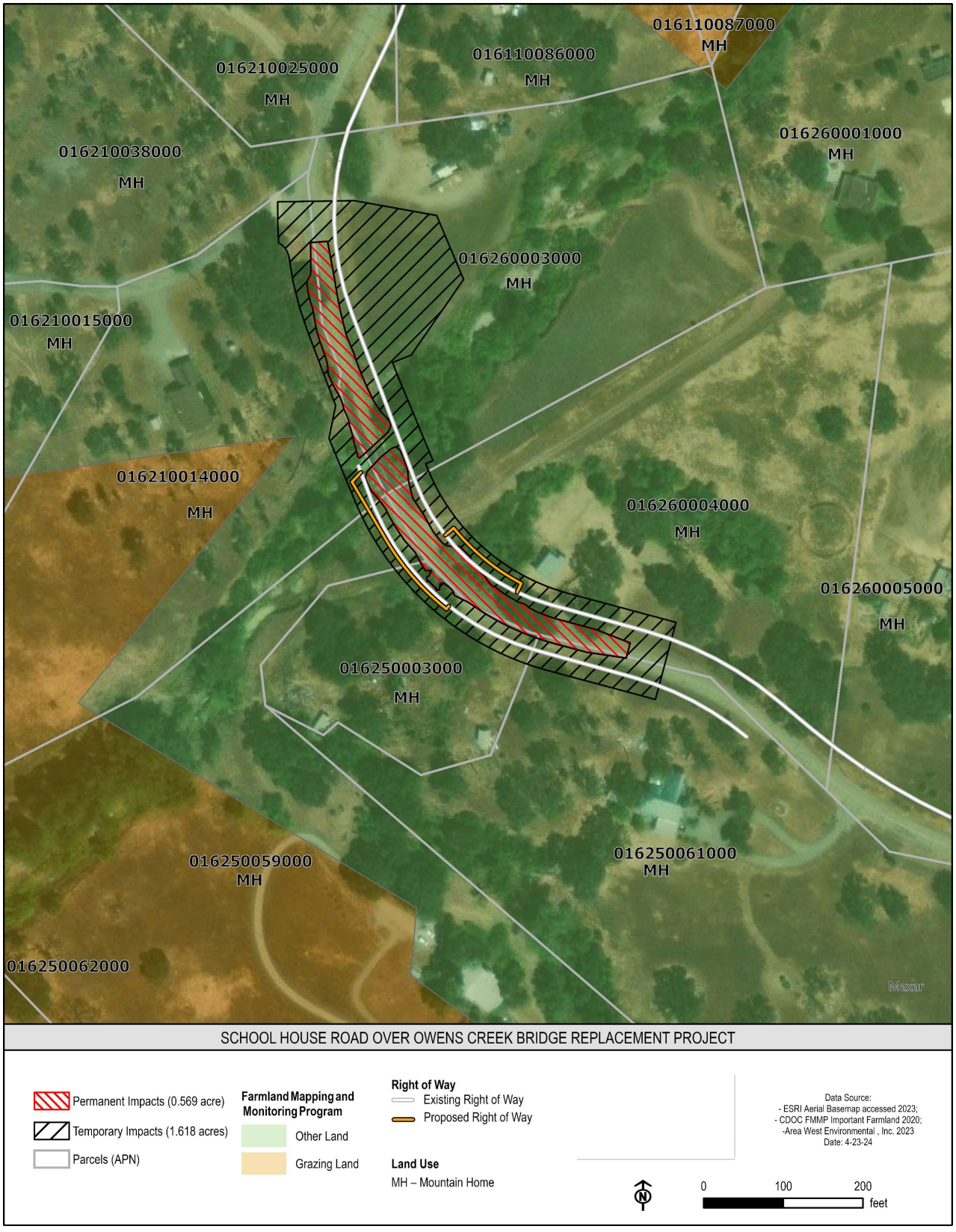

Figure 7. Farmland

CDOC FMMP also produced a California Williamson Act Enrollment 2021 map. The California Land Conservation Act of 1965 – often referred to as the Williamson Act is the State's primary program for the conservation of private land in agricultural and open space use. The Williamson Act enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive preferential property taxes based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. There are no parcels enrolled under the California Williamson Act surrounding the Project area.

Zoning on all adjacent parcels is MH: Mountain Home (Figure 8). Mariposa County applies the MH zoning to land best suited for moderate residential densities based upon suitability of terrain, location adjacent to population centers and service areas. This land use classification is provided to accommodate rural homesites in the county. There are no parcels designated as agricultural land in the Project area.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a, b, c, d, and e. Would the Project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the FMMP of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural uses; conflict with any existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract; conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production; or result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; 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?

There is no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance within or adjacent to the Project area. There is no land zoned for agricultural use or under an existing Williamson Act contract within or adjacent to the Project area. There is no forestland, timberland, or areas zoned for timberland production in the proposed Project vicinity. Therefore, the Project would have ***no impact*** on agriculture or forestry resources.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.3 Air Quality

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

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	Less than Significant Impact
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?	Less than Significant Impact
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	No Impact
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	Less than Significant Impact

Environmental Setting

The proposed Project area is located in the Mountain Counties Air Basin and is under the jurisdiction of the Mariposa County Air Pollution Control District (MCAPCD). Existing land uses in the proposed Project area and vicinity generally consist of scattered low density residential uses, livestock grazing, and open space uses. A residential property is located approximately 115 feet from the Project area. There are no sensitive receptors (i.e., hospitals, schools, daycare facilities, or elderly housing) directly adjacent to the Project area. The nearest school is approximately ½-mile northwest of the Project.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. and b. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan or 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?

Under the California Clean Air Act of 1988, districts designated as non-attainment for state Clean Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) must submit a plan for attaining or maintaining state standards for these pollutants. Mariposa County is in attainment or has an unclassified status for all state and federal ambient air quality standards, with the exception of the ozone standard. Therefore, the California Air Resources Board has not required preparation of such a plan. The MCAPCD has adopted regulation XI and amended Rule 513 that address new source review for projects that will emit more than 100 tons of ozone precursors (MCAPCD 2021).

The Project would not generate new or increased operational emissions compared to existing conditions because it improves existing facilities and does not increase capacity. Therefore, no new long-term regional emissions would result from implementation of the proposed Project and there would be no increase of air pollutants that would exceed the MCAPCD criteria of 100 tons of ozone precursors. Therefore, the Project would have ***no impact*** on applicable air quality plans.

Air pollutant emissions associated with the proposed Project would occur over the short term from construction. Construction activities would result in short-term increases in emissions from the use of heavy machinery, soil disturbance, materials used in construction and construction traffic. Construction activities are expected to take 8-10 months. Emissions would consist of fugitive dust, mainly from ground-disturbance, as well as reactive organic compounds and nitrogen oxides emissions from equipment operations and vehicle use. Emissions would be short-term and are expected to remain localized and dissipate within the immediate vicinity. The MPAPCD does not have a quantified construction emission significance threshold but has two prohibitory rules that address construction phase emissions; Rule 202 prohibits visible emissions and Rule 205 is a general nuisance prevention rule (MCAPCD 2021). Construction emissions, including construction equipment exhaust and windblown dust, would be managed in the construction contract per the provisions of Caltrans Standard Specifications, Section 14-9.02 "Air Pollution Control" and Section 10-5 "Dust Control." Therefore, the Project would have a ***less than significant*** cumulative impact on any criteria pollutant.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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

Sensitive receptors are defined as members of a population who are most sensitive to the adverse health effects of air pollution and the land uses where these population groups would reside for long periods. These groups include children, elderly, and acutely and chronically ill, and sensitive land uses include schools, residential care facilities, and hospitals. There are no sensitive receptors located in the adjacent to the Project. The nearest school is approximately ½-mile from the Project. One residence is located adjacent to the Project area. Implementation of the proposed Project would not result in the long-term operation of stationary emission sources and would not result in long-term increases in exposure to localized pollutant concentrations. Construction activities would result in temporary increases of construction-generated emissions, which are short-term, lasting only as long as construction activities occur. These emissions would be temporary and limited to the immediate area surrounding the construction site. Therefore, the proposed Project would have ***no impact*** on sensitive receptors.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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

Minor sources of odors would be present during construction from diesel engines, which may be considered offensive to some individuals. However, because odors would be temporary and would disperse rapidly with distance from the source; construction-generated odors would not result in frequent objectionable odorous emissions. This impact is ***less than significant***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.4 Biological Resources

Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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 or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or National Marine Fisheries Service?	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated
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?	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated
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?	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated
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?	Less than Significant Impact
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	No Impact
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?	No Impact

Environmental Setting

The proposed Project area is located in the southwestern portion of Mariposa County, California, with elevation in the Project area ranging from approximately 1,150 to 1,170 feet amsl. The topography is relatively flat between gently rolling hills with a general upward slope towards the eastern and western portions of the Project as Owens Creek represents the low point. The region around School House Road Bridge is characterized by hot dry summers and wet winters. Average annual rainfall is approximately 32 inches, mostly occurring from October through May.

A Natural Environment Study (NES) (Area West Environmental [AWE] 2023a) and Biological Assessment (AWE 2023b) were prepared for the Project and is summarized in this section. Biological field surveys were conducted on June 29 and 30, 2021, November 12, 2021, and April 18, 2022 within the biological study area (BSA), which includes the Project area plus a 100-foot buffer area around the Project footprint. Field surveys consisted of a botanical survey, a wildlife habitat assessment, a tree survey, a nest survey, and a delineation of wetlands and other waters of the U.S. and State. Caltrans intiated informal consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under Section 7 of the Federal Endagered Species Act and received a letter of concurrence from the USFWS on April 28, 203, concluding that the Project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the federally threatened California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*).

The BSA supports vegetation communities consisting of three aquatic vegetation communities (culvert, intermittent stream [Owens Creek] and ephemeral drainage) and four upland vegetation communities (developed, wild oats and annual brome grasslands, blue oak woodland and forest, and valley foothill riparian). Figure 8 shows generalized vegetation communities in the BSA. Acreages of vegetation communities within the BSA are provided in Table 5.

Table 5. Vegetation Communities within the Biological Study Area

Vegetation Community	Acres within the Biological Study Area
Culvert	0.002
Intermittent Stream (Owens Creek)	0.212
Ephemeral Drainage	0.062
Developed	1.025
Wild Oats and Annual Brome Grasslands	1.052
Blue Oak Woodland and Forest	4.111
Valley Foothill Riparian	0.900
Total	**7.364**

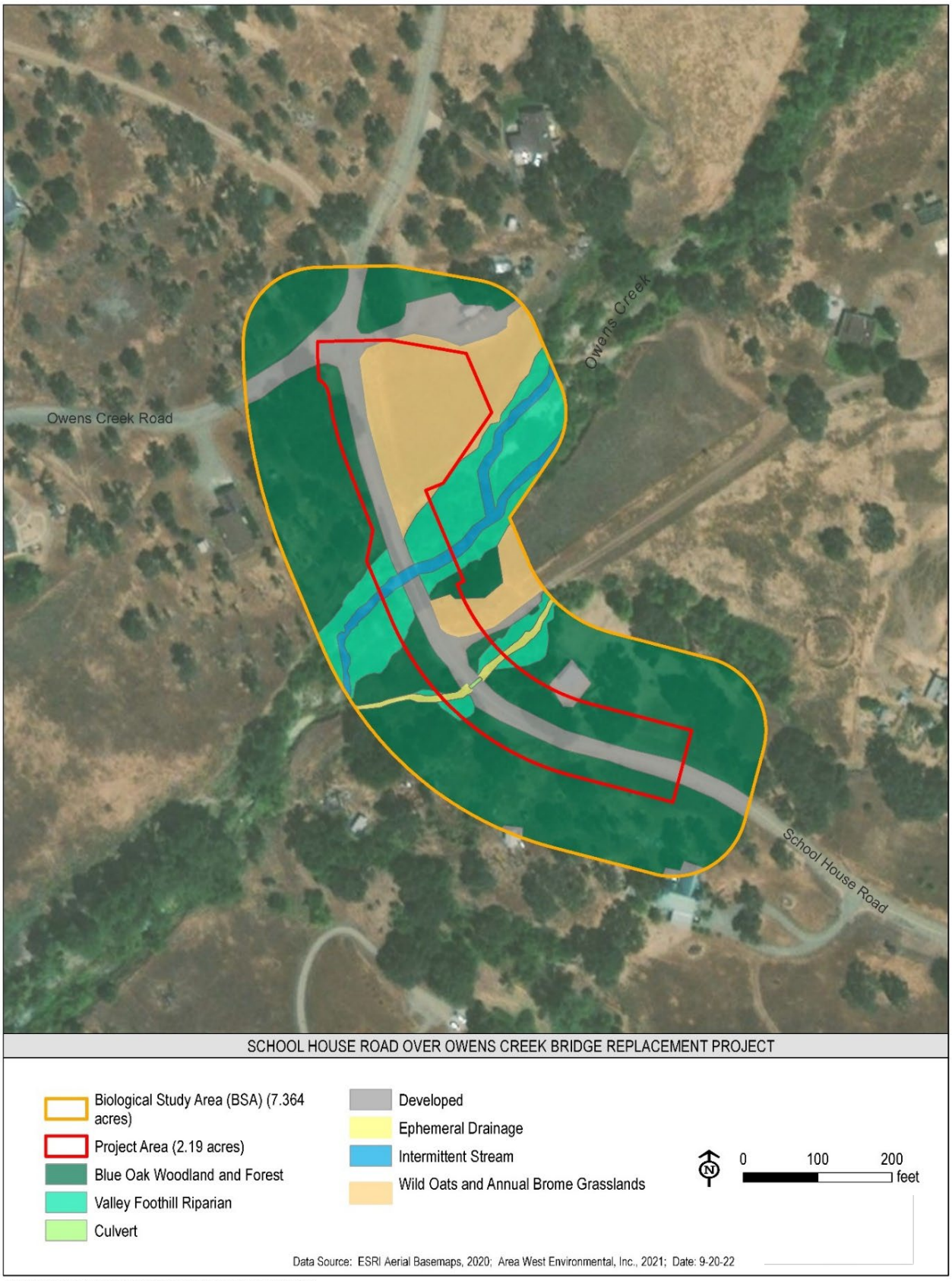

Figure 8. Vegetation Communities within the BSA

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Will 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 CDFW or USFWS?

No special-status plant species were observed during protocol-level botanical surveys conducted during the appropriate blooming period for special-status plant species with potential to occur in the Project area. Therefore, the proposed Project would not affect any special-status plant species.

The following special-status wildlife have potential to occur within the Project area:

- Foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylii*) (Federally Endangered [FE]/State Endangered [SE])
- California red-legged frog (Federally Threatened [FT]/State Species of Special Concern [SSC])
- Western spadefoot (*Spea hammondii*) (SSC)
- Western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*) (Proposed Threatened [PT]/SSC)
- Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) (State Threatened [ST])
- Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) (SSC)
- Hardhead (*Mylopharodon conocphalus*) (SSC)

Habitat for migratory birds and nesting raptors is also present. A discussion of potential impacts on habitats and special-status species is provided below.

Potential Impacts to Special-status Amphibians

Owens Creek and surrounding uplands provide suitable habitat for foothill yellow-legged frog (FE, SE) and California red-legged frog (FT, SSC). Construction of the proposed Project could result in both direct and indirect impacts to these amphibians. Direct effects could include crushing and other injuries resulting from contact with vehicles and other construction equipment; entrapment in open trenches; a reduction of prey or forage items caused by silting, fill placement, or spilling of oil or other chemicals; obstruction of movement corridors due to the presence of people, cofferdams, equipment, and topographic changes; displacement from the BSA due to the presence of people and equipment; and an increased risk of predation by wildlife inadvertently attracted by the Project (trash in Project area, freshly up-turned soils, etc.). Construction of the temporary creek diversion system and dewatering activities could temporarily impede the movement of these species dispersing between breeding areas and refugia sites. Construction activity within the creek would be completed within a few months.

Construction of the new bridge would not change the quality and function of the aquatic habitat provided by Owens Creek. Therefore, the Project would not alter habitat suitability for these amphibian species from existing conditions. A Biological Assessment and addendum submitted to the USFWS evaluating potential Project impacts to California red-legged frog and foothill yellow-legged frog determined that the Project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect California red-legged frog and foothill yellow-legged frog (AWE 2023b).

Impacts on special-status amphibians would be avoided and minimized through implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-5 and BIO-7 through BIO-12**, described at the end of this impact discussion.

Potential Impacts to Special-status Reptiles

Western pond turtle (PT/SCC) could use Owens Creek and surrounding areas within the BSA for aquatic and breeding habitat. Direct effects to western pond turtle could include impacts to nests containing eggs or young resulting from contact with vehicles and other construction equipment; entrapment in open trenches; a reduction of prey or forage items caused by silting, fill placement, or spilling of oil or other chemicals; obstruction of movement corridors due to the presence of people, cofferdams, equipment, and topographic changes; displacement from the BSA due to the presence of people and equipment; and an increased risk of predation by wildlife inadvertently attracted by the Project (trash in Project area, freshly up-turned soils, etc.).

The new bridge would not change the quality and function of aquatic habitat provided by Owens Creek. Therefore, the Project would not alter habitat suitability for western pond turtle from existing conditions.

Impacts on special-status reptiles would be avoided and minimized through implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-5, BIO-7 through BIO-9, and BIO-11 through BIO-13**, described at the end of this impact discussion.

Potential Impacts to Special-status and Migratory Birds

The large trees within the BSA could provide suitable nesting habitat for Swainson's hawk (ST), and the grasslands in the vicinity of the BSA provide suitable foraging habitat for the species. No Swainson's hawk individuals or evidence of Swainson's hawk use (i.e., feathers or large stick nests) were observed during surveys.

Other migratory birds or raptors could potentially nest on the bridge structure, in shrubs, trees or on the ground within or adjacent to the Project area. During surveys, two black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*) nests were observed beneath the bridge, attached to the structure. No other nests were observed.

Removal of trees, shrubs and the bridge structure within the Project area could directly affect nesting birds if they are present. The removal of large trees would result in the loss of suitable nesting habitat for Swainson's hawk. Additionally, noise associated with construction activities involving heavy equipment operation that occurs during the breeding season (generally between March 1 [March 15 for Swainson's hawk] and August 31) could disturb nesting migratory birds and raptors if an active nest is located near these activities. Disturbance of active nests located at or near the construction work area could cause migratory bird or raptor nest abandonment and subsequent loss of eggs or developing young.

Potential impacts to Swainson's hawk, and migratory birds and raptors, and their habitat, would be avoided through **Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3, BIO-6 through BIO-8, and BIO-14**, described at the end of this impact discussion.

Potential Impacts to Special-status Mammals

Pallid bat (SCC) could potentially occur in the Project area. Within the BSA, potential bat roosting habitat occurs within large trees (with holes) in the riparian woodland, and under the School House Road Bridge. Evidence of bat roosting beneath the bridge was observed during biological surveys and bat chatter was detected near the abutments of the existing bridge, although the species of bat roosting on the bridge was not identified. Bat species could forage in openings in the riparian habitat, blue oak woodland habitat, open grassland, or above Owens Creek. If roosting bats are present within the Project area during Project activities, the Project may affect this species. Direct effects could include vegetation removal, bridge removal, soil disturbance, and construction activities in areas that could support roosting bats. Noise associated with construction activities involving heavy equipment operation could disturb roosting bats if they are found to be using habitat near these activities. Vegetation removal could result in alteration of roosting and/or foraging habitat for bats. However, construction activities are not expected to disturb foraging pallid bats or other bat species, as these activities would not be conducted during dusk or dark when bats would be actively foraging.

Following Project construction, temporarily disturbed areas would be restored, and the Project area would continue to function as it does currently for bats. Therefore, the Project would not result in reduced habitat quality for roosting and foraging bats. Potential impacts to roosting bats would be avoided and minimized by implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3, BIO-7, BIO-8, and BIO-15**, described at the end of this impact discussion.

Potential Impacts to Special-status Fish Species

Suitable riverine habitat for hardhead (SSC) is present within the BSA. Owens Creek is a warm water stream with intermittent flow and pools, which provide suitable habitat for this species during portions of the year when water is present. The ephemeral drainage that is a tributary to Owens Creek is not potential habitat for this species. If hardhead is present within the Project area during Project

activities, the Project may directly affect this species. Direct effects could include crushing and other injuries resulting from contact with vehicles and other construction equipment; a reduction of prey or forage items caused by silting, fill placement, or spilling of oil or other chemicals; obstruction of movement corridors due to the presence of people, cofferdams, equipment, and topographic changes; displacement from the BSA due to the presence of people and equipment; and loss of shade from the removal of riparian vegetation, which could cause a potential slight increase in summer stream temperatures, and a potential decrease in food source and detritus associated with canopy cover. Short-term construction activity within the creek would be completed within a few months. The new bridge would not change the quality and function of the aquatic habitat provided by the creek. Therefore, the Project is not expected to alter habitat suitability for hardhead or other fish species from existing conditions.

Potential impacts to hardhead, and their habitat, would be avoided through **Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-5, BIO-7, BIO-11, BIO-12, and BIO-16**, described at the end of this impact discussion.

Impacts to special-status wildlife species would be ***less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures***.

Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Conduct Environmental Awareness Training

Before any work occurs in the Project area, including grading and equipment staging, all construction personnel shall participate in an environmental awareness training regarding special-status species and sensitive habitats present in the Project area. If new construction personnel are added to the Project, they must receive the mandatory training before starting work. The training shall be provided to all personnel and will discuss sensitive resources (i.e., aquatic resources, riparian habitat, special-status species and habitat, nesting birds/raptors) to be avoided during Project construction and lists applicable permit conditions identified by state and federal agencies to protect these resources.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2: Install Temporary Fencing

Final Project construction drawings will identify the locations of temporary fencing to exclude environmentally sensitive areas and resources from the work zone. Exclusion fencing will be established to confine access routes and construction areas to the minimum area necessary to complete construction and minimize the impact to California red-legged frog and foothill yellow-legged frog habitat; this goal includes locating access routes and construction areas outside of wetlands and riparian areas to the maximum extent practicable. Exclusion fencing will be installed along the riparian corridor to prevent potential dispersing California red-legged frogs and foothill yellow-legged frogs from entering the terrestrial work areas. The County shall ensure that temporary construction barrier fencing, silt fencing, and/or flagging is installed between the work area and environmentally sensitive habitat areas, before any ground-disturbing activity occurs

within the Project area, as appropriate. Construction personnel and construction activity shall avoid areas identified as environmentally sensitive. The fencing/flagging shall be checked regularly and maintained until all construction is complete. No construction activity shall be allowed until this condition is satisfied. Any required barrier or sediment fencing and a note reflecting this condition shall be shown on the final construction documents.

Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Restore Temporarily Disturbed Areas

Immediately after bridge construction is complete, all exposed soil shall be stabilized. Soil stabilization may include, but is not limited to, seeding with a native grass seed mix, planting native plants, and placement of rock. These areas will be properly protected from washout and erosion using appropriate erosion control devices including coir or jute netting, hydroseeding, and revegetation. No plastic monofilament materials shall be used aboveground.

Mitigation Measure BIO-4: Implement Water Quality Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Before any ground-disturbing activities, the County shall prepare and implement a SWPPP (as required under the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) General Construction Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ [and as amended by most current order(s)]) that includes erosion control measures and construction waste containment measures to ensure that waters of the State are protected during and after Project construction. The SWPPP shall include site design to minimize offsite stormwater runoff that might otherwise affect adjacent stream habitat.

The SWPPP shall be prepared with the following objectives: (a) to identify pollutant sources, including sources of sediment, that may affect the quality of storm water discharges from the construction of the proposed Project; (b) to identify BMPs to reduce or eliminate pollutants in stormwater discharges and authorized non-stormwater discharges from the Project during construction; (c) to outline and provide guidance for BMP monitoring; (d) to identify proposed Project discharge points and receiving waters; to address post-construction BMP implementation and monitoring; and (f) to address sedimentation, siltation, and turbidity.

The SWPPP will require BMPs including, but not limited to:

- Conduct ground disturbing activities adjacent to and within Owens Creek and the ephemeral drainage during the low-flow period (generally between June 1 and October 15).
- Install sediment fencing, fiber rolls, or other equivalent erosion and sediment control measures between the designated work area and Owens Creek and the ephemeral drainage, as necessary, to ensure that construction debris and sediment does not inadvertently enter the drainage. The County will also cover or otherwise stabilize all exposed soil 48 hours prior to potential precipitation events of greater than 0.5 inch.
- No refueling, storage, servicing, or maintenance of equipment shall take place within 100 feet of aquatic habitat.

- All machinery used during construction of the Project shall be properly maintained and cleaned to prevent spills and leaks that could contaminate soil or water.
- Any spills or leaks from construction equipment (i.e., fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid, and grease) shall be cleaned up in accordance with applicable local, state, and/or federal regulations.

Mitigation Measure BIO-5: Install Catchment Tarps Prior to any Work Activity to the Bridge

Prior to any bridge demolition, decommissioning, or work activity within the channel floodway embankments, catchment tarps, or a debris containment system will be installed to ensure all construction debris is caught and removed daily from the channel floodway.

Mitigation Measure BIO-6: Avoid the Spread of Invasive Plant Species

The following mitigation measures shall be implemented, as appropriate, to avoid the spreading of invasive plant species throughout the Project area during construction activities, particularly in riparian areas:

- All hay, straw, hay bales, straw bales, seed, mulch or other material used for erosion control or landscaping in the Project area shall be free of noxious weed seeds and propagules.
- All equipment brought to the Project area for construction shall be thoroughly cleaned of all dirt and vegetation prior to entering the site, to prevent importing noxious weeds.
- All material brought to the site, including rock, gravel, road base, sand, and topsoil, shall be free of noxious weed seeds and propagules.

Mitigation Measure BIO-7: Minimize Vegetation Removal

- The disturbance or removal of vegetation, especially riparian vegetation and native tree species, would not exceed the minimum necessary to complete the Project and would only occur within the defined work area. Precautions would be taken to avoid other damage to vegetation by people or equipment.
- Areas within the Project area where avoidance of impacts to riparian areas and native tree species is determined to be feasible will be protected during Project activities. These areas would be considered environmentally sensitive areas and exclusion fencing would be installed to ensure avoidance.
- No trees or riparian vegetation outside of the Project area would be removed. Exclusion fencing would be installed along the boundary of the Project area to ensure work is confined to the minimum area possible.

Mitigation Measure BIO-8: Monitor during Ground Disturbance and Vegetation Removal

A biologist will be present during initial ground disturbance, vegetation removal, and exclusion fencing installation and removal within the construction area. Vegetation less than 3 inches in diameter will be cleared by hand or small engine weedeaters or chainsaws. Small material or

grasses will be mowed close to ground with low impact rubber-tired tractors. Vegetation over 3 inches in diameter may require larger equipment such as telescoping chainsaws, hoe-mounted flail mowers, bucket machines to hoist crews and equipment, and climbing crews with chainsaws. The biological monitor must be a biologist with demonstrated knowledge of special-status invertebrate species, foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, western spadefoot, and western pond turtle natural history, ecology and identifying characteristics, as well as demonstrated field experience identifying other amphibian and reptile species within the range of these listed species.

If any listed wildlife species (e.g., California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog) are observed in the Project work limits during construction, work will immediately stop, the species will be allowed to move out of harm's way on its own accord, and the USFWS and CDFW will be contacted within 24 hours. In the event that any life stage of California red-legged frog or foothill yellow-legged frog is present or has potential to be present, re-initiation of consultation with USFWS may be required.

Mitigation Measure BIO-9: Provide Escape Ramps or Cover Open Trenches

To avoid entrapment of wildlife, all excavated steep-walled holes or trenches more than 1 foot deep will be provided with one or more escape ramps constructed of earth fill or wooden planks at the end of each workday. If escape ramps cannot be provided, then holes or trenches will be covered with plywood or similar materials. Providing escape ramps or covering open trenches will prevent injury or mortality of wildlife resulting from falling into trenches and becoming trapped. The trenches will be thoroughly inspected for the presence of federally listed species at the beginning of each workday. Any species observed shall be allowed to voluntarily move outside of the work area on its own. If at any time a trapped listed animal is discovered, the approved biologist, or an on-site designee identified by the approved biologist, will immediately place escape ramps or other appropriate structures to allow the animal to escape.

Mitigation Measure BIO-10: Complete Preconstruction Surveys for Special-status Amphibian Species

A biologist shall conduct a survey no less than 7 days prior to the initiation of any ground disturbing activities within or adjacent to suitable habitat for foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, western spadefoot, and other special-status aquatic species that have potential to occur in the BSA. This survey will comprise walking transects while conducting visual encounter surveys within areas that will be subject to staging, vegetation clearing, grubbing, grading, cut and fill, or other ground disturbing activities. The survey will include areas upstream and downstream of the BSA. All potential habitat features in the BSA, such as crevices, burrows and/or insulated ledges along waterways shall be inspected for signs of foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, and western spadefoot usage to the maximum extent practicable.

Immediately prior to in-stream activities or installation of water diversion structures, and after the 7-day survey, a biologist shall conduct a follow-up survey for foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, western spadefoot, and other special-status aquatic species that have potential to occur in the BSA. All potential habitat features in the BSA shall be inspected for special-status amphibian species, such as crevices, burrows and/or insulated ledges along waterways. If foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, western spadefoot, and other special-status aquatic species that have potential to occur in the BSA are present (including their egg masses or tadpoles) in the immediate work area, then all work shall stop, and the appropriate agencies shall be notified. In the event of any life stage of California red-legged frog or foothill yellow-legged frog is present or has potential to be present, USFWS will be contacted, and re-initiation of consultation may be required. Any special-status species observed shall be allowed to voluntarily move outside of the work area on its own volition.

Non-listed and common aquatic species shall be captured and relocated out of the work area in a net or placed in buckets containing stream water and then moved directly to the nearest suitable habitat in the same branch of the creek. Suitable habitat shall be identified prior to capturing aquatic species to minimize holding time.

If egg masses or tadpoles of state-listed special-status aquatic species are detected during preconstruction surveys, no in-stream construction may commence until species have metamorphosed and moved out of the work area on its own volition. Once the biologist has determined that all listed aquatic species have moved out of the work area or been effectively relocated, barrier seines or exclusion fencing shall be installed to prevent amphibians from moving back in, as appropriate, and the work area will be dewatered, as necessary.

If any listed wildlife species (e.g., California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog) are observed in the Project work limits during construction, work will immediately stop, the species will be allowed to move out of harm's way on its own accord, and the USFWS and CDFW will be contacted within 24 hours.

Mitigation Measure BIO-11: Restrict In-stream Work to Low-flow Period

To minimize impacts of dewatering and construction on foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, western pond turtle, and other resident aquatic species, limit in-creek construction activities to between June 1 and October 15, unless creek is dry or as otherwise specified by appropriate agencies. This window can be extended based on stream conditions, if approved in writing by regulatory agencies with jurisdiction. Work from the existing roadway, top of banks, and within falsework can occur year-round.

Mitigation Measure BIO-12: Monitor during Dewatering Activities

Appropriate temporary cofferdams shall be used to dewater the construction site and divert water through the Project area during the construction period to prevent impeding water flow through

the work area. When dewatering is required, a qualified biologist shall be present during the dewatering period to inspect and ensure that sensitive aquatic species will not be trapped within the temporary cofferdams and to monitor the construction site during aquatic species relocation and dewatering activities. If foothill yellow-legged frog or any other special-status aquatic species are found within the cofferdams, then all work shall stop, and the appropriate agencies shall be notified. Any species observed shall be allowed to voluntarily move outside of the work area on its own. All cofferdams shall be inspected and maintained on a daily basis to ensure its integrity for the duration of the work below the ordinary high water mark (OHWM) of the creek. Pumps used for dewatering shall have fish screens, as identified in Project permits, installed to minimize intake of fish and other aquatic species into pumps. Diversion structures shall be left in place until all in-stream work is completed.

At the completion of Project construction, the County/contractor shall remove from the streambed all materials used to maintain flow and divert water from the Project area during the construction period, including cofferdams, pipes, and filter fabric. Temporary culverts and all construction materials and debris shall be removed from the affected area prior to reestablishing flow and prior to the rainy season. A monitor shall be present during the removal of dewatering materials.

Mitigation Measure BIO-13: Conduct a Preconstruction Survey for Western Pond Turtle

A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction clearance survey for western pond turtles within 48 hours prior to any ground disturbance within Owens Creek and within the Project area, as well as upstream and downstream from the Project area and up to 1,300 feet from the stream channel in undeveloped upland habitats where access permits. For surveys outside the Project area where access is not permitted, the surveying biologist shall use binoculars to scan upstream, downstream, and within uplands for western pond turtle. Any western pond turtles found within the construction work area shall be allowed to voluntarily move out of this area or shall be captured and held by a qualified biologist for the minimum amount of time necessary to release them into suitable aquatic habitat outside the construction work area. If a western pond turtle nest containing eggs or young is identified within the construction work area, the biologist shall consult with CDFW to determine an appropriate no-disturbance buffer to ensure avoidance of the nest.

Mitigation Measure BIO-14: Conduct a Preconstruction Nesting Migratory Bird and Raptor Survey

If construction or vegetation removal will occur during the breeding season for migratory birds and raptors (generally February through August), the County shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction nesting bird and raptor survey prior to the start of construction activities (including equipment staging). The preconstruction nesting bird and raptor surveys shall be conducted between February 1 and August 31 within suitable habitat within the designated Project area. Surveys for raptors' nests would also extend 1,250 feet from the Project area to ensure that nesting raptors are not affected by construction disturbances. For raptor surveys outside the Project area where property access has not been granted, the surveying biologist shall use binoculars to

scan any suitable nesting substrate for potential raptor nests. The preconstruction survey shall be conducted no more than 48 hours before the initiation of construction activities.

If an active bird or raptor nest is identified within the construction work area or an active raptor nest is identified within 1,250 feet from the construction work area, a no-disturbance buffer shall be established around the nest to avoid disturbance of the nesting birds or raptors until a qualified biologist determines that the young have fledged and are foraging on their own. The extent of these buffers shall be determined by the biologist (coordinating with CDFW) and shall depend on the species identified, level of noise or construction disturbance, line-of-sight between the nest and the disturbance, ambient levels of noise and other disturbances, and other topographic or artificial barriers. In addition to the establishment of buffers, other avoidance measures (determined during CDFW coordination) may include monitoring of the nest during construction and restricting the type of work that can be conducted near the nest site. If no active nests are found during the preconstruction surveys, then no additional mitigation is required.

If a lapse in construction activities for one week or longer occurs during the avian breeding season, another preconstruction survey would be performed prior to work re-initiation.

Mitigation Measure BIO-15: Conduct a Preconstruction Survey and Exclusion for Bats

To minimize impacts to roosting bats, humane eviction of bats from onsite roosting habitat (i.e., on-site trees with crevices or cavities suitable for roosting and the existing bridge) would be completed prior to removal. Eviction would be conducted during periods of dry weather and outside of the maternity season. The maternity season is approximately April 15 through September 1.

Bridge Roosting Habitat. Prior to the start of construction activities and outside of the maternity season, bat exclusion would be installed beneath the bridge by a qualified biologist or bat exclusion expert. Humane bat eviction would consist of daytime installation of one-way exits attached to the concrete that would permit bats to exit but not re-enter. After 4-10 days, or after a visual inspection shows that all bats have vacated the roosts, the one-way exits would be removed, and the entrances blocked securely to prevent bats from entering prior to demolition.

Tree Roosting Habitat. If construction is scheduled between April and September, before construction begins, a qualified biologist will survey for roosting bats prior to tree removal activities. The qualified biologist would survey trees and rocky outcrops within the Project area and identify any snags, hollow trees, or other trees with cavities that may provide suitable roosting habitat for bats. If no suitable roosting trees are found, construction may proceed. Trees containing suitable roosting habitat would be removed in two steps occurring over two consecutive days. On the first day, small limbs containing no cavity, crevice, or exfoliating bark would be removed using chainsaws only. On the second day, the remainder of the tree would be removed. If bats are found or evidence of use by bats is present, the qualified biologist will work with CDFW to implement measures to avoid or minimize disturbance to the colony.

Mitigation Measure BIO-16: Rescue Stranded Aquatic Life

All reasonable efforts shall be made to capture and move all stranded aquatic life observed in the dewatered areas. Capture methods may include fish landing nets, dip nets, buckets, and by hand. Captured aquatic life shall be released immediately downstream in Owens Creek or in the closest body of water. Efforts shall be made to reduce collecting and handling stress, minimize the time that animals are held in buckets, and minimize handling stress during processing and release. No employee or contractor shall remove any fish, dead or alive, from the site for personal use.

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, and regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS?

Valley foothill riparian vegetation community occupies the edge of Owens Creek and along the ephemeral drainage to the south of the existing bridge. Project construction would result in the removal of valley foothill riparian vegetation within the Project area. Although the Project has been sited to minimize impacts on riparian vegetation by limiting disturbance to the smallest work limits possible, Project construction would result in 0.040 acre of permanent impacts and 0.154 acre of temporary impacts to riparian vegetation. Several riparian trees would be removed to facilitate construction. Permanent impacts would occur from constructing a wider bridge structure and widening the bridge approaches. Temporary impacts would occur from vegetation clearing, grubbing, or trimming of tree canopy that would be required to provide construction crews and equipment access to Owens Creek.

Following Project completion, the riparian area would be restored to its existing grade. Temporary impact areas within riparian areas would be replanted with native riparian species, except for some small areas where rock slope protection (RSP) may be installed. The Project would convert a negligible amount of valley foothill riparian to transportation uses (i.e., road fill and RSP under the bridge), but the Project would not alter the quality and overall function of the Project riparian habitat from existing conditions.

The implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3, BIO-6 and BIO-7** would minimize impacts to riparian habitat.

Impacts to riparian habitat would be ***less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures***.

Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Conduct Environmental Awareness Training

Mitigation Measure BIO-2: Install Temporary Fencing

Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Restore Temporarily Disturbed Areas

Mitigation Measure BIO-6: Avoid the Spread of Invasive Plant Species

Mitigation Measure BIO-7: Minimize Vegetation Removal

c. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally-protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA; including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption or other means?

The Project area does not support federally protected wetlands but includes other waters of the U.S. and State, which are regulated by Section 404 of the CWA.

The aquatic resources delineation for the Project identified two aquatic features within the BSA—an intermittent creek (Owens Creek) and an ephemeral stream. Owens Creek would be considered a water of the U.S. and State because it has a well-defined OHWM and because water that flows within this stream drains to a navigable waterway. The ephemeral drainage would also be considered a water of the U.S. and State because it also exhibits a defined OHWM and drains into Owens Creek which drains into a navigable waterway.

Project construction activities would result in 0.003 acre of permanent impact and 0.038 acre of temporary impact to the intermittent stream (Owens Creek) and 0.010 acre of permanent impact and 0.010 acre of temporary impact to the ephemeral drainage. During construction, permanent impacts to Owens Creek would result from the installation of RSP under the new bridge and fill within the channel associated with construction of the replacement bridge and widening the roadway approaches. Permanent impact to the ephemeral drainage would result from the installation of the new culvert and rock revetment on the inlet and outlet of the new culvert. Temporary impact to Owens Creek and the ephemeral drainage would include disturbance by vegetation removal, removal of the existing bridge, removal of the existing culvert, and temporary water diversion. The water diversion system may include screened pumps, a temporary pipe network, siltation baffles, and installation of cofferdams in the form of water bladder, sheet piling, stacked sandbags, or clean rock/gravel with a plastic liner below and on the sides to route flow through and around the immediate work area, maintain dewatered conditions, and return flow to the downstream channel network without causing harm to biological resources or affecting water quality.

Additionally, earth moving adjacent to Owens Creek and the ephemeral drainage due to construction of the new bridge abutments could result in increased sediment loads, turbidity, and siltation into the stream. The accidental introduction of washwater, solvents, oil, cement, or other pollutants during construction could also harm the aquatic environment in Owens Creek and the ephemeral drainage.

Implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-5** would minimize potential Project impacts to these aquatic features. Impacts would be ***less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures***.

Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Conduct Environmental Awareness Training

Mitigation Measure BIO-2: Install Temporary Fencing

Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Restore Temporarily Disturbed Areas

Mitigation Measure BIO-4: Implement Water Quality BMPs

Mitigation Measure BIO-5: Install Catchment Tarps Prior to any Work Activity to the Bridge

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 corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Owens Creek, the ephemeral stream, and their associated riparian habitat have the potential to provide a migratory corridor for fish and wildlife species. As described under Question b, a small portion of the riparian habitat in the BSA would be temporarily and permanently impacted by Project activities. During Project construction, wildlife would be deterred from moving or dispersing through the Project area due to construction noise and human presence. Wildlife could continue to migrate through existing habitat adjacent to the Project area. It is anticipated that both Owens Creek and the ephemeral stream will be dry during the Project activities. However, if water is present, a water diversion would be installed with proper fish passage. The permanent impact to the riparian corridor and waterways would be negligible, the habitat would continue to provide a migratory corridor as it had prior to the Project, and there would be no other substantial change to conditions for dispersing or migrating species. Therefore, impacts would be ***less than significant***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

e. Would the Project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

The Project is consistent with the following County General Plan goals, policies, and strategies (County of Mariposa 2006):

- Goal 11-1: Conserve the natural and scenic resources, and open space lands to protect and enhance the County's quality of life and character ensuring a viable economy.
- Policy 11-2d(1): Implement requirements for minimum building and grading setback lines from waters of the state (i.e., perennial streams and environmentally significant wetlands), that are adequate to protect stream riparian, and wetland resource values.

- Goal 11-4: Conserve and enhance the ecosystems, plant communities, wildlife habitats, and the inherent diversity of both plant and animal species for the recreational, commercial, aesthetic, and basic ecosystems needs.
- Policy 11-4a(2): Conserve the diversity of native ecosystems, plant communities, wildlife habitat, and plant and animal species in the County.

The Project would not conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. There would be ***no impact.***

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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?

There are no adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservations Plans, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans that overlap with the Project area. Therefore, the proposed Project would have ***no impact.***

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.5 Cultural Resources

Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to in §15064.5?	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated

Environmental Setting

To identify the potential for cultural resources to be affected by the proposed Project, Area West Environmental (AWE) conducted archival records searches, assessed buried site sensitivity, and conducted a pedestrian survey and Extended Phase I (XPI) study of the Project area. Mariposa County contacted interested Native American parties and completed consultation with the Southern Sierra Mikuk Nation (SSMN), as discussed in Section 3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources.

The Central California Information Center (CCaIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System located at California State University, Stanislaus, in Turlock, California provided record search results on April 28, 2016 and July 2, 2021. The CCaIC search results identified two resources within the Project area and an additional 10 resources within the ½-mile search radius of the Project. Of the two resources within the Project area, one of these, the bridge itself has been determined by Caltrans to be a Category 5 bridge, not eligible for listing on the California or National Register of Historic Places (Caltrans 2012). The other is a prehistoric bedrock milling site found within the Project area.

An intensive pedestrian survey was conducted for the Project on June 29 and 30, 2021. During the pedestrian survey, prehistoric and historic resources were identified within or adjacent to the Area of Potential Effect (APE). The site sensitivity analysis indicates that there is a high potential for encountering surface and buried precontact archaeological resources in the APE. An XPI study was conducted on July 25 and 26, 2023 to determine: (1) whether or not a known site extends horizontally into the Project's Area of Direct Impact (ADI); and (2) if a subsurface deposit is associated with surface materials or features. During the XPI study, cultural materials were identified near the known site and within the Project's ADI (AWE 2024).

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. and b. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5? Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource as defined in §15064.5?

The known historical and archaeological resources in the Project area would be protected in their entirety from construction activities with the implementation of an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) Action Plan. The ESA Action Plan includes fencing to protect known resources and procedures for worker training, construction monitoring, and inadvertent discovery during construction. If previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction, the contractor would halt work in that area until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find.

Impacts to historical resources and archaeological resources would be ***less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures***.

Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Worker Environmental Awareness and Cultural Respect Training

Prior to excavation or other subsurface disturbance activities, individuals conducting the work will be required to participate in Worker Environmental Awareness and Cultural Respect Training. Workers will be advised to watch for cultural resource materials, including evidence of pre-contact cultural resources (freshwater shells, beads, bone tool remnants or an assortment of bones, soil changes including subsurface ash lens or soil darker "midden" in color than surrounding soil, lithic materials such as flakes, tools or grinding rocks, etc.), or historic-era cultural resources (adobe foundations or walls, structures and remains with square nails, refuse deposits or bottle dumps, often associated with wells or old privies).

Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Tribal Monitoring during Construction

A Tribal monitor will be present during all ground excavation activities. The Contractor will coordinate with SSMN to schedule the Tribal monitor.

Mitigation Measure CUL-3: Procedures for Inadvertent Discovery of Cultural Resources

If previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction, work will be halted within 60 feet of the find until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find, in coordination with the Tribal monitor when the find contains potential pre-historic resources. Mariposa County and Caltrans will be notified of the potential find, and the County will retain an on-call archaeologist for the duration of ground-disturbing construction activities to assess finds. If resource is determined to be significant, the archaeologist shall work with the County, Caltrans, and (if applicable) the Tribe to develop and implement appropriate procedures to protect the integrity of the resource.

Mitigation Measure CUL-4: Environmentally Sensitive Area Fencing

Access to environmentally sensitive areas will be barred using temporary orange plastic fencing to protect designated sites. The ESAs will be clearly delineated on construction plans and noted

for avoidance. Qualified archaeological and biological consultants under the supervision of Caltrans, will monitor the installation of ESA fencing. The ESAs will be fenced off (Temporary Fencing [Type ESA]) and will be posted as an ESA. No construction or associated activities (e.g., parking, equipment storage) shall take place within the ESAs. During construction, the County Project Manager, archaeological consultant, and Tribal monitor will periodically inspect the ESAs to confirm that no construction activities have encroached on the site area. After construction, the archaeological consultant will monitor the removal of ESA fencing.

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

No human remains have been previously encountered in the vicinity of the proposed Project. However, this does not preclude the potential for discovering buried human remains during ground disturbance associated with construction of the proposed Project. Although unlikely, if human remains are discovered during proposed Project construction, California Health and Safety Code regulations shall be followed, as required by law. Potential impacts resulting from disturbance of human remains during Project construction are considered ***less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated.***

Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation Measure CUL-5: Procedures for Human Remains

If human remains, associated grave goods, or sacred objects are encountered during excavation, the following protocols will be strictly adhered to:

- Provisions of state and local law applicable to the intentional excavation and the inadvertent discovery of human remains or cultural items on non-federal lands will be complied with pursuant to the provisions of the California Health and Safety Code (Sections 7050.5-7054.1, and 8100) and the Public Resources Code (Sections 5097.90-99)
- The Principal Investigator shall immediately notify the Native American Monitor, Caltrans District 10 PQS Sarah Luce, a Mariposa County Representative, and the Mariposa County Coroner.
- If the remains are considered to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be notified. The NAHC will notify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD)
- Potentially damaging excavation activities within 100 feet of the remains will be stopped immediately.
- Treatment and repatriation of human remains will be conducted in consultation with the MLD.

3.6 Energy

Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during Project construction or operation?	Less than Significant Impact
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	No Impact

Environmental Setting

The proposed Project is a bridge replacement project. Energy would be consumed during the construction phase in the form of diesel or gasoline fuel consumption for construction equipment and vehicles. No changes to operational energy consumption would occur.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

During construction, the proposed Project would require the use of construction vehicles to deliver construction personnel and materials to the site, complete grading, construct the abutments, and install the new bridge and roadway overlay. Construction would be temporary. Construction vehicles would be properly maintained, and it is reasonable to assume that the construction contractor would avoid wasteful or unnecessary fuel consumption to reduce construction costs and waste. Therefore, the proposed Project would not involve the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during construction. This impact would be considered ***less than significant***.

During Project operation, the proposed Project would retain its existing use as a transportation facility and would not include changes to the roadway capacity. Therefore, the proposed Project is not expected to cause any operational change in the number of vehicle miles traveled and would not lead to inefficient or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. There would be ***no impact*** due to operational conditions.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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

The proposed Project is a transportation project and does not include any energy-consuming features. Therefore, the proposed Project would not conflict with renewable energy or energy efficiency policies and would have ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.7 Geology and Soils

Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) 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
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	No Impact
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	No Impact
(iv) Landslides?	No Impact
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated
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?	No Impact
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	No Impact
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	No Impact
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	Less than Significant Impact

Environmental Setting

The proposed Project is located in the southwestern portion of Mariposa County, California, within the physiographic unit referred to as the Sierra Nevada Geomorphic Province, near the western boundary with the Great Valley Province. The Sierra Nevada province has a high, rugged eastern face with a gentle western slope under sediments of the Great Valley, a trough in which sediments have been deposited almost continuously since the Jurassic Period (about 160 million years ago). The metamorphic bedrock contains gold-bearing veins (CDOC 2002). Mariposa County is home to the southern extremity of the Mother Lode, the name given to a region of the western Sierra Nevada with extensive gold deposits that led to the Gold Rush of 1849.

The area of the Project is mapped as gabbroic rock of the Mesozoic Era (lower Jurassic to upper Cretaceous Age). The gabbroic rocks are exposed in outcrops northwest and southeast of the existing bridge. The rock is also exposed along the west edge of the existing bridge north abutment and east edge of the south abutment. Probing within the channel sediment seems to indicate bedrock is likely within a depth of two feet, where not exposed (Quincy Engineering 2016).

Two soil map units are present within the BSA (Figure 9 and Table 6; [NRCS 2021]). One soil map unit, loamy alluvial land, is included on the National Hydric Soil List (NRCS 2021).

Table 6. Soils within the Biological Study Area

Mapping Unit[a]	Mapping Unit Symbol	Drainage	Landform	Hydric Soils Components of Mapping Unit	Hydric Criteria[b]	Percent of BSA
Blasingame-Las Posas rocky loams, 15 to 50 percent slopes	BlF	Well drained	Hills	None	N/A	68.6%
Loamy alluvial land	LdC	Well drained	Alluvial fans	Unnamed-wet Unnamed-flooded	3 4	31.4%

[a] NRCS. 2021. Web Soil Survey. Available online: http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/. Website accessed August 2021

[b] Hydric Criteria Code:

1. Soils in Aquic suborders, great groups, or subgroups, Albolls suborder, Historthels great group, Histoturbels great group, Pachic subgroups, or Cumulic subgroups that:
   a) Based on the range of characteristics for the soil series, will at least in part meet one or more Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States, or
   b) Show evidence that the soil meets the definition of a hydric soil.
2. Soils that are frequently ponded for long or very long duration during the growing season.
   a) Based on the range of characteristics for the soil series, will at least in part meet one or more Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States, or
   b) Show evidence that the soil meets the definition of a hydric soil.
3. Map unit components that are frequently flooded for long duration or very long duration during the growing season that:
   a) Based on the range of characteristics for the soil series, will at least in part meet one or more Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States, or
   b) Show evidence that the soil meets the definition of a hydric soil.

Source: NRCS 2021

Geologic maps imply an extension of the Bear Mountain fault about 1.7 miles southwest of the Project and indicate the Melones Fault Zone is about 7.9 miles northeast of the Project. Both of these faults are indicated as Pre-Quaternary Faults and are not considered to be active. The Project area is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone.

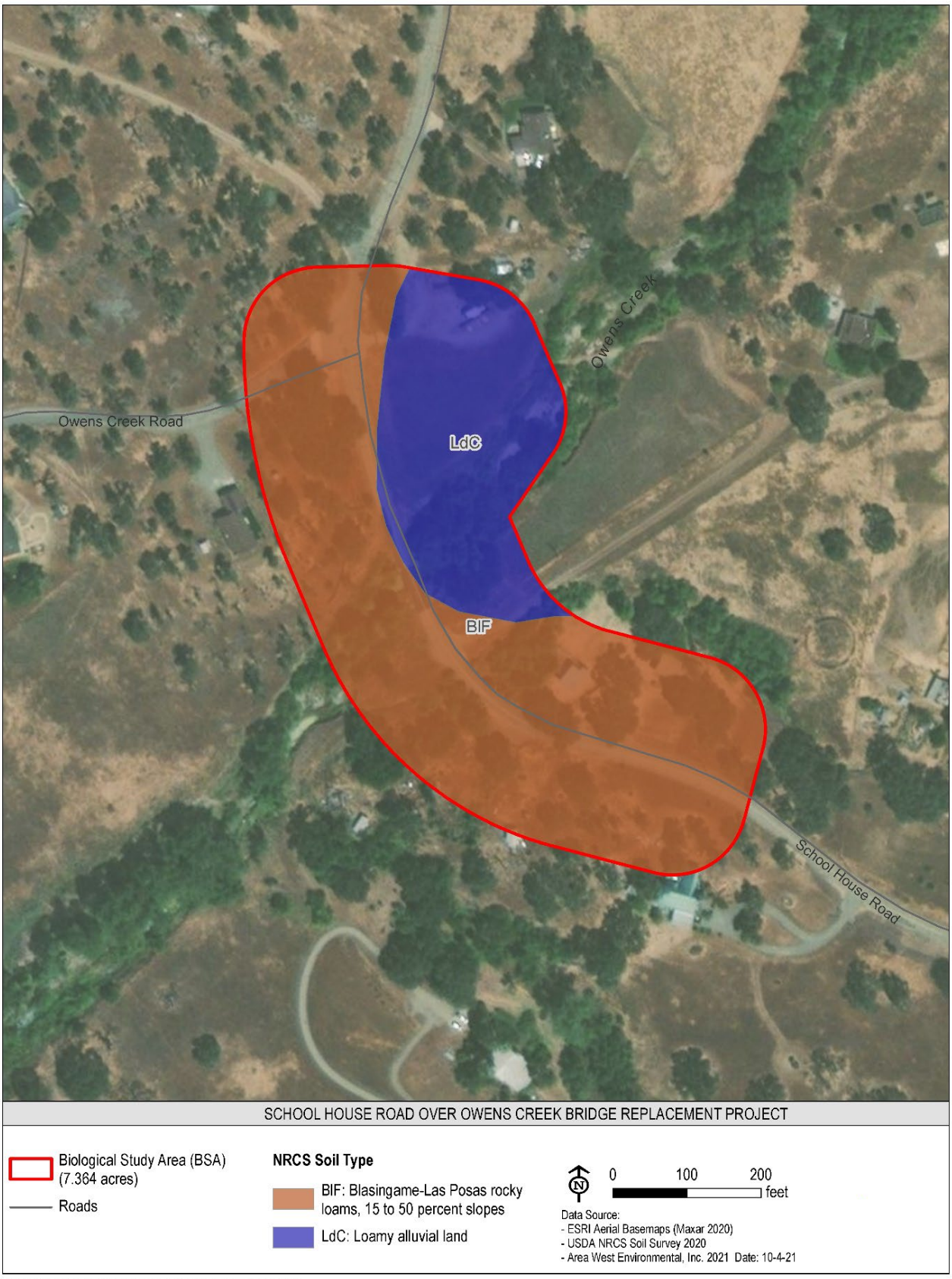

Figure 9. Soils Mapped within the Biological Study Area

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a, (i)-(iv). Would the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: rupture of a known earthquake fault; strong seismic ground shaking; seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or landslides?

The Project area is not within an active fault zone, and the potential for secondary seismic-related effects such as liquefaction, lateral spreading, surface fault rupture, settlement, and slope instability do not constitute hazard at this Project area (Quincy Engineering 2016). The Project would not expose people or structures to additional risk associated with seismic activity or liquefaction. In addition, implementation of the proposed Project would adhere to construction recommendations in the Caltrans Design Manual, Caltrans Seismic Design Criteria, Caltrans Bridge Design Specification, and the current design parameters of the Structural Engineers of California Uniform Building Code. The Project would have ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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

Soils in the Project area have a moderate erosion potential (NRCS 2021). Construction of the proposed Project would involve site grading and earthmoving activities, which would expose soils at the site and could result in soil erosion. Soil erosion and topsoil loss would be limited by implementing standard construction practices and BMPs for erosion and sediment control, consistent with Caltrans Standard Specifications and through implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-3**. Because erosion control BMPs would be implemented, the proposed Project has limited potential to result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil. This impact would be considered ***less than significant with mitigation incorporation.***

Mitigation Measures: BIO-3 and BIO-4 (See Section 3.4, Biological Resources).

Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Restore Temporarily Disturbed Areas

Mitigation Measure BIO-4: Implement Water Quality BMPs

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?

The proposed Project area is not located within an active fault zone or active liquefaction zone. The Project is not located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable or that would become unstable as a result of the proposed Project. The Caltrans Bridge Design Specifications require an assessment of the existing onsite soils and the proposed Project would be constructed following the recommendations in the Caltrans Design Manual. The proposed Project would have ***no impact.***

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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

Soils in the proposed Project area are classified by the NRCS as loam or clay loam to a depth of 36 to 60 inches (NRCS 2021). Although the majority of soils in Mariposa County have low to moderate shrink-swell potential (expansivity), the Las Posas Clay series has a high shrink-swell potential (Mariposa County 2006) and constitute up to 25 percent of the Blasingame-Las Posas soils (NRCS 2021). The Project would improve bridge safety compared to existing conditions; it would not create substantial risks to life and property or construct new housing on expansive soils. The Project would not create a new substantial risk to life or property; it would have ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

e. Would the proposed project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternate wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

No septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed as part of the Project. There would be ***no impact.***

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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

Significant nonrenewable vertebrate and invertebrate fossils have been documented throughout California. The fossil yielding potential of a particular area is highly dependent on the geologic age and origin of the underlying rocks. The sediments within the Project area, except in areas of artificial fill, have a potential to contain paleontological resources. If previously unidentified paleontological resources are unearthed during construction, the contractor would follow Caltrans' policy that work be halted in that area until a qualified specialist can assess the significance of the find. Therefore, the Project would have a ***less than significant impact*** on paleontological resources.

Mitigation Measures: None required. The following standard measure, consistent with Caltrans standard policy for unanticipated paleontological resource discoveries, is recommended.

***Mitigation Measure GEO-1*: Protect Discovered Paleontological Resources.** If any evidence of paleontological resources is inadvertently unearthed during construction, all work will cease within 50-feet of the discovery, the County will be notified, and a qualified paleontologist shall be consulted to assess the significance of the resources and recommend appropriate conservation measures.

3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	Less than Significant Impact
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	No Impact

Environmental Setting

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) have the potential to adversely affect the environment because such emissions contribute, on a cumulative basis, to global climate change. In turn, global climate change has the potential to result in rising sea levels, which can inundate low-lying areas; reduce snowpack, leading to less overall water storage in the Sierra Nevada; affect rainfall, leading to changes in water supply, increased frequency and severity of droughts, and increased wildfire risk; and affect habitat and agricultural land, leading to adverse effects on biological and agricultural resources. The State of California and MCAPCD have not identified quantitative thresholds of significance for GHGs. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD), located to the west of the Project, has recommended GHG Best Performance Standards to be implemented to reduce GHG emissions from individual projects (SJVAPCD 2009). The SJVAPD identifies Best Performance Standards for land use development projects and stationary sources; the SJVAPCD does not have an adopted recommended GHG threshold for construction-related GHG emissions.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant effect on the environment?

Replacement of the School House Road Bridge would not result in long-term increases in vehicle trips in the area. A short-term increase in vehicle emissions may result from construction activities associated with the proposed Project, including grading, construction of the new bridge, demolition of the old bridge, and longer local vehicle trips during road closure and detour. Due to the scale and nature of construction activities, the short-term construction-generated GHG emissions would not result in a significant individual or cumulative contribution to GHG emissions. Therefore, this impact would be considered ***less than significant***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

b. Would the project conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

California legislation has been adopted to address GHG impacts and set goals for GHG emissions reductions state-wide. These include AB 32, Senate Bill 97, and Senate Bill 375. After AB 32 was adopted, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) published a Technical Advisory *CEQA and Climate Change: Addressing Climate Change Through CEQA Review* (OPR 2008). Additionally, the nearby SJVAPCD has adopted a Climate Change Action Plan, and prepared guidance for CEQA analysis of GHG emissions in their *Final Staff Report: Addressing Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act* (SJVAPCD 2009). The Project does not increase operational GHG emissions and does not impede regional goals for reducing GHG emissions. The Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Therefore, there would be ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	Less than Significant Impact
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?	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated
c) 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
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?	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
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	Less than Significant Impact
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	Less than Significant Impact

Environmental Setting

The following information regarding the Project area and potential impacts related to hazardous materials is taken from the Phase I Initial Site Assessment (ISA) prepared by Kleinfelder for the proposed Project (Kleinfelder 2023).

A review of Environmental Data Resources (EDR) Database Record, and California Department of Toxic Substances Control and State Water Quality Control Board databases, found no active site records within 1,000 feet of the Project. Recognized environmental conditions (RECs) are present in the Project vicinity. A REC is the presence or likely presence of hazardous substances or petroleum substances in or on a property under conditions that indicate an existing release, a past release, or a material threat of a release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products into structures on the property or into the ground, groundwater, or surface water of the property.

The bridge and roadway may contain hazardous materials such as lead-based paint (LBP) and asbestos containing materials (ACM). Vehicle emissions through operational use can be a source of aerially deposited lead (ADL) from vehicle exhaust. Wood used as guardrail support posts may have been treated with wood preserving chemicals.

The ISA (Kleinfelder 2023) identifies the following potential RECs within the Project vicinity:

- Potential LBP and ACM within the bridge materials;
- Potential wood preserving chemicals such as chromated arsenic, copper naphthenate, or pentachlorophenol within wood posts;
- Potential LBP from yellow traffic striping;
- Potential for ADL from vehicle emissions in shallow soil adjacent to the roadway around the Project area; and
- Potential ACM associated with underground utilities.

In addition, construction activities would include the use of equipment that would use fuels (gasoline and diesel), oil, lubricants, and cleaning solvents. The routine use of these hazardous materials could result in accidental inadvertent releases of small quantities of hazardous materials, which could adversely affect construction workers or the environment.

The Catheys Valley Preschool, and a public school, Sierra Foothill Charter School are located at 4952 School House Road, approximately ½-mile north of the Project area. The nearest public school is Mariposa Elementary School, located on Jones Street in Mariposa, more than 8 miles northeast of the Project area. The proposed Project is not located within 2 miles of a public or public use airport or in the vicinity or a private air strip. The nearest airport is the Mariposa-Yosemite Airport, located more than 7 miles northeast of the Project.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

The proposed Project would not involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials once the Project becomes operational.

During construction, Caltrans Standard Specifications would be implemented to prevent spills or leaks from construction equipment and from storage of fuels, lubricants, and solvents. All aspects of Project construction associated with removal, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials would be done in accordance with the appropriate California Health and Safety Code. Handling of hazardous materials would comply with Caltrans Standard Specifications section 14-11, Hazardous Waste and Contamination, which outlines handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. Therefore, the Project impact would be ***less than significant***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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?

During construction, the Project has the potential to encounter hazardous substances (potential RECs) as described above. Due to the age of the bridge, there is potential for LBP and ACM within the bridge structure. If LBP or ACM are present, lead abatement or asbestos removal would be required prior to bridge demolition. Also, roadway improvements may require the removal of yellow traffic striping, which may contain LBP. Sampling, removal, and disposal would be consistent with Caltrans Standard Specifications and Standard Special Provisions.

To evaluate potential ADL from the historical use of leaded gasoline in the surface and near-surface soils within the Project footprint, soil sampling for total lead would be completed before construction. If ADL is present, construction activities involving ground disturbance would require a Lead Compliance Plan consistent with Caltrans Standard Special Provisions.

Sampling of the wood used as guardrail support posts on the bridge for the presence of wood-preserving chemicals is recommended prior to demolition. Treated wood waste would be handled and disposed of consistent with Caltrans Standard Special Provisions.

Since the Project has the potential to encounter hazardous substances during construction, this impact is considered ***less than significant with mitigation incorporated.***

Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation Measure HAZ-1: Conduct Phase II Soil and Materials Sampling and Implement Contamination Removal Activities as Needed

Materials sampling for ACM and LBP on the bridge and for wood-preserving chemicals on the wood posts shall be completed before demolition. A workplan to conduct a Phase II site assessment shall be submitted to the County for review and approval prior to field activities. Analytical results from soil and materials samples obtained during Phase II screening will be compared to state and federal standards to evaluate reuse and/or disposal requirements for contaminated soils and materials. The Project will implement Caltrans Standard Specifications and Standard Special Provisions for sampling, removal, and disposal of contaminated soils and materials, as well as treated wood waste.

Mitigation Measure HAZ-2: Implement Lead Compliance Plan

If sampling determines elevated lead levels in soils or materials, the Contractor shall prepare and implement a project-specific Lead Compliance Plan (8 CCR 1532.1, the "Lead in Construction" standard) to reduce worker exposure to lead-impacted soil and lead-containing paint. The plan would include protocols for environmental and personnel monitoring, requirements for personal protective equipment, other health and safety protocols and procedures for the handling of lead-

impacted soil, and requirements for disposal of lead-containing paint in traffic striping and on the existing bridge. The plan would be consistent with Caltrans Standard Special Provisions for removal of LBP from structures and traffic striping.

Mitigation Measure HAZ-3: Implement Asbestos Compliance Plan

If sampling determines ACM on the bridge, the Contractor shall prepare and implement an Asbestos Compliance Plan consistent with Caltrans Standard Special Provisions.

c. Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within ¼ mile of an existing or proposed school?

There are no existing or proposed schools located within ¼ mile of the proposed Project. In addition, the Project would not have hazardous emissions or handle hazardous materials, substances, or waste during operation. Therefore, there would be ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

d. Would the project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code §65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or to the environment?

The proposed Project is not located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites. Therefore, there would be ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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 a public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

The Project is not located within an airport land use plan area or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport. No Project components, including construction equipment, would reach heights or have the potential to pose a safety hazard to airport operations. Further, the Project would not generate excessive noise that would impact people residing or working adjacent to the Project, as discussed in Section 3.13. Therefore, there would be ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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

During construction, all traffic across the bridge would be rerouted via a detour. The anticipated detour length is approximately 5 miles, and the anticipated travel duration is approximately 7 minutes. Emergency Services would be notified of the road closures and would be updated with the status of the Project. School House Road is not part of an adopted emergency response plan or

emergency evacuation plan. In addition, the Project would not conflict with the Mariposa County Emergency Operations Plan (County of Mariposa 2018). Implementation of the Project is considered to have a beneficial effect on local emergency response efforts as it would address the existing bridge's narrow width and better serve the local population in the event of an evacuation. Therefore, the Project impact would be ***less than significant***. See also Sections 3.15 Public Services and 3.17 Transportation.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

g. Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

During construction, equipment may be used that has the potential to increase the risk of wildfire. However, construction crews would be equipped with standard incipient stage fire suppression equipment such as fire extinguishers and shovels. Professional fire services are stationed nearby and would be contacted immediately in the event of a fire. The Project does not have permanent components that would expose people or structures to risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. The proposed Project would not expose people or structures to increased wildland fire risks. Therefore, Project impacts would be ***less than significant***. See Section 3.20 Wildfire for more information.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	Less than Significant Impact
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	No Impact
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;	Less than Significant Impact
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	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; or	Less than Significant Impact
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	Less than Significant Impact
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to Project inundation?	No Impact
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	No Impact

Environmental Setting

A Water Quality Technical Memorandum (AWE 2022) and a Floodplain Evaluation Technical Memorandum (WRECO 2023) were completed for the proposed Project and are summarized in this section. As described in the Biological Resources section, the aquatic resources delineation for the Project identified two aquatic features — an intermittent stream (Owens Creek) and an ephemeral drainage tributary to Owens Creek. Owens Creek is an intermittent stream within the Project area; it originates in the foothills of Mariposa County east of the Project and travels west towards the Central Valley before eventually connecting to Deep Slough and then to the San Joaquin River via Bear Creek. Owens Creek is approximately 21.6 miles long. Based on an examination of aerial imagery, Owens Creek does not contain water year-round and dries during the early summer. Owens Creek is mapped as an intermittent riverine channel on the National Wetlands Inventory Mapper (USFWS 2021). The Project is in the Owens Creek watershed (USGS Hydrologic Unit Code [HUC] 1804000117) and the Upper Owens Creek sub-watershed (HUC 180400011702). Owens Creek belongs to the Middle San Joaquin-Lower Chowchilla sub-basin (HUC 18040001) within the San Joaquin River Basin.

Owens Creek is not located within a California Department of Water Resources designated groundwater basin. The nearest designated groundwater basin is the small Yosemite Valley

Groundwater Basin located northeast of Owens Creek. Most of Mariposa County's groundwater supplies originate from hard rock wells in the plutonic granites of the Sierra Nevada. The County's groundwater flow is governed by the granitic terrain of the overall landscape. The overlying soil mantle thereby acts as a filtration and containment system, facilitating percolation and subsequent recharge in the fissure crack system, and serving as a temporary water reservoir. Groundwater resources in some parts of the Catheys Valley planning area have been found to contain elevated levels of nitrates in the upper 50 to 100 feet of the water bearing unit, which has been attributed to historic turkey ranches (County of Mariposa 2006).

The rivers and streams within Mariposa County have high water quality with generally low total dissolved solids (TDS) loads. During flood events and times of elevated flows, TDS and suspended solid levels can increase, and activities such as timber harvest, grazing, and/or mining could be sources of pollutants that impact water quality. Owens Creek is not listed on the CWA Section 303(d) List for any pollutants (Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board [CVRWQCB] 2018).

The Project is not within the boundary of the 100-year floodplain for Owens Creek as indicated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM; FEMA 2016).

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

The proposed Project includes ground disturbance that would expose soil and could result in accelerated erosion, which could affect water quality in downstream water bodies by increasing turbidity and/or sedimentation. The proposed Project could also result in the degradation of water quality from runoff of petroleum-based products associated with equipment and vehicles used during construction. Improper handling, storage, or disposal of fuels and materials or improper cleaning of machinery could cause surface water and groundwater quality degradation. Should it be necessary, a temporary diversion system may be utilized to isolate and dewater the work area. Installation of the temporary diversion system could result in a temporary increase in turbidity. Dewatering discharge could result in an adverse effect to water quality if the effluent contains chemical pollutants or high levels of sediment. While sediment is the primary pollutant of concern, all dewatering effluents such as nitrogen, oil and grease, total petroleum hydrocarbons, and sulfides could impact water quality. Large construction equipment may compress and compact soil within the Project work area, which could lead to a reduction in permeability and an increase in site runoff.

Implementation of standard erosion and sediment control practices, as described in Measure BIO-4, would minimize these potential impacts and ensure that the proposed Project does not violate

water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. BMPs prevent discharge of soil or construction wastes or debris, including contaminants from construction materials, tools, and equipment. Standard BMPs may include, but are not limited to, installing sediment fencing, fiber rolls, or other erosion and sediment control measures between the designated work area and aquatic features; stabilizing all exposed soil prior to potential precipitation events; and using vehicle tracking control. Therefore, the proposed Project impact would be ***less than significant.***

> **Mitigation Measures:** Although not required, the following measure would further reduce this less-than-significant impact.

Mitigation Measure BIO-4: **Implement Water Quality BMPs**

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?

Water for construction-related activities (e.g., dust control and concrete washout) would be brought in by the contractor and on-site groundwater would not be used. There would be an increase in impervious surface area by approximately 0.15 acre due to the wider bridge and roadway approaches. Though the Project would increase the amount of impervious surface, this change is negligible and would not affect local groundwater levels. The proposed Project is not expected to interfere with groundwater recharge in the Project area. Therefore, the proposed Project would have ***no impact*** on groundwater resources.

> **Mitigation Measures:** None required.

c(i), (ii), (iii), (iv)). Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site, substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site, 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 impede or redirect flood flows?

The proposed Project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site in a manner that would result in significant erosion, siltation, or flooding on- or off-site. The negligible expansion of impervious surfaces would not increase the rate or volume of surface water. The proposed Project would not create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of stormwater drainage systems or provide additional sources of polluted runoff. In addition, Caltrans Standard Special Provisions and BMPs would further minimize erosion, siltation, and the potential discharge of polluted runoff on- or offsite.

The Floodplain Evaluation Technical Memorandum (WRECO 2023) performed a hydrologic assessment of the Project to determine the design flows. The hydraulic analyses were performed

for the existing and proposed conditions. The existing bridge does not meet the Caltrans/FHWA design criteria for 100-year and 50-year discharge and has a history of overtopping. Because of the larger hydraulic clearance between the abutment faces of the proposed bridge compared to the existing bridge, the proposed bridge would reduce the backwater effect upstream of the bridge. The proposed action would not significantly modify the characteristics of the existing 100-year floodplain.

For these reasons, the potential impacts of the proposed Project resulting from altered drainage patterns is ***less than significant.***

Mitigation Measures: None required.

d. Would the project, in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

The proposed Project is not within the boundary of the 100-year flood hazard area and does not include any features that would release pollutants or expose people and property to flooding in the event of inundation. There is no risk of tsunami or seiche at this inland location. Therefore, the Project would have ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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

A Water Quality Technical Memorandum (AWE 2022) was completed for the proposed Project to evaluate potential Project impacts to water quality, including compliance with the San Joaquin River Basin Water Quality Control Plan. The proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. The proposed Project would have ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.11 Land Use and Planning

Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Physically divide an established community?	No Impact
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

Environmental Setting

The proposed Project is located within Mariposa County and is governed by the County of Mariposa General Plan (2006) and the Catheys Valley Community Plan (CV Plan) (County of Mariposa 2012) with the goal of preserving rural character of the community through managed growth. One of the mechanisms to manage growth in the CV Plan is to maintain residential land uses along School House Road.

School House Road is a narrow paved rural road that connects rural unincorporated residents to the community of Catheys Valley and the regional transportation network (SR 140). The Project area is located approximately 0.70 miles east of SR 140, with surrounding land uses consisting of scattered low density residential, livestock grazing, and open space. Adjoining properties are zoned as Mountain Home (MH) (Figure 7) and are predominantly undeveloped, wooded lands.

Currently, the County ROW is an approximately 60-foot-wide corridor centered on School House Road. Temporary construction easements would be needed from adjacent properties for access and staging during construction (Table 2). As stated in the Project Description, the Project would replace an existing box culvert under the road south of the existing bridge. This culvert must be replaced to accommodate the wider approach roadway. Permanent ROW may be required from adjacent properties to accommodate earthwork for the southern bridge approach and around the culvert. Depending on final design, ROW acquisition may not be required, and locations of potential ROW acquisition may become TCE (Table 3).

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a and b. Would the project physically divide an established community; conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

The proposed Project would replace an existing bridge along an already established transportation corridor. While small amounts of new ROW, adjacent to the existing bridge, would be required to accommodate the new bridge, the proposed Project would not physically divide an established community. The Project has been designed to minimize ROW acquisition outside the County's roadway easement to the extent possible. The sliver acquisition(s) would not substantially change

existing land uses or conflict with zoning regulation and land use policies. The proposed Project would not conflict with the CV Plan's mechanism to manage growth by maintaining residential land uses along School House Road.

The proposed Project would comply with the County's goals, policies, and strategies with regards to public roads and surrounding planned land use development. Namely, the Project would comply with the following Mariposa County General Plan (County of Mariposa 2006) Transportation Element policies and goals:

- Goal 5-1: Maintain the rural character of Mariposa County.
- Goal 9-1: All development shall have safe and adequate access.
- Policy 9-1a: Level of Service shall be used as a measure of capacity for major collector and arterial roads.
- Policy 9-1e(1): Adopt comprehensive standards for all County roadways.
- Goal 9-9: Maintain quality emergency service delivery.
- Goal 11-1: Conserve the natural and scenic resources, and open space lands to protect and enhance the County's quality of life and character ensuring a viable economy.
- Goal 11-2: Protect and manage the use of Mariposa County's limited water resources.
- Policy 11-2d(1): Implement requirements for minimum building and grading setback lines from waters of the state (i.e., perennial streams and environmentally significant wetlands), that are adequate to protect stream riparian, and wetland resource values.
- Goal 11-4: Conserve and enhance the ecosystems, plant communities, wildlife habitats, and the inherent diversity of both plant and animal species for the recreational, commercial, aesthetic, and basic ecosystems needs.
- Policy 11-4a(2): Conserve the diversity of native ecosystems, plant communities, wildlife habitat, and plant and animal species in the County.
- Goal 11-5: Avoid erosion and loss of soils due to development activities.
- Policy 11-5a: Minimize impacts of grading activities.

The Project would comply with all applicable zoning requirements and regulations and is consistent with General Plan development and transportation policies. Therefore, there would be ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.12 Mineral Resources

Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Physically divide an established community?	No Impact
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

Environmental Setting

The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) was enacted in 1975 with the purpose of identifying where economically significant mineral deposits occur. Special emphasis has been given to the study of construction aggregate because it is the state's most important mineral commodity.

Mariposa County is home to the southern extent of the Mother Lode, a gold vein that runs along the western Sierra Nevada Mountain range. In 1849, gold was discovered in Mariposa County at Agua Fria (Wood 1954), which is about 7 miles northeast of the Project area. With the exception of sand and gravel extraction and processing, most mines in Mariposa County are now closed or only intermittently active. The Project area is located near the historic Cathey mining district. In the Cathey mining district, placer-mining occurred during the Gold Rush period, and lode mining shortly thereafter (1850). Primary mines consisted of Francis, Moore Hill, and Rich, which were last worked in the 1930s (County of Mariposa 2006). There are no mines or quarries within the Project vicinity.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a and b. Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of future value to the region and the residents of the State; or 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?

The Project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or locally important mineral resource recovery site. There are no known mineral resources associated with the proposed Project area. No mineral extraction activities exist in the Project area and mineral extraction is not included as a part of the proposed Project. There would be ***no impact.***

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.13 Noise

Would the Project result in:

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	Less than Significant Impact
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	Less than Significant Impact
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

Environmental Setting

Land uses surrounding the proposed Project consist of scattered low density residential uses, livestock grazing, and open space. As such, the existing noise environment in the immediate Project vicinity is dominated by farming/residential maintenance equipment, sporadic vehicle traffic along School House Road, farm animals, and birds. The rural lifestyle found in Mariposa County results in a noise environment which is typically well below 55 A-weighted decibels (dBA) (County of Mariposa 2006).

Some land uses are considered more sensitive to ambient noise levels than others because of the amount of noise exposure and the types of activities typically involved for those uses. Residences, schools, daycares, rest homes, hospitals, and churches are generally more sensitive to noise than commercial and industrial land uses. The areas surrounding the Project include several residential homes. The nearest occupied residences are located approximately 115 feet, or more, from the Project work limits.

There are no State or federal standards that specifically address construction noise. Additionally, the Mariposa County General Plan does not specifically limit hours during which construction may occur. However, Caltrans Standard Specifications include specifications for the control of noise and vibration associated with construction activities. Caltrans Standard Specifications, Section 14-8.02, Noise Control, requires that noise from constructions activities not exceed 86 dBA maximum sound level (L_{max}) at 50 feet from the job site between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. (Caltrans 2023).

Mariposa County does not have established performance standards regarding groundborne vibration levels from construction activities. However, the Mariposa County General Plan Noise Element does include Implementation Measure 15.1a(3) which requires the County to implement standards that will reduce vibration from construction activities to a level that is less than perceptible at adjacent property lines. Additionally, Caltrans has developed vibration criteria based

on potential structural damage risks and human annoyance. The criteria apply to continuous vibration sources, which include vehicle traffic and most construction activities. All damage criteria for buildings are in terms of ground motion at buildings' foundation (Caltrans 2020).

A Noise Study (AMBIENT 2024) was completed by AMBIENT Air Quality and Noise Consulting (AMBIENT). A summary of the report findings is presented here.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a and b. 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; or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

The Project corridor is along School House Road, a rural road that creates background noise levels for nearby residences. Operation of the Project would not change road capacity, move travel lanes substantially closer to any sensitive receptor, or permanently increase ambient noise levels in the Project vicinity. Therefore, there would be no long-term or permanent impact to ambient noise levels.

During construction of the Project, noise from construction activities may intermittently dominate the noise environment in the immediate area of construction. Construction noise levels vary on a day-to-day basis. Using typical noise levels associated with constructed equipment (FHWA 2008), intermittent noise levels could reach levels up to approximately 85.0 dBA L_{max} for brief periods of time (AMBIENT 2024). Actual noise levels would vary depending on various factors, including the type and number of pieces of equipment used and duration of use.

In comparison to ambient daytime noise levels, construction-generated noise levels would be intermittently detectable to nearby sensitive receptors. The Mariposa County General Plan Noise Element identifies 60 dBA as an acceptable exposure limit for land use type in the Project vicinity. Noise generated during construction may exceed these levels, but construction is expected to be of limited duration and would occur during normal daytime working hours. Noise associated with construction would be controlled by Caltrans Standard Specification 86 dBA at 50 feet from a project from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. in residential areas.

Construction-related groundborne vibration levels associated with the proposed Project would be largely associated with the operation of off-road equipment (e.g., vibratory rollers, bulldozers, trucks, and jackhammers). The use of pile drivers is not anticipated for this Project. Groundborne vibration levels at nearby structures would not exceed the commonly applied criteria for structural damage (AMBIENT 2024).

Therefore, the Project would have a temporary impact that is ***less than significant***.

Mitigation Measures: None required. The following measure, consistent with Caltrans standard noise policy, is recommended.

Mitigation Measure NOISE-1: Implement Construction Noise Reduction Measures

Noise-generating construction activities shall conform to the provisions in Section 14-8.02, "Noise Control," of the Caltrans Standard Specifications. This policy requires the following mandatory noise abatement measures:

- Per Caltrans Section 14-8.02 Noise Control, do not exceed 86 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet from the job site activities from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

In addition to compliance with the measures listed above, implementing the following recommended measures also would help minimize temporary construction noise impacts:

- Internal combustion engines shall be equipped with a muffler of a type recommended by the manufacturer.
- Portable/stationary equipment (e.g., generators, compressors) shall be located at the furthest distance from the nearby sensitive receptors.
- Construction equipment and haul trucks should be turned off when not in use.

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 in or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

The Project is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan area or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport. The nearest airport is the Mariposa-Yosemite Airport, located more than 8 miles northeast of the Project. Therefore, there would be ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.14 Population and Housing

Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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)?	No Impact
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	No Impact

Environmental Setting

The Land Use Designations in the Project vicinity are scattered low density residential, livestock grazing, and open space; see Section 3.11 Land Use and Planning for more information. Mariposa County had a population of 17,131 people in 2020 (U.S. Census Bureau 2021). Mariposa County experienced a decrease in population since the 2010 census when a population of 18,251 was reported, for an annual average decrease of -0.6 percent. The Project is located within census tract 1.02, which has a population of 2,570 people and 1,245 total housing units, with 78 percent of residential units being single family units. The Project is located in an area designated as Catheys Valley, which is the sixth largest community in the county, with Mariposa, Yosemite Valley, Bootjack, Lake Don Pedro, and Midpines having larger populations (County of Mariposa 2012).

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Would the project induce substantial population growth in an area either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

The Project would not directly or indirectly induce population growth because it does not increase the capacity of School House Road, remove barriers to future growth, or increase population or housing growth (or demand for new housing, utilities, or public services). The replacement bridge would more efficiently and safely accommodate existing traffic volumes. The Project would not induce substantial population growth. Therefore, there would be ***no impact.***

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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

The proposed Project would not require the displacement of existing housing or the construction of replacement housing. Permanent ROW may be required from adjacent properties to

accommodate earthwork for the southern bridge approach and around the culvert. No residences or businesses would be displaced by the acquisition of ROW. Therefore, there would be ***no impact.***

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.15 Public Services

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated
Police protection?	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated
Schools?	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated
Parks?	No Impact
Other public facilities?	No Impact

Environmental Setting

Two fire stations are located in the Project vicinity; a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) station is located at 2203 SR 140, approximately 1.5 miles southwest of the Project, and Mariposa County's Catheys Valley Fire Company #23 is located at 2820 SR 140, approximately 1.6 miles northeast of the Project. Police services are provided by the Mariposa County Sheriff located in Mariposa, about 13 miles northeast of the Project. Medical service providers are also located in Mariposa. A preschool, Catheys Valley Preschool, and a public school, Sierra Foothill Charter School, are both located at 4952 School House Road, approximately ½-mile northwest of the Project area. The nearest park to the Project is the Catheys Valley County Park, located at 2820 SR 140, approximately 1.6 miles northeast of the Project.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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 fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities?

The Project is a bridge replacement project and is not capacity increasing. It would not result in the substantial alteration of government facilities, such as fire and police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities, nor trigger the need for new government facilities or alter the demand for public services The proposed Project would not result in the need for new or altered government facilities.

During construction, all traffic across the bridge would be rerouted via a detour. The anticipated detour length is approximately 5 miles, and the anticipated travel duration is approximately 7 minutes. Emergency Services would be notified in advance of the road closure and would be updated with the status of the Project. Response times are not expected to substantially increase due to the roadway closure.

This detour would affect families with students who attend Sierra Foothill Charter School or Catheys Valley Preschool and live on the opposite side of the road closure from the school. Bus service for the Mariposa County Unified School District (MCUSD) would also be affected by the road closure. Ms. Wendy Hagen, secretary for the transportation department at MCUSD, indicated that existing school bus stops on School House Road would be moved to the intersections of School House Road with Old Highway Road and SR 140 because a school bus would not be able to turn around on the narrow rural road. Contingent on enrollment at time of construction, alternative options may be needed for Special Education students that require drop off and pick up at their residence. Enrollment for the following school year is typically determined in August.

With advanced notification of the road closure, and availability of alternative routes during construction, the Project would not adversely affect emergency services and response times. Traffic control systems and detour signage would comply with state standards. Therefore, the Project impact would be ***less than significant with mitigation incorporation*** on emergency response providers and schools. The Project would have ***no impact*** on other public services and facilities such as parks.

Implementation of the Project may have a beneficial effect to local emergency response efforts as it would address the existing bridge's narrow width and better serve the local population in the event of an evacuation.

Mitigation Measures: The following transportation mitigation measure, described in Section 3.17 Transportation, is recommended.

Mitigation Measure TRA-1: Traffic Management Plan and Notification of Detour.

3.16 Recreation

Question	CEQA Determination
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
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

Environmental Setting

School House Road does not provide access to local or regional parks. There are no public parks or recreational facilities in the immediate vicinity of the Project. The nearest park or recreational facility is Catheys Valley County Park, located at 2820 SR 140, approximately 1.6 miles northeast of the Project. Owens Creek is not known to be a fishing destination.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a and b. 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; or include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

The proposed Project would not increase the use of any recreational facilities and does not include recreational facilities. The Project would not result in changes in recreation or require the construction of new recreational facilities. Therefore, the Project would have ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.17 Transportation

Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	No Impact
b) Would the Project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	Less than Significant Impact
c) 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
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated

Environmental Setting

School House Road in the Project area is classified as a minor collector road. School House Road is a narrow paved rural road that connects rural residents to the Community of Catheys Valley and the regional transportation network (SR 140). School House Road is identified as part of Catheys Valley's major road system (County of Mariposa 2012). The latest Caltrans Bridge Inspection Report (2022) lists the ADT on School House Road as 380 (2004) with a future ADT estimated at 843 (2040) vehicles per day.

The Project would require School House Road to be closed to through traffic during construction. Therefore, during construction, a temporary detour would be utilized. The detour length is approximately 5 miles, and the anticipated travel duration is approximately 7 minutes (Figure 6). Residents to the west of the Project would utilize School House Road to access SR 140. Residents to the east of the Project area would travel east on School House Road to Old Highway Road then west to SR 140. Signage would be placed along SR 140, Old Highway Road, Cornetts Entrance Road, and School House Road warning the travelling public about the road closure. As previously mentioned, this detour would remain for the duration of Project construction. The closure of School House Road during construction would be communicated in advance to emergency response officials, MCUSD transportation department, and local residents.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

Implementation of the proposed Project would more efficiently and safely accommodate existing traffic volumes on School House Road and improve road width for pedestrians and cyclists. The proposed Project would not conflict with federal transportation programs or the Circulation Element of the Mariposa County General Plan. Therefore, the Project would have ***no impact.***

Mitigation Measures: None required.

b. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

The proposed Project does not include the development of any new residential uses or include other land development that would directly induce additional population growth or affect vehicle miles travelled (VMT) by residents or visitors within the area. Construction activities would be expected to result in a negligible temporary increase in vehicle trips to the Project area by construction personnel and a temporary increase in VMT for local travelers using the detour. The proposed Project is consistent with CEQA Guidelines §15064.3(b) in that transportation projects that reduce or have less than significant impact on vehicle miles traveled should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact. Therefore, this impact is considered ***less than significant***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

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)?

The purpose of the proposed Project is to remove a potentially hazardous feature, a "Functionally Obsolete" bridge. The Project would not increase hazards because of a geometric design feature or incompatible use. The proposed Project would have ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

d. Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

Construction of the Project would require the temporary detour of School House Road vehicle traffic at the Project area during the construction period, temporarily affecting local traffic accessing the neighborhood. Residential traffic would be routed around the Project area as shown in Figure 6. A TMP would be implemented as part of Caltrans Standard Specifications and would minimize traveler delays and maintain residential circulation and access along School House Road during construction. Emergency services would be notified of the road closures and would be updated with the status of the Project. Response times are not expected to substantially increase due to the roadway closure. The detour may affect response times to the residential properties along the south side of the bridge. Response times to other portions of the area would not be affected. With advanced notification of the road closure, and availability of alternative routes during construction, the Project would not adversely affect emergency services and response times. The Project impact on emergency access and response times would be ***less than significant with mitigation***, consistent with Caltrans Standard Specifications for traffic control during construction.

Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation Measure TRA-1: Traffic Management Plan and Notification of Detour.

A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) would be prepared by the contractor and approved by the County prior to the beginning of construction and in consultation with the appropriate agencies. The TMP would provide advance notice to travelers of the upcoming Project and road closure and identify alternative routes for emergency and medical vehicles associated with essential services. Notifications and instructions for rapid response or evacuation in the event of an emergency would be provided.

- Emergency service providers and the MCUSD transportation department shall be notified in advance of construction activities, informed of the full road closure, and provided details of detour routes during construction.
- Traffic detours shall be announced to residents and roadway users well in advance of construction and closure of the bridge.
- Traffic detour signage shall be installed before construction begins and throughout construction so that drivers can avoid the Project area entirely.

3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

Question	CEQA Determination
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 section 5020.1(k), or	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated
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 Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated

Environmental Setting

The NAHC was contacted, and they reported that no recorded Sacred Land was within or adjacent to the Project. The NAHC also provided a list of Native American contacts. Letters to the Native American contacts were sent on March 22, 2022. Follow up calls and emails were sent to Native American contacts on April 21, 2022. Due to a change in contact information, the consultation process was re-initiated by email with the SSMN on September 30, 2022. A response was received on October 3, 2022, and a virtual introductory meeting took place on November 1, 2022. A site visit was held on March 1, 2023, but the SSMN representative was not able to attend due to illness, so a summary of the site visit between Caltrans and AWE cultural staff was sent via email. During the March 1, 2023, site visit, an XPI study was recommended, and SSMN concurred with the subsurface testing approach via email.

Coordination between AWE and SSMN to discuss the XPI plan and need for a Tribal monitor took place via email between March and July 2023. On July 25 and 26, 2023, a SSMN Tribal monitor was present to monitor the XPI study. After the XPI testing, SSMN and Caltrans were presented preliminary XPI results. Based on the XPI results and sensitivity of the area, SSMN concurred with proposed mitigation measures including the recommendation for Tribal monitoring during construction.

No additional responses have been received by other Native American contacts to date.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a, b. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or

in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

A Tribal cultural resource site extends within the APE. In reviewing resource locations from the CaCIC record search, there are other Tribal cultural resource sites along Owens Creek outside of the APE. The Tribal cultural resources in the APE would be protected in its entirety from construction activities with the implementation of an ESA Action Plan.

Additionally, the site sensitivity analysis indicates that there is a high potential for encountering buried Tribal cultural resources during construction. The proposed Project could result in a potentially significant impact on Tribal cultural resources. Implementation of resource avoidance measures provided in **Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-5** would reduce the impact to less than significant. The proposed Project would have a ***less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated.***

Mitigation Measures: The following mitigation measures, described in Section 3.5 Cultural Resources, would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

***Mitigation Measure CUL-1*: Worker Environmental Awareness and Cultural Respect Training.**

***Mitigation Measure CUL-2*: Tribal Monitoring during Construction.**

***Mitigation Measure CUL-3*: Procedures for Inadvertant Discovery of Cultural Resources.**

***Mitigation Measure CUL-4*: Environmental Sensitive Area Fencing.**

***Mitigation Measure CUL-5*: Procedures for Human Remains.**

3.19 Utilities and Service Systems

Would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	No Impact
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	No Impact
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?	No Impact
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?	Less than Significant Impact
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	Less than Significant Impact

Environmental Setting

Catheys Valley faces many of the same challenges as Mariposa County as a whole, related to the delivery of infrastructure and community services. The County has limited abilities to provide public facilities and services. This is particularly true with delivery of domestic water and treatment of wastewater. Large distances between service connections and topographic variation contribute to very high cost associated with developing a public water or wastewater treatment system for the area (County of Mariposa 2012). Most development in the County must provide for its own water and wastewater treatment through on-site means or small, private communal systems. Private utilities carry electricity, gas, and communications within the County (County of Mariposa 2006).

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

The Project would not require or result in the construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, electrical power, or natural gas facilities. The Project is not anticipated to require utility relocations. Therefore, there would be ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

b, c. Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years; result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

The Project would not require water supplies to serve the Project. The Project would not require the services of a wastewater treatment provider. During construction, pursuant to California Code of Regulations (sec. 1526), portable toilets would be provided for construction workers. Therefore, there would be ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

d, e. 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; comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

The Project would not require the services of a landfill where the Project would affect its capacity. All construction-related waste would be properly disposed of, or recycled, at an approved facility in compliance with both Caltrans Standard Specification 14-11, and Hazards and Hazardous Materials (Section 3.9) **Mitigation Measures HAZ-1 through HAZ-3**, and the requirements of the facility to which the construction-related waste is hauled. Construction-related activities would comply with all federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Construction activities would generate solid waste that may require off-site disposal. Therefore, construction-related impacts on solid waste services would be ***less than significant***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.20 Wildfire

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	Less than Significant 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
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	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

Environmental Setting

In the Project area, fire response is provided by two fire stations as described in Section 3.15 Public Services. The County's overall transportation network relies heavily on private roads, many of which are single-access and are not suitable for a coordinated mass evacuation under fast-moving events such as wildfires. The Mariposa County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (Mariposa CWPP) (County of Mariposa 2021) Land Use and Development and Critical Infrastructure sections include policies regarding critical infrastructure maintenance.

The Project is located within a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone within a California State Responsible Area (CalFire 2022). Fire Hazard Severity Zones are classified as Moderate, High, or Very High by CalFire based on the factors that influence fire likelihood and fire behavior, such as fire history, existing and potential fuel (natural vegetation), predicted flame length, blowing embers, terrain, and typical fire weather for the area. The area west on CA-140 is of Moderate Severity while to the east towards the Community of Mariposa is of Very High Fire Hazard Severity. Notable recent fires in the vicinity of the Project area would be the 2017 Detwiler Fire, which reached 2.66 miles east of the Project area. This fire evacuated the Community of Mariposa and destroyed 131 structures and 63 homes (Mariposa CWPP 2021).

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

During construction, all traffic across the bridge would be rerouted via a detour. Temporary traffic detours and associated delays may occur during construction which could result in reduced response times for emergency responders. However, all emergency responders, transit agencies, and local residents would be notified of the construction work and road closure. School House

Road is not part of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. In addition, the Project would not conflict with the Mariposa County Emergency Operations Plan (County of Mariposa 2018). Implementation of the Project would have a beneficial effect to local emergency response efforts as it would address the existing bridge's narrow width and better serve the local population in the event of an evacuation. Therefore, impacts would be ***less than significant***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

b., c., and d. 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? Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment? 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?

The proposed Project would not exacerbate wildfire risk, nor would it require the installation of new associated infrastructure that would exacerbate fire risk, expose residents to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. Further, the Project would not expose people or structure to significant risks for flooding or landslides. Therefore, there would be ***no impact***.

Mitigation Measures: None required.

3.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

Question	CEQA Determination
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 with Mitigation Incorporation
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that 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)?	Less than Significant Impact
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	Less than Significant Impact

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

As described previously in this IS/MND, implementation of mitigation measures identified in the Biological Resources section would ensure that proposed Project implementation would not 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, or reduce the number or restrict the range of rare or endangered plants or animals. Furthermore, mitigation measures identified in the Cultural Resources section would ensure that the proposed Project would not significantly affect previously undiscovered resources or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

Given the existing conditions of the Project area, the fact that potential impacts to biological and cultural resources would occur during construction, and that measures have been identified to reduce these temporary impacts, the overall potential of the proposed Project to degrade the environment is considered ***less than significant with mitigation***.

b. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?

Section 15064(h)(1) of CEQA Guidelines states that the lead agency shall consider whether the cumulative impact is significant, and the incremental effects of the project are cumulatively considerable. The lead agency may determine that a project's incremental contribution would be

less-than-cumulatively considerable when one or more of the following occur: 1) the contribution would be rendered less-than-cumulatively considerable through implementation of mitigation measures; 2) the project would comply with the requirements of a previously approved plan or mitigation program that provides specific requirements that would avoid or substantially lessen the project's cumulative effects; and/or 3) the project's incremental effects would be so small that the environmental conditions would be essentially the same regardless of whether the project is implemented.

Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the vicinity of the proposed Project include two proposed housing development projects on SR 140: the Vallecito's project would construct 22 single-family houses and four commercial lots on the southeast side of SR 140, immediately north of School House Road; and, the Major Subdivision Application No. 2009-052, JCS Capital Resources project would construct 26 single-family houses northeast of the Vallecito's project. Potential impacts associated with the proposed Project are primarily short-term (construction-related) and shall be mitigated to less-than-significant levels. Long-term incremental effects of the proposed Project are so small that local environmental conditions (e.g., traffic, noise, air quality) would be essentially the same regardless of whether the project is implemented. Any future development project in the Project vicinity would be subject to the same laws and regulations as the proposed Project. Therefore, the proposed Project's incremental contribution to cumulative conditions would be less-than-cumulatively considerable. The Project would have ***less than significant*** cumulative impact.

c. Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Potential adverse effects to human beings could occur as a result of construction activities. Potential impacts would include temporary increases in noise and traffic detours. These impacts would be short-term and would cease upon completion of the construction process. Potential adverse effects on human beings as a result of the proposed Project are considered ***less than significant***.

4.0 List of Preparers

The Draft IS/MND for the proposed Project was prepared by Area West Environmental, Inc. in cooperation with Mariposa County. The following individuals contributed to this IS/MND.

Mariposa County

Matiel Holloway, P.E.

Area West Environmental, Inc.

Aimee Dour-Smith, Senior Environmental Planner

Samantha Morford, Biologist

Colena Sankbeil, Planner

Kim Mays, Planner

Consor Engineering

Brad Allender, P.E.

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Appendix A. Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

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Appendix A. Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Introduction

This mitigation monitoring and reporting program summarizes identified mitigation measures, implementation schedule, and responsible parties for the School House Road over Owens Creek bridge Replacement Project (Project). The County of Mariposa (County) will use this mitigation monitoring and reporting program to ensure that identified mitigation measures, adopted as a condition of project approval, are implemented appropriately. This monitoring program meets the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 14074(d), which mandates preparation of monitoring provisions for the implementation of mitigation assigned as part of project approval or adoption.

Mitigation Implementation and Monitoring

The County will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of mitigation measures designed to minimize impacts associated with the proposed Project. While the County has ultimate responsibility for ensuring implementation, others may be assigned the responsibility of actually implementing the mitigation. The County will retain the primary responsibility for ensuring that the proposed Project meets the requirements of this mitigation plan and other permit conditions imposed by participating regulatory agencies.

The County will designate specific personnel who will be responsible for monitoring implementation of the mitigation that will occur during Project construction. The designated personnel will be responsible for submitting documentation and reports to the County on a schedule consistent with the mitigation measures and in a manner necessary for demonstrating compliance with mitigation requirements. The County will confirm that the designated personnel have authority to require implementation of mitigation requirements and will be capable of terminating project construction activities found to be inconsistent with mitigation objectives or project approval conditions.

The County and its appointed contractor will also be responsible for ensuring that its construction personnel understand their responsibilities for adhering to the performance requirements of the mitigation plan and other contractual requirements related to the implementation of mitigation as part of Project construction. In addition to the prescribed mitigation measures, the following table lists each environmental resource area being affected, the party responsible for implementation of the mitigation measure, and the corresponding monitoring and reporting requirement.

Mitigation Enforcement

The County will be responsible for enforcing mitigation measures. If alternative measures are identified that would be equally effective in mitigating the identified impacts, implementation of these alternative measures will not occur until agreed upon by the County.

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-1:*** **Conduct Environmental Awareness Training.** Before any work occurs in the Project area, including grading and equipment staging, all construction personnel shall participate in an environmental awareness training regarding special-status species and sensitive habitats present in the Project limits. If new construction personnel are added to the Project, they must receive the mandatory training before starting work. The training shall be provided to all personnel and will discuss sensitive resources (i.e., aquatic resources, riparian habitat, special-status species and habitat, nesting birds/raptors) to be avoided during Project construction and lists applicable permit conditions identified by state and federal agencies to protect these resources.	Qualified Biologist and Contractor	Prior to and during construction	Contractor will submit WEAT sign-in sheets to the County. The County will confirm completion of WEAT at the onset of construction activities.
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-2*****: Install Temporary Fencing.** Before any work occurs in the Project area, including grading and equipment staging, all construction personnel shall participate in an environmental awareness training regarding special-status species and sensitive habitats present in the Project limits. If new construction personnel are added to the Project, they must receive the mandatory training before starting work. The training shall be provided to all personnel and will discuss sensitive resources (i.e., aquatic resources, riparian habitat, special-status species and habitat, nesting birds/raptors) to be avoided during Project construction and lists applicable permit conditions identified by state and federal agencies to protect these resources.	Contractor to install fencing	Prior to construction	County representative will check fencing/flagging regularly. Maintenance and repairs will be completed by Contractor.
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-3:*** **Restore Temporarily Disturbed Areas.** Immediately after bridge construction is complete, all exposed soil shall be stabilized. Soil stabilization may include, but is not limited to, seeding with a native grass seed mix, planting native plants, and placement of rock. These areas will be properly protected from washout and erosion using appropriate erosion control devices including coir or jute netting, hydroseeding, and revegetation. No plastic monofilament materials shall be used aboveground.	Contractor	Following completion of construction.	The County will inspect post-Project conditions to ensure temporarily disturbed areas have been restored.
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-4:*** **Implement Water Quality Best Management Practices (BMPs).** Before any ground-disturbing activities, the County shall prepare and implement a SWPPP (as required under the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) General Construction Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ [and as amended by most	Contractor	Prior to and during construction	The County will confirm that all Water Quality BMPs are being followed

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
	current order(s)]) that includes erosion control measures and construction waste containment measures to ensure that waters of the State are protected during and after Project construction. The SWPPP shall include site design to minimize offsite stormwater runoff that might otherwise affect adjacent stream habitat. The SWPPP shall be prepared with the following objectives: (a) to identify pollutant sources, including sources of sediment, that may affect the quality of storm water discharges from the construction of the proposed Project; (b) to identify BMPs to reduce or eliminate pollutants in stormwater discharges and authorized non-stormwater discharges from the Project during construction; (c) to outline and provide guidance for BMP monitoring; (d) to identify proposed Project discharge points and receiving waters; to address post-construction BMP implementation and monitoring; and (f) to address sedimentation, siltation, and turbidity. The SWPPP will require BMPs including, but not limited to: ▪ Conduct ground disturbing activities adjacent to and within Owens Creek and the ephemeral drainage during the low-flow period (generally between June 1 and October 15). ▪ Install sediment fencing, fiber rolls, or other equivalent erosion and sediment control measures between the designated work area and Owens Creek and the ephemeral drainage, as necessary, to ensure that construction debris and sediment does not inadvertently enter the drainage. The County will also cover or otherwise stabilize all exposed soil 48 hours prior to potential precipitation events of greater than 0.5 inch. ▪ No refueling, storage, servicing, or maintenance of equipment shall take place within 100 feet of aquatic habitat. ▪ All machinery used during construction of the Project shall be properly maintained and cleaned to prevent spills and leaks that could contaminate soil or water. ▪ Any spills or leaks from construction equipment (i.e., fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid, and grease) shall be cleaned up in accordance with applicable local, state, and/or federal regulations.			according to the SWPPP.

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-5:*** **Install Catchment Tarps Prior to any Work Activity to the Bridge.** Prior to any bridge demolition, decommissioning, or work activity within the channel floodway embankments, catchment tarps, or a debris containment system will be installed to ensure all construction debris is caught and removed daily from the channel floodway.	Contractor	During construction	County representative will ensure the catchment tarps are installed prior to construction. Maintenance and repairs will be completed by Contractor.
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-6:*** **Avoid the Spread of Invasive Plant Species.** The following mitigation measures shall be implemented, as appropriate, to avoid the spreading of invasive plant species throughout the Project area during construction activities, particularly in riparian areas: ▪ All hay, straw, hay bales, straw bales, seed, mulch or other material used for erosion control or landscaping in the Project area shall be free of noxious weed seeds and propagules. ▪ All equipment brought to the Project area for construction shall be thoroughly cleaned of all dirt and vegetation prior to entering the site, to prevent importing noxious weeds. ▪ All material brought to the site, including rock, gravel, road base, sand, and topsoil, shall be free of noxious weed seeds and propagules.	Contractor	During construction	County representative will check implementation measures regularly. Maintenance and repairs will be completed by Contractor.
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-7:*** **Minimize Vegetation Removal.** ▪ The disturbance or removal of vegetation, especially riparian vegetation and native tree species, would not exceed the minimum necessary to complete the Project and would only occur within the defined work area. Precautions would be taken to avoid other damage to vegetation by people or equipment. ▪ Areas within the Project area where avoidance of impacts to riparian areas and native tree species is determined to be feasible will be protected during Project activities. These areas would be considered environmentally sensitive areas and exclusion fencing would be installed to ensure avoidance. ▪ No trees or riparian vegetation outside of the Project area would be removed. Exclusion fencing would be installed along the boundary of the Project area to ensure work is confined to the minimum area possible.	Contractor	During construction	County representative will check implementation measures regularly. Maintenance and repairs will be completed by Contractor.

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-8:*** **Monitor during Ground Disturbance and Vegetation Removal.** A biologist will be present during initial ground disturbance, vegetation removal, and exclusion fencing installation and removal within the construction area. Vegetation less than 3 inches in diameter will be cleared by hand or small engine weedeaters or chainsaws. Small material or grasses will be mowed close to ground with low impact rubber-tired tractors. Vegetation over 3 inches in diameter may require larger equipment such as telescoping chainsaws, hoe-mounted flail mowers, bucket machines to hoist crews and equipment, and climbing crews with chainsaws. The biological monitor must be a biologist with demonstrated knowledge of special-status invertebrate species, foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, western spadefoot, and western pond turtle natural history, ecology and identifying characteristics, as well as demonstrated field experience identifying other amphibian and reptile species within the range of these listed species. If any listed wildlife species (e.g., California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog) are observed in the Project work limits during construction, work will immediately stop, the species will be allowed to move out of harm's way on its own accord, and the USFWS and CDFW will be contacted within 24 hours. In the event that any life stage of California red-legged frog or foothill yellow-legged frog is present or has potential to be present, re-initiation of consultation with USFWS may be required.	Qualified Biologist	During construction	The County or contractor will employ a qualified biologist to be present during ground disturbance and vegetation removal. If any listed wildlife species are observed in the Project work limits and adjacent areas during the construction period, the County will report conditions and initiate correspondence with CDFW and USFWS.
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-9:*** **Provide Escape Ramps or Cover Open Trenches.** To avoid entrapment of wildlife, all excavated steep-walled holes or trenches more than 1 foot deep will be provided with one or more escape ramps constructed of earth fill or wooden planks at the end of each workday. If escape ramps cannot be provided, then holes or trenches will be covered with plywood or similar materials. Providing escape ramps or covering open trenches will prevent injury or mortality of wildlife resulting from falling into trenches and becoming trapped. The trenches will be thoroughly inspected for the presence of federally listed species at the beginning of each workday. Any species observed shall be allowed to voluntarily move outside of	Contractor	During construction	County representative will check implementation measures regularly. Maintenance and repairs will

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
	the work area on its own. If at any time a trapped listed animal is discovered, the approved biologist, or an on-site designee identified by the approved biologist, will immediately place escape ramps or other appropriate structures to allow the animal to escape.			be completed by Contractor.
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-10:*** **Complete Preconstruction Surveys for Special-status Amphibian Species.** A biologist shall conduct a survey no less than 7 days prior to the initiation of any ground disturbing activities within or adjacent to suitable habitat for foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, western spadefoot, and other special-status aquatic species that have potential to occur in the BSA. This survey will comprise walking transects while conducting visual encounter surveys within areas that will be subject to staging, vegetation clearing, grubbing, grading, cut and fill, or other ground disturbing activities. The survey will include areas upstream and downstream of the BSA. All potential habitat features in the BSA, such as crevices, burrows and/or insulated ledges along waterways shall be inspected for signs of foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, and western spadefoot usage to the maximum extent practicable. Immediately prior to in-stream activities or installation of water diversion structures, and after the 7-day survey, a biologist shall conduct a follow-up survey for foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, western spadefoot, and other special-status aquatic species that have potential to occur in the BSA. All potential habitat features in the BSA shall be inspected for special-status amphibian species, such as crevices, burrows and/or insulated ledges along waterways. If foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, western spadefoot, and other special-status aquatic species that have potential to occur in the BSA are present (including their egg masses or tadpoles) in the immediate work area, then all work shall stop, and the appropriate agencies shall be notified. In the event of any life stage of California red-legged frog or foothill yellow-legged frog is present or has potential to be present, USFWS will be contacted, and re-initiation of consultation may be required. Any special-status species observed shall be allowed to voluntarily move outside of the work area on its own volition. Non-listed and common aquatic species shall be captured and relocated out of the work area in a net or placed in buckets containing stream water and then moved	Qualified Biologist	Prior to and during construction	The qualified biologist will submit a summary of the pre-construction survey results to the County. If any listed wildlife species are observed in the Project work limits and adjacent areas, the County will report conditions and initiate correspondence with CDFW and USFWS.

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
	directly to the nearest suitable habitat in the same branch of the creek. Suitable habitat shall be identified prior to capturing aquatic species to minimize holding time. If egg masses or tadpoles of state-listed special-status aquatic species are detected during preconstruction surveys, no in-stream construction may commence until species have metamorphosed and moved out of the work area on its own volition. Once the biologist has determined that all listed aquatic species have moved out of the work area or been effectively relocated, barrier seines or exclusion fencing shall be installed to prevent amphibians from moving back in, as appropriate, and the work area will be dewatered, as necessary. If any listed wildlife species (e.g., California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog) are observed in the Project work limits during construction, work will immediately stop, the species will be allowed to move out of harm's way on its own accord, and the USFWS and CDFW will be contacted within 24 hours.			
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-11:*** **Restrict In-stream Work to Low-flow Period.** To minimize impacts of dewatering and construction on foothill yellow-legged frog, California red-legged frog, western pond turtle, and other resident aquatic species, limit in-creek construction activities to between June 1 and October 15, unless creek is dry or as otherwise specified by appropriate agencies. This window can be extended based on stream conditions, if approved in writing by regulatory agencies with jurisdiction. Work from the existing roadway, top of banks, and within falsework can occur year-round.	Contractor	During construction	The County will inspect in-creek construction activities and confirm schedule is limited to the low-flow period.
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-12:*** **Monitor during Dewatering Activities** Appropriate temporary cofferdams shall be used to dewater the construction site and divert water through the Project area during the construction period to prevent impeding water flow through the work area. When dewatering is required, a qualified biologist shall be present during the dewatering period to inspect and ensure that sensitive aquatic species will not be trapped within the temporary cofferdams and to monitor the construction site during aquatic species relocation and dewatering activities. If foothill yellow-legged frog or any other special-status aquatic species are found within the cofferdams, then all work shall stop, and the appropriate agencies shall be notified. Any species observed shall be allowed to voluntarily move outside of the work area on its own. All cofferdams shall be inspected and maintained on a daily basis to ensure its integrity for the duration of the work below the ordinary high	Qualified Biologist	During construction	The County will ensure a qualified biologist is present during dewatering activities. If any listed wildlife species are observed, the County will

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
	water mark (OHWM) of the creek. Pumps used for dewatering shall have fish screens, as identified in Project permits, installed to minimize intake of fish and other aquatic species into pumps. Diversion structures shall be left in place until all in-stream work is completed. At the completion of Project construction, the County/contractor shall remove from the streambed all materials used to maintain flow and divert water from the Project area during the construction period, including cofferdams, pipes, and filter fabric. Temporary culverts and all construction materials and debris shall be removed from the affected area prior to reestablishing flow and prior to the rainy season. A monitor shall be present during the removal of dewatering materials.			report conditions and initiate correspondence with appropriate agencies.
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-13*: Conduct a Preconstruction Survey for Western Pond Turtle** A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction clearance survey for western pond turtles within 48 hours prior to any ground disturbance within Owens Creek and within the Project area, as well as upstream and downstream from the Project area and up to 1,300 feet from the stream channel in undeveloped upland habitats where access permits. For surveys outside the Project area where access is not permitted, the surveying biologist shall use binoculars to scan upstream, downstream, and within uplands for western pond turtle. Any western pond turtles found within the construction work area shall be allowed to voluntarily move out of this area or shall be captured and held by a qualified biologist for the minimum amount of time necessary to release them into suitable aquatic habitat outside the construction work area. If a western pond turtle nest containing eggs or young is identified within the construction work area, the biologist shall consult with CDFW to determine an appropriate no-disturbance buffer to ensure avoidance of the nest.	Qualified Biologist	Prior to and during construction	The qualified biologist will submit results of preconstruction survey for western pond turtle to the County. The County will coordinate with CDFW on appropriate buffers if any western pond turtles are located during surveys.
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-14:* Conduct a Preconstruction Nesting Migratory Bird and Raptor Survey** If construction or vegetation removal will occur during the breeding season for migratory birds and raptors (generally February through August), the County shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction nesting bird and raptor survey prior to the start of construction activities (including equipment staging). The	Qualified Biologist	Prior to and during construction	The qualified biologist will submit results of preconstruction survey for

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
	preconstruction nesting bird and raptor surveys shall be conducted between February 1 and August 31 within suitable habitat within the designated Project area. Surveys for raptors' nests would also extend 1,250 feet from the Project area to ensure that nesting raptors are not affected by construction disturbances. For raptor surveys outside the Project area where property access has not been granted, the surveying biologist shall use binoculars to scan any suitable nesting substrate for potential raptor nests. The preconstruction survey shall be conducted no more than 48 hours before the initiation of construction activities. If an active bird or raptor nest is identified within the construction work area or an active raptor nest is identified within 1,250 feet from the construction work area, a no-disturbance buffer shall be established around the nest to avoid disturbance of the nesting birds or raptors until a qualified biologist determines that the young have fledged and are foraging on their own. The extent of these buffers shall be determined by the biologist (coordinating with CDFW) and shall depend on the species identified, level of noise or construction disturbance, line-of-sight between the nest and the disturbance, ambient levels of noise and other disturbances, and other topographic or artificial barriers. In addition to the establishment of buffers, other avoidance measures (determined during CDFW coordination) may include monitoring of the nest during construction and restricting the type of work that can be conducted near the nest site. If no active nests are found during the preconstruction surveys, then no additional mitigation is required. If a lapse in construction activities for one week or longer occurs during the avian breeding season, another preconstruction survey would be performed prior to work re-initiation.			nesting bird and raptors to the County. The County will coordinate with CDFW on appropriate buffers if nesting birds and raptors are located during surveys.
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-15:*** **Conduct a Preconstruction Survey and Exclusion for Bats** To minimize impacts to roosting bats, humane eviction of bats from onsite roosting habitat (i.e., on-site trees with crevices or cavities suitable for roosting and the existing bridge) would be completed prior to removal. Eviction would be conducted during periods of dry weather and outside of the maternity season. The maternity season is approximately April 15 through September 1. <u>Bridge Roosting Habitat.</u> Prior to the start of construction activities and outside of the maternity season, bat exclusion would be installed beneath the bridge by a qualified biologist or bat exclusion expert. Humane bat eviction would consist of daytime	Qualified Biologist	Prior to and during construction	The qualified biologist will submit results of preconstruction survey for bridge and tree roosting habitat to the County.

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
	installation of one-way exits attached to the concrete that would permit bats to exit but not re-enter. After 4-10 days, or after a visual inspection shows that all bats have vacated the roosts, the one-way exits would be removed, and the entrances blocked securely to prevent bats from entering prior to demolition. Tree Roosting Habitat. If construction is scheduled between April and September, before construction begins, a qualified biologist will survey for roosting bats prior to tree removal activities. The qualified biologist would survey trees and rocky outcrops within the Project area and identify any snags, hollow trees, or other trees with cavities that may provide suitable roosting habitat for bats. If no suitable roosting trees are found, construction may proceed. Trees containing suitable roosting habitat would be removed in two steps occurring over two consecutive days. On the first day, small limbs containing no cavity, crevice, or exfoliating bark would be removed using chainsaws only. On the second day, the remainder of the tree would be removed. If bats are found or evidence of use by bats is present, the qualified biologist will work with CDFW to implement measures to avoid or minimize disturbance to the colony.			The County will coordinate with CDFW on appropriate measures for exclusion or removal if suitable roosting habitat is located during surveys.
Biological Resources	***Mitigation Measure BIO-16*: Rescue Stranded Aquatic Life.** All reasonable efforts shall be made to capture and move all stranded aquatic life observed in the dewatered areas. Capture methods may include fish landing nets, dip nets, buckets, and by hand. Captured aquatic life shall be released immediately downstream in Owens Creek or in the closest body of water. Efforts shall be made to reduce collecting and handling stress, minimize the time that animals are held in buckets, and minimize handling stress during processing and release. No employee or contractor shall remove any fish, dead or alive, from the site for personal use.	Contractor	During construction	County representative will check implementation measures regularly.
Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources	***Mitigation Measure CUL-1:* Worker Environmental Awareness and Cultural Respect Training.** Prior to excavation or other subsurface disturbance activities, individuals conducting the work will be required to participate in Worker Environmental Awareness and Cultural Respect Training. Workers will be advised to watch for cultural resource materials, including evidence of pre-contact cultural resources (freshwater shells, beads, bone tool remnants or an assortment of bones, soil changes including subsurface ash lens or soil darker "midden" in color than surrounding soil, lithic materials such as flakes, tools or grinding rocks, etc.), or historic-era cultural resources (adobe foundations or walls, structures and remains with square nails, refuse deposits or bottle dumps, often associated with wells or old privies).	Contractor	Prior to and during construction	Contractor will advise the County in writing that the environmental awareness and cultural respect training has been completed. The County will confirm

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
				completion of environmental awareness and cultural respect training at the onset of construction activities.
Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources	***Mitigation Measure CUL-2*: Tribal Monitoring during Construction.** A Tribal monitor will be present during all ground excavation activities. The Contractor will coordinate with SSMN to schedule the Tribal monitor.	Contractor	During construction	The Contractor will coordinate with SSMN to schedule the Tribal monitor. County representative will confirm a monitor is present for all ground-disturbing activities.
Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources	***Mitigation Measure CUL-3*: Procedures for Inadvertent Discovery of Cultural Resources.** If previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction, work will be halted within 60 feet of the find until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find, in coordination with the Tribal monitor when the find contains potential pre-historic resources. Mariposa County and Caltrans will be notified of the potential find, and the County will retain an on-call archaeologist for the duration of ground-disturbing construction activities to assess finds. If resource is determined to be significant, the archaeologist shall work with the County, Caltrans, and (if applicable) the Tribe to develop and implement appropriate procedures to protect the integrity of the resource.	Contractor and Qualified Archaeologist	During construction (upon discovery)	Contractor will report and document any discovered subsurface resources to the County and Caltrans, who will take appropriate additional measures, as needed.

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources	***Mitigation Measure CUL-4:*** **Environmentally Sensitive Area Fencing.** Access to environmentally sensitive areas will be barred using temporary orange plastic fencing to protect designated sites. The ESAs will be clearly delineated on construction plans and noted for avoidance. Qualified archaeological and biological consultants under the supervision of Caltrans, will monitor the installation of ESA fencing. The ESAs will be fenced off (Temporary Fencing [Type ESA]) and will be posted as an ESA. No construction or associated activities (e.g., parking, equipment storage) shall take place within the ESAs. During construction, the County Project Manager, archaeological consultant, and Tribal monitor will periodically inspect the ESAs to confirm that no construction activities have encroached on the site area. After construction, the archaeological consultant will monitor the removal of ESA fencing.	Contractor	Prior to construction	County representative and Tribal monitor will check fencing/flagging regularly. Maintenance and repairs will be completed by Contractor with the presence of the Tribal monitor.
Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources	***Mitigation Measure CUL-5:*** **Procedures for Human Remains.** If human remains, associated grave goods, or sacred objects are encountered during excavation, the following protocols will be strictly adhered to: ▪ Provisions of state and local law applicable to the intentional excavation and the inadvertent discovery of human remains or cultural items on non-federal lands will be complied with pursuant to the provisions of the California Health and Safety Code (Sections 7050.5-7054.1, and 8100) and the Public Resources Code (Sections 5097.90-99) ▪ The Principal Investigator shall immediately notify the Native American Monitor, Caltrans District 10 PQS Sarah Luce, a Mariposa County Representative, and the Mariposa County Coroner. ▪ If the remains are considered to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be notified. The NAHC will notify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) ▪ Potentially damaging excavation activities within 100 feet of the remains will be stopped immediately. ▪ Treatment and repatriation of human remains will be conducted in consultation with the MLD.	Contractor	During construction (upon discovery)	Contractor will report and document any discovered human remains to the Mariposa County coroner, the County and Caltrans, who will take appropriate additional measures, as needed.
Geology and Soils	***Mitigation Measure GEO-1:*** **Protect Discovered Paleontological Resources.** If any evidence of paleontological resources is inadvertently unearthed during construction, all work will cease within 50-feet of the discovery, the County will be	Contractor and Qualified Paleontologist	During construction (upon discovery)	Contractor will report and document any discovered

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
	notified, and a qualified paleontologist shall be consulted to assess the significance of the resources and recommend appropriate conservation measures.			subsurface resources to the County, who will take appropriate additional measures, as needed.
Hazardous Materials	***Mitigation Measure HAZ-1*: Conduct Phase II Soil and Materials Sampling and Implement Contamination Removal Activities as Needed.** Materials sampling for ACM and LBP on the bridge and for wood-preserving chemicals on the wood posts shall be completed before demolition. A workplan to conduct a Phase II site assessment shall be submitted to the County for review and approval prior to field activities. Analytical results from soil and materials samples obtained during Phase II screening will be compared to state and federal standards to evaluate reuse and/or disposal requirements for contaminated soils and materials. The Project will implement Caltrans Standard Specifications and Standard Special Provisions for sampling, removal, and disposal of contaminated soils and materials, as well as treated wood waste.	Contractor	Prior to construction and bridge demolition	The Contractor will conduct sampling for hazardous materials and provide the results to the County and Caltrans.
Hazardous Materials	***Mitigation Measure HAZ-2:*** **Implement Lead Compliance Plan.** If sampling determines elevated lead levels in soils or materials, the Contractor shall prepare and implement a project-specific Lead Compliance Plan (8 CCR 1532.1, the "Lead in Construction" standard) to reduce worker exposure to lead-impacted soil and lead-containing paint. The plan would include protocols for environmental and personnel monitoring, requirements for personal protective equipment, other health and safety protocols and procedures for the handling of lead-impacted soil, and requirements for disposal of lead-containing paint in traffic striping and on the existing bridge. The plan would be consistent with Caltrans Standard Special Provisions for removal of LBP from structures and traffic striping.	Contractor	During construction (if needed)	The County will be provided with a Lead Compliance Plan if needed and the Contractor will implement the plan.
Hazardous Materials	***Mitigation Measure HAZ-3:*** **Implement Asbestos Compliance Plan.** If sampling determines ACM on the bridge, the Contractor shall prepare and implement an Asbestos Compliance Plan consistent with Caltrans Standard Special Provisions.	Contractor	During construction (if needed)	The Contractor will provide an Asbestos Compliance Plan if needed to the County, and the

Final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program				
Impact Area	**Mitigation Measure**	**Responsible Party**	**Implementation Timing**	**Monitoring Activity**
				Contractor will implement the plan.
Noise	***Mitigation Measure NOISE-1:*** **Implement Construction Noise Reduction Measures.** Noise-generating construction activities shall conform to the provisions in Section 14-8.02, "Noise Control," of the Caltrans Standard Specifications. This policy requires the following mandatory noise abatement measures: ▪ Per Caltrans Section 14-8.02 Noise Control, do not exceed 86 dBA Lmax at 50 feet from the job site activities from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. In addition to compliance with the measures listed above, implementing the following recommended measures also would help minimize temporary construction noise impacts: ▪ Internal combustion engines shall be equipped with a muffler of a type recommended by the manufacturer. ▪ Portable/stationary equipment (e.g., generators, compressors) shall be located at the furthest distance from the nearby sensitive receptors. ▪ Construction equipment and haul trucks should be turned off when not in use.	Contractor	During construction	Contractor will monitor construction activities and adherence to noise mitigation.
Traffic	***Mitigation Measure TRA-1*****: Traffic Management Plan and Notification of Detour.** A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) would be prepared by Caltrans prior to the beginning of construction and in consultation with the appropriate agencies. The TMP would provide advance notice to travelers of the upcoming project and road closure and identify alternative routes for emergency and medical vehicles associated with essential services. Notifications and instructions for rapid response or evacuation in the event of an emergency would be provided. ▪ Emergency service providers shall be notified in advance of construction activities, informed of the full road closure, and provided details of detour routes during construction. ▪ Traffic detours shall be announced to residents and roadway users well in advance of construction and closure of the bridge. ▪ Traffic detour signage shall be installed before construction begins and throughout construction so that drivers can avoid the Project area entirely.	Contractor	Prior to Construction	Contractor will submit Traffic Control Plan to County for approval, including notification plans.

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Appendix B. Site Photos

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Overview of the rural landscape from School House Road. Taken facing east.

Overview of current School House Road Bridge, taken facing north.

Overview of the Project area from School House Road. Taken facing southeast.

Overview of current School House Road Bridge from Owens Creek, taken facing east.

Owens Creek downstream from School House Road Bridge. Taken facing west (downstream).

Owens Creek upstream of bridge. Taken facing west.

Owens Creek upstream of existing bridge. Taken facing northeast.

Ephemeral drainage and culvert under School House Road. Taken facing west (downstream).