

**Initial Study
and
Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration**

**for the
Cort Property Sphere of Influence
Amendment and Annexation**

Lead Agency:
Byron Bethany Irrigation District
7995 Bruns Road
Byron CA 94514

State Clearinghouse No. _____

Draft Document

September 2024

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1. Introduction and Project Description

This Project Information, Description, and Environmental Checklist contained herein constitute the contents of an Initial Study in accordance with Section 15063 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines:

Project Title: Cort Property Sphere of Influence Amendment and Annexation to the Byron Bethany Irrigation District

Lead Agency: Byron Bethany Irrigation District
7995 Bruns Road
Byron CA 94514

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Project Sponsor's Name and Address: Vera Court Revocable Living Trust
Vera Cort, Trustee
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San Francisco CA 94118

Robert Cort, Project Manager
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Project Location

The Cort Property Annexation parcel is located between the community of Byron and the Byron Airport in southeastern Contra Costa County. The project site is also located between the Byron Highway and North Vasco Road. The property address is 5400 Byron Hot Springs Road, Byron, California. (Refer to Figure 1: Vicinity Map)

The annexation parcel consists of 200 acres and is identified as Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 002-020-021. The subject property is located in Section 15 of Township 1 South, Range 3 East, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.

General Plan Designation

The subject property carries a Contra Costa County General Plan Land Use designation of AL (Agricultural Lands). The purpose of the AL designation is to preserve and protect lands capable of and generally used for production of food, fiber, and plant materials.

Zoning

The eastern portion of the subject property (approximately 160 acres) is zoned F-R (Forest Recreation). The western portion of the subject property is zoned A-3 (Heavy Agriculture). It is the intent of the F-R Zone to provide areas for single-family dwellings, public and private parks and playgrounds, hotels, golf courses, and other recreation uses. The A-3 zone provides for all types of agriculture, general farming, dairying, livestock production, and similar uses.

Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

As detailed in Table A, the subject property is surrounded by various types of agricultural pursuits, including dry farming, grazing and pasture, irrigated pasture, orchards, vineyards, and row crops.

Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required

Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission (Contra Costa LAFCo), if jurisdiction is relinquished for the Annexation by San Joaquin LAFCo as the principal LAFCo.

California Native American Tribal Consultation

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1 (AB 52), the Lead Agency is responsible for consultation with affected California Native American Tribes who are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project. Letters requesting consultation with the affected tribes have been issued. To date, the Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nations have requested consultation. Refer also to Section 5 – Tribal Cultural Resources.

Existing Environmental Setting

The subject property is located south of the small community of Byron (population of 1,140 in 2020). This area in Southeastern Contra Costa County contains significant acreage in agricultural production and is headquarters to such family farms as Maggiore Ranches, Salvador Family Farm, Stoney Family Farms, and Freitas Cherry Ranch. A variety of crops and agricultural land uses are located in the area, including: orchards (primarily cherries, along with apricots, nectarines, peaches, olives, and walnuts);

vineyards; row crops (primarily tomatoes and sweet corn); field crops (including alfalfa, hay, cereal hay, and field corn); irrigated pasture; dry farming; and grazing.

Detailed Project Description

The proposed project is the annexation of one parcel of record (under one ownership) totaling 200 acres to the Byron Bethany Irrigation District (BBID) in order to obtain irrigation water for crop production. (Refer to Figure 2: Annexation Map) Such water service will be subject to BBID's current rules and regulations governing both the distribution of water and payment of tolls and charges for water service.

Irrigation water will be supplied from two turnouts along BBID's Forty-Five Canal, which traverses along the west side of Byron Highway. The Cort property is not currently in agricultural production. Due to the on-site sandy-salty soils, the property owner may develop an approximate 182-acre portion of the property as an agricultural area for olives, and perhaps grapes, pomegranates, or hops. (Robert Cort, Project Manager; Personal Communication)

The remaining 18-acres of the property is the site of the historic Byron Hot Springs Resort dating from the 1930's. The remaining resort buildings are abandoned and in disrepair. The property owner is working toward restoring the resort; but as a separate project not associated with the agricultural activity. (Robert Cort, Project Manager; Personal Communication)

Sphere of Influence and Annexation

Because the subject property is not within the existing BBID Sphere of Influence (SOI), nor within the BBID district boundary, two government organization actions are required:

1. Amend the District SOI to include the Cort Property (200 acres). This action is the responsibility of San Joaquin LAFCo (as Principal LAFCo, having a majority of assessed land value in the District); and
2. Annex the territory as proposed to BBID. The annexation area is contiguous with the existing District boundary on its east and northeast sides. (Refer to Figure 2) This action will be the responsibility of Contra Costa LAFCo after the SOI Amendment is complete; and if San Joaquin LAFCo relinquishes approval authority to Contra Costa LAFCo.

Urban Limit Line/Urban Growth Boundary

The subject property is outside the voter approved Contra Costa County Urban Limit Line (ULL). The Byron area is a Census Designated Place, and does not have a ULL. The City of Brentwood, located northwest of the subject area, has an adopted ULL.

Flood Hazard

The project site is not within an identified flood hazard zone as depicted on Panel 510 of the National Flood Insurance Program for Contra Costa County, March 21, 2017.

Proposed Project Approvals

The proposed project will require the following approvals:

- **Sphere of Influence Amendment**

Add 200 acres to the Byron Bethany Irrigation District Sphere of Influence.

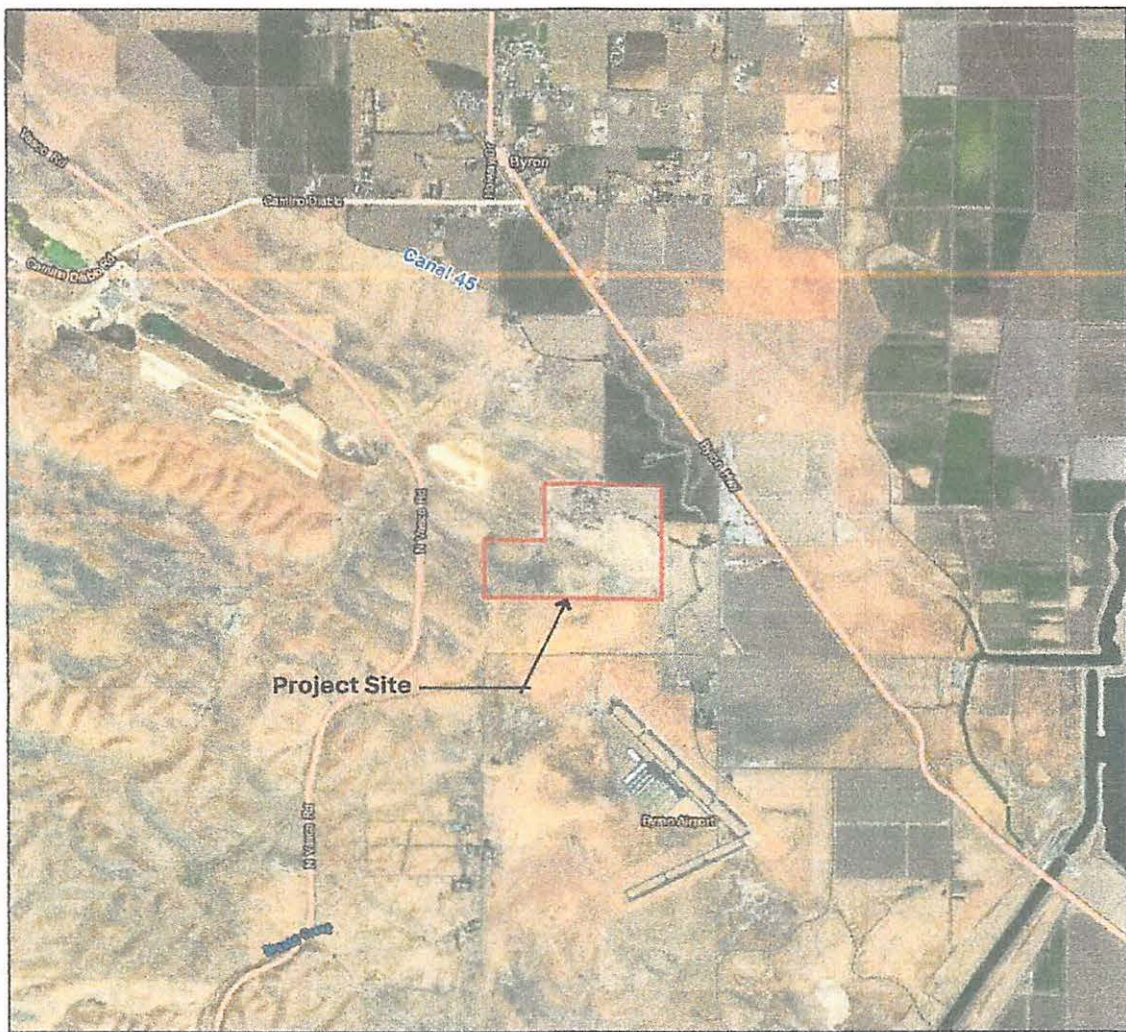
Approval by the San Joaquin Local Agency Formation Commission as a responsible agency in conjunction with approval of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration.

- **Annexation**

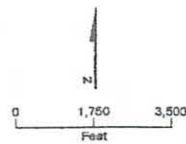
Annexation of 200 acres to the Byron Bethany Irrigation District.

Detachments from other affected special districts within the annexation area are not contemplated.

Approval by the Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission if San Joaquin LAFCo (as the principal LAFCo) relinquishes jurisdiction.



VICINITY MAP



Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar
 Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and
 the GIS User Community
 Esri, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors
 Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, NRCAN, METI, IPC,
 TomTom
 Esri, HERE, Garmin, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user

Byron Bethany Irrigation District, California

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Figure 1: Vicinity Map

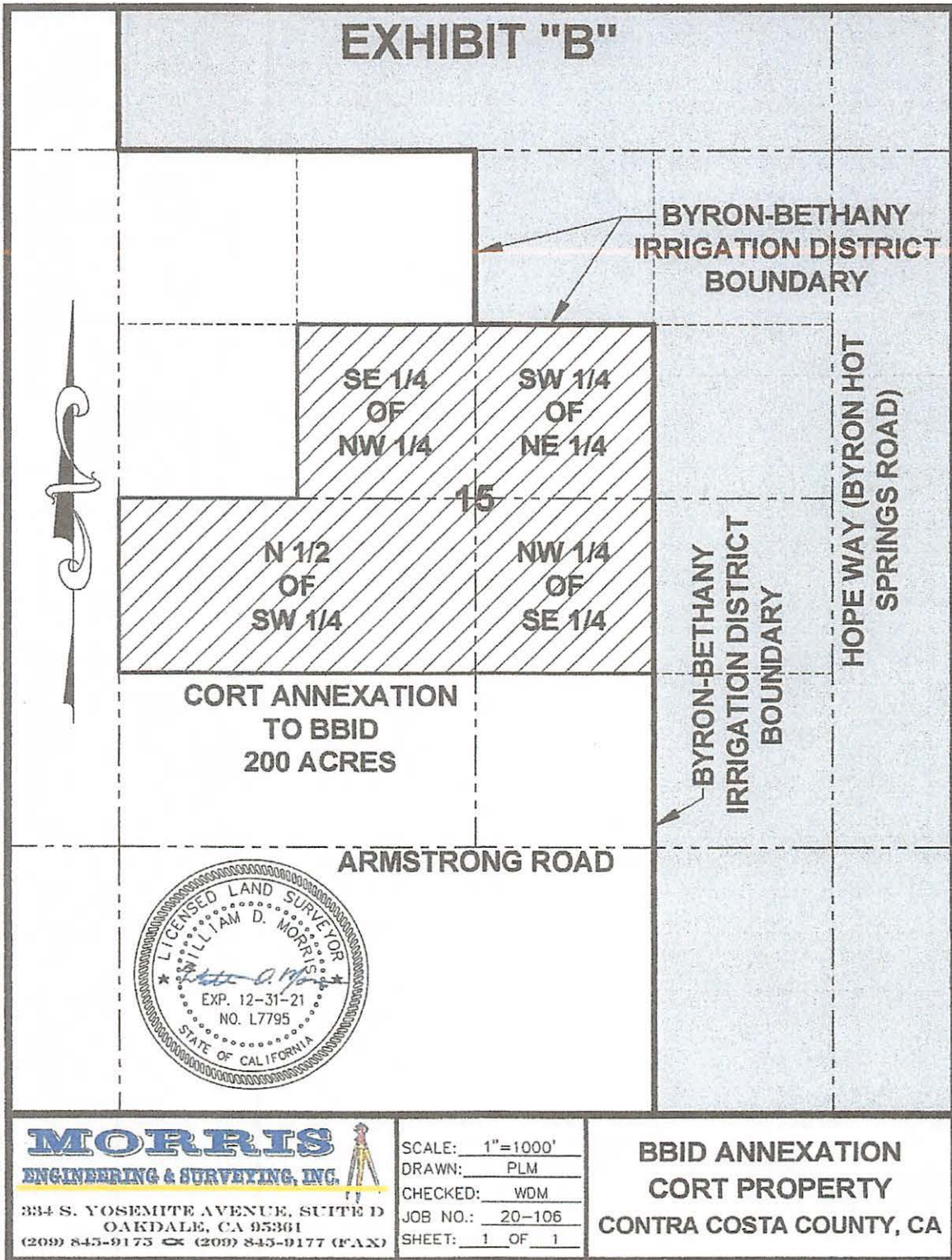


Figure 2: Annexation Map

Regulatory Guidance

This document is an initial study, which provides justification for a Negative Declaration pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared in accordance with CEQA, Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., and the State CEQA Guidelines 14 California Code Regulations Section 15000 et seq.

An initial study is conducted by the Lead Agency to determine if a project may have a significant effect on the environment. In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines Section 15063, an EIR must be prepared if an initial study indicates that the proposed project under review may have a potentially significant impact on the environment. A Negative Declaration may be prepared instead, if the Lead Agency prepares a written statement describing the reasons why the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment, and therefore, why it does not require the preparation of an EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15371). According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, a proposed Negative Declaration shall be prepared for a project subject to CEQA when either:

- a) *The initial study shows there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment, or The initial study identifies potentially significant effects, but:*
 - (1) *Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by or agreed to by the applicant before the proposed negative declaration is released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur and;*
 - (2) *There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment.*

2. Environmental Determination

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

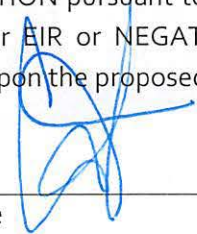
The environmental factors checked below are analyzed in this Initial Study:

X	Aesthetics	X	Agriculture and Forestry Resources	Air Quality
	Biological Resources	X	Cultural Resources	Energy
X	Geology/Soils		Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Hazards & Hazardous Materials
	Hydrology/Water Quality	X	Land Use/Planning	Mineral Resources
	Noise		Population/Housing	Public Services
	Recreation		Transportation	X Tribal Cultural Resources
	Utilities/Service Systems	X	Wildfire	X 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 project have been made by or agreed to by the 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.

 _____ Signature	September 5, 2024 _____ Date
Edwin Pattison, General Manager _____	Byron Bethany Irrigation District _____

Evaluation of Environmental Impacts:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards, (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants based on a project-specific screening analysis.)
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063 (c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used: Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed: Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures: For effects that are "Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures, which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

- 9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
- a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

3. Environmental Checklist

1. Aesthetics

Except as provided in Public Resources code Section 21099, would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
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 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?			X	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	

Discussion

a-b) No Impact:

The Project area is not within a scenic vista or visible from a State scenic highway.

c-d) Less Than Significant:

Establishment of agricultural operations on the subject property will not degrade the existing visual character in the project vicinity; nor will it add substantial light or glare to the project vicinity. The anticipated use of the property is consistent with surrounding agricultural uses.

Mitigation

None Required.

2. Agricultural and Forestry Resources

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. 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 forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 1220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				X
d) Result in the loss of forestland or conversion of forestland to non-forest use?				X
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?				X

References:

Prime Agricultural Soil and Important Farmland Map. Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission. August 10, 2017.

Soil Survey, Contra Costa County, California. United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. September 1977.

Discussion**a-e) No Impact:**

The subject property is classified as Important Farmland, but is not considered to be Prime Farmland.. On-site soils are a mixture of loam, loamy sand, clay loam, and clay. Specific soil types are Solano loam (Sk), San Ysidero loam (Sc), Briones loamy sand (BdE), Linne clay loam (LbD and LbE), Altamont clay (AbE), and Clear Lake clay (Cc). These soils have a Storie Index ranging from 17 to 49, with a 100 index being prime soils.

Annexation of this property will not convert agricultural land to a non-agricultural use; and will in fact, develop additional agricultural acreage for the production of crops. The agricultural portion of the property (160 acres) is zoned A-3, which allows a wide range of agricultural activities. The parcel of record is not under a Williamson Act Contract.

Mitigation

None Required.

3. Cultural Resources

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

References:

Cultural Resources Records Review of the Cort Property Annexation Project. Historic Resource Associates. April 23, 2024. (Refer to Appendix A)

Discussion

a–c) Less Than Significant with Mitigation:

A cultural resources records review of the project site was conducted by Dana E. Supernowicz of Historic Resource Associates at the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) in Rohnert Park, California on April 9, 2024.

According to the NWIC database, there have been two cultural resource studies conducted within the project boundary, both focused on specific areas of the property. The first, by Theodoratus Cultural Research in 1980 focused on an electrical transmission corridor that bisected the annexation parcel. The second, by Thomas & Wills in 2018 was focused on a T-Mobile cellular tower on the site. There have also been five additional cultural resource studies conducted within a one-fourth mile radius of the project location.

The conclusion from Mr. Supernowicz is that to date, the annexation property has only received a cursory physical inspection by a professional archaeologist. He also suggested that the hot springs area (which is not a part of this proposed use) was utilized by Native Americans.

No relevant Native American cultural resource listings, or historic resource listings were found for the project site. No human remains are known to occur in the area, however it is possible that buried resources or human remains could be uncovered during site preparation work for the commercial agriculture use. Therefore, mitigation measures 3.1 and 3.2 are proposed to reduce the potential impact to less than significant.

Mitigation

Mitigation Measure 3-1:

Should unknown buried resources or human remains become inadvertently uncovered during grading or other earth disturbing activities, construction is required to stop within 50 feet of the find and the County of Contra Costa is to be notified.

Mitigation Measure 3-2:

If human remains are uncovered, the Contra Costa County Coroner will be notified immediately, according to Section 5097.98 of the State Public Resources Code and Section 7050.5 of California's Health and Safety Code. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, and the procedures outlined in CEQA Section 15064.5(d) shall be followed.

4. Geology and Soils

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
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.				X
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure including liquefaction?				X
(iv) Landslides?				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?		X		
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			X	
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?				X
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?				X
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				X

References:

Contra Costa County General Plan 2005-2020, Chapter 10 – Safety Element. Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development. January 18, 2005.

Soil Survey, Contra Costa County, California. United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. September 1977.

Discussion

a, c, d e, f) No Impact:

The project site is not located in an area subject to earthquakes, strong seismic ground shaking, liquefaction, or landslides.

4. Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation:

On-site soils for the most part are slightly or moderately subject to erosion, except for the Briones loamy sand which has a moderate to high erosion factor. In order to prevent erosion on the property, mitigation measures are proposed to reduce these factors to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure 4-3:

Erosion control measures shall be in place by September 15th and include the following:

- Seed bare soils and cover with 2 to 4-inches of straw; and
- Place straw rolls (waddles) at the bottom of slopes and around drainage swales.

4. Land Use and Planning

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
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?				X

References

Contra Costa County General Plan 2005-2020, Chapter 3 – Land Use Element. Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development. January 18, 2005.

Discussion

a) No Impact:

The proposed project is on the periphery of the community of Byron and not adjacent to the community proper. Therefore, it will not divide the community.

b) No Impact:

Amending the BBID SOI and Annexation of the subject property to Byron Bethany Irrigation District is logical and consistent with Contra Costa General Plan Policies. The SOI Amendment area and the Annexation area (one and the same) are contiguous the District boundary, and are logical additions to the District.

Mitigation

None Required.

5. Tribal Cultural Resources

Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, as defined in Public Resource Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				X
(i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or				X
(ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subsection (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.				X

Discussion

a) No Impacts:

No tribal cultural resources have been identified within or adjacent to the project site. The probability of the presence of tribal cultural resources is very low.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1 (AB 52), Byron Bethany Irrigation District as the Lead Agency, has invited California Native American Tribes who are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project to consult with the District. At this point in time, the Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nations has requested consultation. The District will follow-up to address any concerns the Tribe may have.

These tribal organizations are as follows:

Amah Mutsun Tribal Band	Galt CA
Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation	Oakland CA
Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan	Hollister CA
Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area	Castro Valley CA

Northern Valley Yokut/Ohlone Tribe
The Ohlone Indian Tribe
Tule River Indian Tribe
Wilton Rancheria
Wuksachi Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band

Linden CA
San Lorenzo CA
Porterville CA
Elk Grove CA
Salinas CA

Mitigation

None Required.

6. Wildfire

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
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?				X
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?				X
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?				X

Reference:

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. *Fire Hazard Severity Zones*. August 2018.

Discussion

a,b,c,d) No Impacts:

The current circulation system that provides evacuation routes is not in proximity to the subject property.

The subject property is not within a CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone, but is adjacent to a 'Moderate' Fire Hazard Severity Zone to the west. This is the lowest fire hazard severity designation.

The potential exists for grassland fires to occur on adjacent lands; however, this possibility is considered very low due to most properties in the area are under cultivation.

Mitigation

None Required.

4. Mandatory Findings of Significance

Mandatory Findings of Significance	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No Impact
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?				X
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)?				X
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				X

Discussion

a and c) Less than Significant:

The proposed project may have a small but incremental impact; however, these environmentally sensitive issues are not anticipated to cause any significant environmental concerns.

b) Less Than Significant

Agricultural activities and crop production on the subject property may add an incremental effect to local traffic and circulation, stormwater runoff, noise, and pesticide and fertilizer use. However, these activities are currently in place in the area and no changes are anticipated.

5. References

Regulations, Code of (CA) (as amended). Title 14 – Natural Resources, Division 6 – Natural Resources Agency, Chapter 3 -- *Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Appendix G – Environmental Checklist Form* . Sacramento, CA.

See also references pertaining to specific checklist topics.

6. Glossary

Annexation	The inclusion of territory into a city or special district.
Contiguous	In the case of boundary, territory adjacent to an agency to which boundary is proposed. Territory is not contiguous if the only contiguity is based upon a strip of land more than 300 feet long and less than 200 feet wide.
District	An agency of the state, formed in accordance with general law or a special act, for the local performance of governmental functions within limited boundaries. Synonymous with "special district."
General Plan	A document containing a statement of development policies including a diagram and text setting forth the objectives of the plan. The general plan must include certain state mandated elements related to land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open-space, noise, and safety.
Lead Agency	The public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project. The Lead Agency decides whether an EIR or Negative Declaration is required for a project, and causes the appropriate document to be prepared.
Negative	A written statement prepared by a Lead Agency that briefly describes the reasons that a project, not exempt from CEQA, will not have a significant effect on the environment and therefore does not require the preparation of an EIR.
Open Space	Any parcel or area of land or water, which is substantially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use.
Prime Agricultural Land	An area of land, whether a single parcel or contiguous parcels, which has not been developed for a use other than agriculture and meets certain criteria related to soil classification or crop and livestock carrying capacity. Class I and II soils as mapped by the Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Project Under CEQA, a project is the whole of an action which has the potential to result in significant environmental change in the environment, directly, or ultimately (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15378).

Responsible Agencies Under CEQA, responsible agencies are all public agencies other than the Lead Agency that have discretionary approval power over the project.

Zoning The primary instrument for implementing the general plan. Zoning divides a community or county into districts or "zones" that specify the permitted/prohibited land uses.

TABLE A

Information regarding the areas surrounding the proposal area

	APN	Existing Land Use	General Plan Designation	Zoning Designation
East	002-200-007	Dry Farming, Farming, Grazing & Pasture, 40 acres and over	Agricultural Lands	A-3: Heavy Agricultural District
	002-200-019 (<i>same parcel as North</i>)	Orchards, Vineyard, Row Crops, Irrigated Pasture, 40 acres and over	Agricultural Lands	A-2: General Agricultural District
West	022-200-022 (<i>same parcel as North</i>)	Dry Farming, Farming, Grazing & Pasture, 40 acres and over	Agricultural Lands	A-3: Heavy Agricultural District
	003-160-006	Government-owned, with or without improvements	Parks and Recreation	A-4: Agricultural Preserve District
North	002-200-019 (<i>same parcel as East</i>)	Orchards, Vineyards, Row Crops, Irrigated Pasture, 40 acres and over	Agricultural Lands	A-2: General Agricultural District
	002-200-013	Dry Farming, Farming, Grazing & Pasture, 40 acres and over	Agricultural Lands	F-R: Forest Recreation
	022-200-022 (<i>same parcel as West</i>)	Dry Farming, Farming, Grazing & Pasture, 40 acres and over	Agricultural Lands	A-3: Heavy Agricultural District
South	002-200-016	Government-owned, with or without improvements	Open Space	A-3: Heavy Agricultural District

Appendix A

CULTURAL RESOURCES RECORDS REVIEW
of the
CORT PROPERTY ANNEXATION PROJECT

[Please refer to attached document]