Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Coalinga Perimeter Trail Interconnect Gregory North, Coalinga, Fresno County, California

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

NOVEMBER 2024

PREPARED FOR

City of Coalinga
Planning Department

PREPARED BY

SWCA Environmental Consultants

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT
INITIAL STUDY / MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE COALINGA PERIMETER TRAIL INTERCONNECT GREGORY NORTH, COALINGA, FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Prepared for

City of Coalinga
Planning Division
155 West Durian Avenue
Coalinga, California 93210
Attn: Sean Brewer, Interim City Manager

Prepared by

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SWCA Project No. 86760

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

2022 Ozone Plan	*2022 Plan for 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard*
2023 Maintenance Plan	*2023 Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request for the Revoked 1-Hour Ozone Standard*
2024 $PM_{2.5}$ Plan	*2024 Plan for the 2012 $PM_{2.5}$ Standard*
3N	Segment 3-North
AB	Assembly Bill
AC	asphalt concrete
ACM	asbestos-containing material
ATV	all-terrain vehicle
Basin Plan	*The Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the California Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Valley Region*
BMPs	best management practices
BPS	Best Performance Standards
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CalEPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CDOC	California Department of Conservation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CGS	California Geologic Survey
CH_4	methane
CHSC	California Health and Safety Code
CHUSD	Coalinga-Huron Unified School District
City	City of Coalinga
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
Coalinga ATP	*City of Coalinga Active Transportation Plan*

Coalinga General Plan	*City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025*
Coalinga General Plan FEIR	*Final Master Environmental Impact Report for the City of Coalinga 2025 General Plan Update*
Coalinga TMP	*City of Coalinga Trails Master Plan*
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CRPR	California Rare Plant Ranks
dB	decibel(s)
dBA	A-weighted decibel(s)
DPS	Distinct Population Segment
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substance Control
EO	Executive Order
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
FC	Federal Candidate
FCAA	Federal Clean Air Act
FE	Federal Endangered
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
FHSZ	fire hazard severity zone
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FP	Fully Protected
GHG	greenhouse gas
H_2S	hydrogen sulfide
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation
IS/MND	Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
LBP	lead-based paint
Ldn	Day-Night Average Level
Leq	Equivalent Noise Level
LRA	local responsibility area
LUST	Leaking Underground Storage Tank
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MLD	Most Likely Descendant
MLRA	Major Land Resource Area
mph	miles per hour
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
NOA	naturally occurring asbestos

NO_X	nitrogen oxides
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
O_3	ozone
OS	Open Space
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PM_{10}	particulate matter 10 micrometers and smaller in diameter
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter 2.5 micrometers and smaller in diameter
PRC	Public Resources Code
project	Coalinga Perimeter Trail Interconnect Gregory North
REC	recognized environmental condition
RMD	Residential Medium Density
ROG	reactive organic gases
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SE	State Endangered
SJVAB	San Joaquin Valley Air Basin
SJVAPCD	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
SO	sulfur monoxide
SO_2	sulfur dioxide
SO_X	sulfur oxides
SR	State Route
SRA	state responsibility area
SSC	Species of Special Concern
SSC	California Species of Special Concern
SSJVIC	Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center
ST	State Threatened
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TPY	tons per year
UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VMT	vehicle miles traveled

1 ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION FORM

1. Project Title:

Coalinga Perimeter Trail Interconnect Gregory North

2. Lead Agency Name and Address:

City of Coalinga
Planning Division
155 West Durian Avenue
Coalinga, CA 93210

3. Contact Person and Phone Number

Sean Brewer, Interim City Manager
City of Coalinga
(559) 935-1533 Ext. 143

4. Project Location:

The project includes one proposed trail segment located in the northern portion of the city of Coalinga, Fresno County, California.

5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:

City of Coalinga
Planning Division
155 West Durian Avenue
Coalinga, CA 93210

6. General Plan Land Use/Zoning Designations:

Open Space (OS) and Residential Medium Density (RMD)

7. Project Description Summary:

The City of Coalinga (City) is proposing the design, construction, and operation of one segment (Segment 3-North [3N]) of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system identified in the *City of Coalinga Trails Master Plan* (Coalinga TMP; City of Coalinga 2017b) using California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Active Transportation Program funding. The Coalinga Perimeter Trail Interconnect Gregory North (project) would develop an approximately 1,917-foot-long pedestrian trail and associated improvements in the city of Coalinga, Fresno County, California (Figures 1 and 2). The proposed trail segment would include a 14-foot-wide shared-use bicycle and pedestrian trail. The proposed trail would consist of a 10-foot-wide paved asphalt concrete (AC) trail between 2 feet of unpaved shoulders on both sides. Other proposed trail components would include a 24-foot-long sidewalk at the Gregory Way crosswalk; one prefabricated bike/pedestrian bridge over Los Gatos Creek with 42-inch-tall guardrails; two curb ramps; a roundabout with an island consisting of signage, shade trees, and a bench; and one solar light on the west side of the Gregory Way crosswalk. The proposed trail segment would connect existing and planned segments of the City's perimeter trail network, including Segment 3 near Walnut Street, Segment 2 at the roundabout, and Segment 1E at Phelps Avenue (see Figure 1).

The project would develop one segment of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system to connect residents in Coalinga (and a disadvantaged census tract) to activity centers such as schools, parks, a college, shopping, neighborhoods, and jobs. The project would provide a safe option to enable increased bicycle/pedestrian transportation use. Increased active transportation would address health disparities in a community that faces higher than average California city rates of asthma, obesity, and heart disease.

8. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

The proposed trail alignment is located on land within the City's Open Space (OS) and Residential Medium Density (RMD) land use and zoning designations (Figure 3). Land uses surrounding the project site include previously disturbed and undeveloped land and Los Gatos Creek to the north and south and single-family residences to the east and west. The proposed trail alignment occurs within an abandoned segment of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) corridor.

9. Discretionary Actions:

Implementation of the proposed project would require the following discretionary action by the City:

- Approval of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) prepared for this project.

10. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, has consultation begun?

The City sent notification of a consultation opportunity to 15 tribes identified in a Native American Contact List from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) regarding this project on August 21, 2024. Only one tribe, the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe, has requested consultation notification from the City pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52. Additionally, a response was received from the Table Mountain Rancheria on September 3, 2024, indicating the project site is beyond the Table Mountain Rancheria's area of interest. No other responses or requests for consultation pursuant to AB 52 were received.

Figure 1. Project location map.

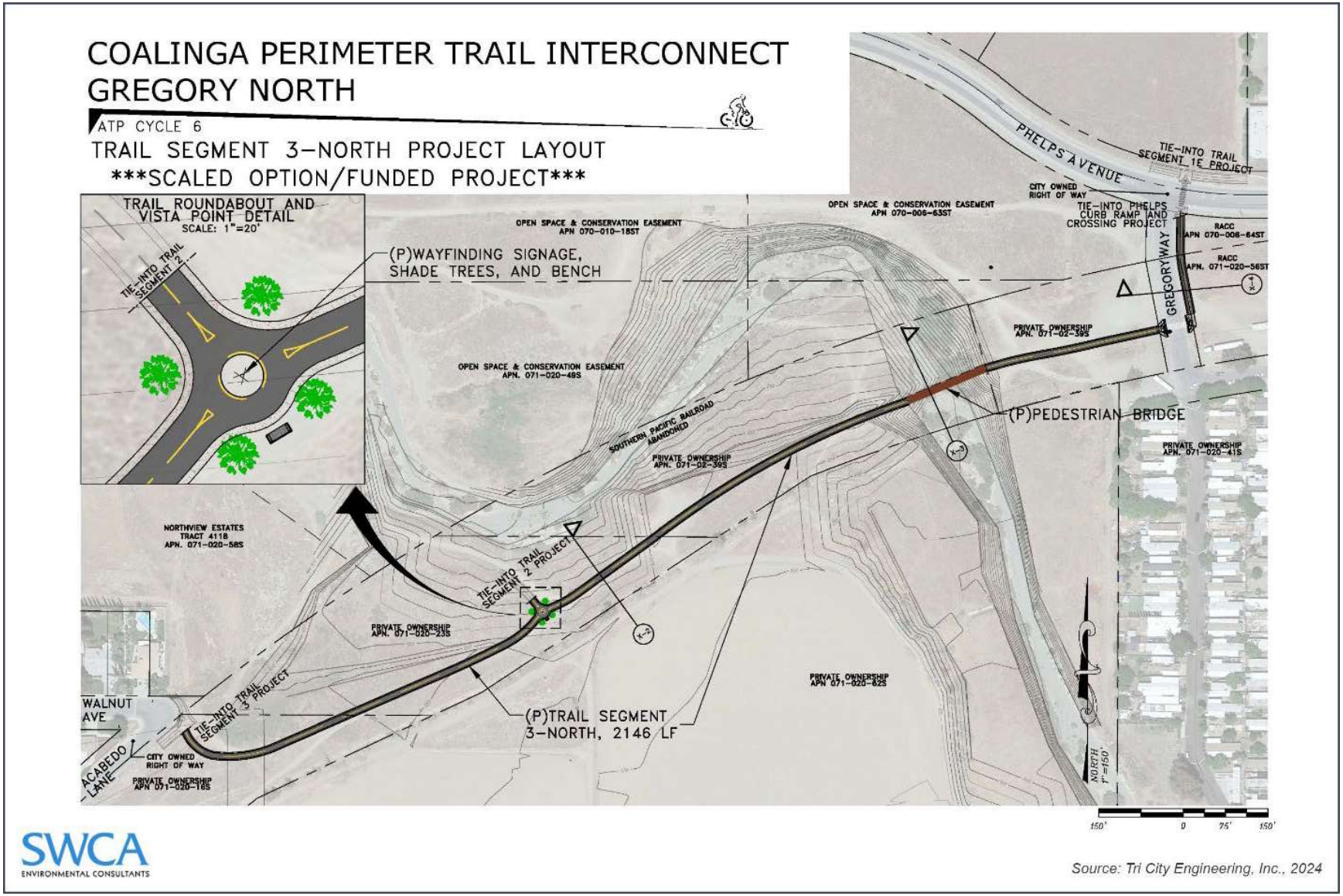

Figure 2. Site plan map.

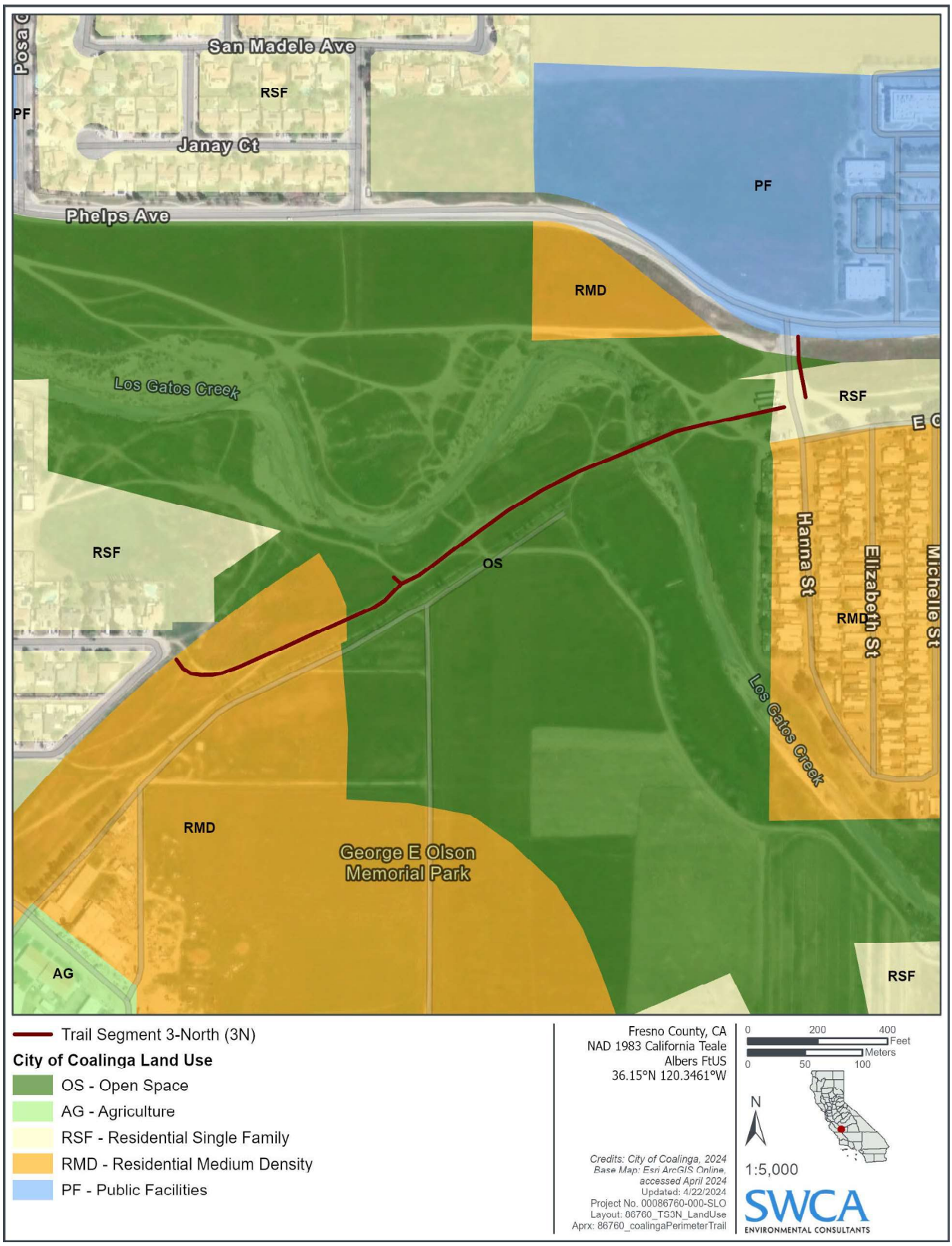

Figure 3. General Plan land use designation map.

1.1 Background and Introduction

The city of Coalinga lacks a cohesive network of trails for off-street walking, jogging, bicycling, and nature viewing. During community-based planning efforts, residents envisioned a connected-loop trail system along the city's perimeter to create a viable, sustainable Active Transportation Plan (ATP) option for all ages and abilities to safely recreate or transport themselves to various destinations.

The City previously received Caltrans Active Transportation Program funding to prepare an ATP and accompanying Coalinga TMP, completed in March 2017, which identifies existing trail facilities in the city and presents a detailed feasibility analysis of proposed trail facilities. The *City of Coalinga Active Transportation Plan* (Coalinga ATP; City of Coalinga 2017a) defines four classes of path facilities, as defined below:

- **Class I/Shared Use Paths:** Class I trails are off-street facilities dedicated exclusively to use by bicyclists, pedestrians, and in some cases, equestrians and other non-motorized travel such as roller skating and skateboarding. Trails can be paved or treated with a natural surface. They must be at least 8 feet wide (10–12 feet preferred).
- **Class II/Bike Lanes:** Class II bike lanes delineate a portion of the street for bicyclists through the use of pavement markings and signage. The bike lane is located directly adjacent to motor vehicle travel lanes and used in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic. Bike lanes are typically on the right side of the street, between the adjacent travel lane and curb, road edge, or parking lane. Bike lanes should be at least 5 feet wide, but 6 feet is preferred if adjacent to on-street parking. For wider streets or streets with higher volumes or speed limits, or with truck traffic, buffered bike lanes can be installed. Buffered bike lanes are conventional bicycle lanes paired with a designated buffer space, separating the bicycle lane from the adjacent motor vehicle travel lane and/or parking lane. Buffers should be at least 2 feet wide. If the buffer area is 4 feet or wider, white chevron or diagonal markings should be used. For clarity at driveways or minor street crossings, a dotted line should be considered.
- **Class III/Bike Routes:** Class III bike routes are routes where the travel lane is shared by drivers and bicyclists. Class III routes are generally designated on roadways with low levels of motor vehicle traffic where bicyclists may share the travel lane. Class III bike boulevards are also routes where the travel lane is shared but have low motorized traffic volumes and speeds, designated to provide a high level of comfort for all ages and bicycle abilities. Bicycle boulevards use signs, pavement markings, and speed and volume management measures. Bike boulevard markings or shared lane markings should be placed frequently along the route to identify the bicycle boulevard.
- **Class IV/Separated Bikeways:** Class IV separated bikeways are a new class of bicycle facility. Generally, Class IV bikeways are on-street bicycle facilities that are separated from vehicle traffic by some kind of physical protection, including a curb, on-street parking, flexible bollards, or concrete planters. They may provide one-way or two-way travel on each side of the roadway.

Existing trail facilities present in the city of Coalinga are limited to 4.4 miles of Class II Bike Lanes and 0.7 mile of Class III Bike Routes; there are no Class I or Class IV facilities in the city. The Coalinga TMP identifies 8.8 miles of a proposed Class I perimeter trail system that will connect to points of interest like the Coalinga Sports Park/Complex and interlace with other proposed bicycle facilities, providing users with access to services and destinations in the heart of the city. Residents who walk or bike can connect with nature, lead healthier lives through exercise, meet and socialize with neighbors, and have a safe and comfortable choice for getting to school or running errands without driving throughout the city.

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025* (Coalinga General Plan; City of Coalinga 2009a) calls for "a network of multi-use recreational trails along Los Gatos and Warthan Creeks with inner City and regional connections for use by local residents and visitors" (Goal C2). The Coalinga TMP implements Coalinga General Plan Measure C2-1.1 to "develop a Multi-Use Off-Street Trails Master Plan" and provides data, mapping, and analysis needed to help realize the following Coalinga General Plan implementation measures:

> **Implementation Measure C2-1.2:** Establish development standards requiring new development provide the necessary funding, easements, dedications and improvements needed to establish a network of recreational trails.
>
> **Implementation Measure C2-1.3:** Pursue grant opportunities and other financing programs to fund the construction and maintenance of recreational trails including taxes, fees, bonds, assessments, and/or donations.

Further, the Coalinga TMP identifies 14 potential Class I trail segments in Coalinga and provides an overview of the design standards and guidelines for proposed Class I facilities. Class I facilities, also known as trails or shared-use paths, are separated from motor vehicle traffic and provide recreation and active transportation opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities.

The City recently conducted environmental review of Segments 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 13, and 14 of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system identified in the Coalinga TMP. Segments 3, 4, and 9 were approved by the City Council on December 2, 2021, and Segments 1, 2, 13, and 14 were approved by the City Council on January 19, 2023.

1.2 Project Description

The City is proposing the design, construction, and operation of one segment (Segment 3N) of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system identified in the Coalinga TMP using Caltrans Active Transportation Program funding (proposed project). The proposed project would develop an approximately 1,917-foot-long pedestrian trail and associated improvements in the city of Coalinga (see Figure 1). The proposed trail segment would include a 14-foot-wide shared-use bicycle and pedestrian trail. The proposed trail would consist of a 10-foot-wide paved AC trail between 2 feet of unpaved shoulders on both sides of the trail. Other proposed trail components would include a 24-foot-long sidewalk at the Gregory Way crosswalk; demolition of the existing bridge structure and installation of one prefabricated bike/pedestrian bridge over Los Gatos Creek with 42-inch-tall guardrails; two curb ramps; construction of a roundabout with an island consisting of signage, shade trees, and a bench; and installation of one solar light on the west side of the Gregory Way crosswalk. The proposed trail segment would connect existing and planned segments of the City's perimeter trail network, including Segment 3 near Walnut Street, Segment 2 at the roundabout, and Segment 1E at Phelps Avenue.

The trail segment would be positioned away from the nearest roadways but with connectivity at key intersections to existing sidewalks and Class II and III bicycle routes on existing roads near the perimeter trail. The project would develop one segment of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system to connect residents in Coalinga (and a disadvantaged census tract) to activity centers such as schools, parks, a college, shopping, neighborhoods, and jobs. The project would provide a safe option to enable increased bicycle/pedestrian transportation use. Increased active transportation would address health disparities in a community that faces higher than average California city rates of asthma, obesity, and heart disease.

1.2.1 *Construction*

Construction of the proposed trail segment (Segment 3N) would require rough grading and excavation to create the trail. The anticipated excavation depth would be 1 to 3 feet, ranging from 6 to 12 inches for multi-trail grading and construction and up to 3 feet for various traffic signage and barrier foundations. After the trail segment is excavated, finish grading of the path would occur, followed by path surfacing, consisting of compacted native soil and/or paved asphalt.

The project intersects Los Gatos Creek (see Figure 1) and includes the demolition of the existing bridge and construction of a new pedestrian bridge over the creek. Construction activities would require approximately 200 cubic yards of cut and 200 cubic yards of fill activity within Los Gatos Creek top of bank. In addition, installation of the proposed bridge foundation would require an anticipated excavation depth of 3 feet. Work within Los Gatos Creek is expected to require permitting from relevant regulatory agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Construction activities may require trimming of trees located along Los Gatos Creek.

The final major stage of construction would include landscaping and erosion protection. Landscaping is expected to primarily include hydroseeding of a native, drought-tolerant seed mix. Other final stages include fencing along the pedestrian bridge, signage, and striping. Signage would be installed to alert trail users to places where the trail would interface with existing roads and destinations. Trash receptacles would be placed along the trail and maintained by the City.

Construction of the proposed project is estimated to require 60 working days and is expected to occur between May and August 2027. Construction activities would require the implementation of temporary traffic controls along Gregory Way during the 60-day construction period; however, no full road closures would be necessary.

1.2.2 *Drainage*

According to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) panels 06019C3213F and 06019C3214F (effective date 08/30/2012), the proposed trail alignment is located within shaded Zone X, a 500-year flood zone; Zone AE, a 100-year flood zone; and Zone X, an area of minimal flood hazard (Figure 4) (FEMA 2024).

To minimize maintenance and protect the project, the proposed trail would be cradled by a 2-foot-wide unpaved shoulder on both sides of the trail. This design would enable safe passage, provide a variety of trail surfaces that appeal to the greatest variety of users, and hold up in wet and dry conditions.

1.2.3 *Existing Utilities*

Construction of the proposed pedestrian bridge would require relocation of existing City water and gas utility infrastructure and removal of an abandoned oil pipeline. In addition, a new connection to the existing water line would be installed under the trail to provide irrigation for the trees at the roundabout.

1.2.4 *Right-of-Way*

The project would require right-of-way and/or partial acquisition from parcels not owned by the City.

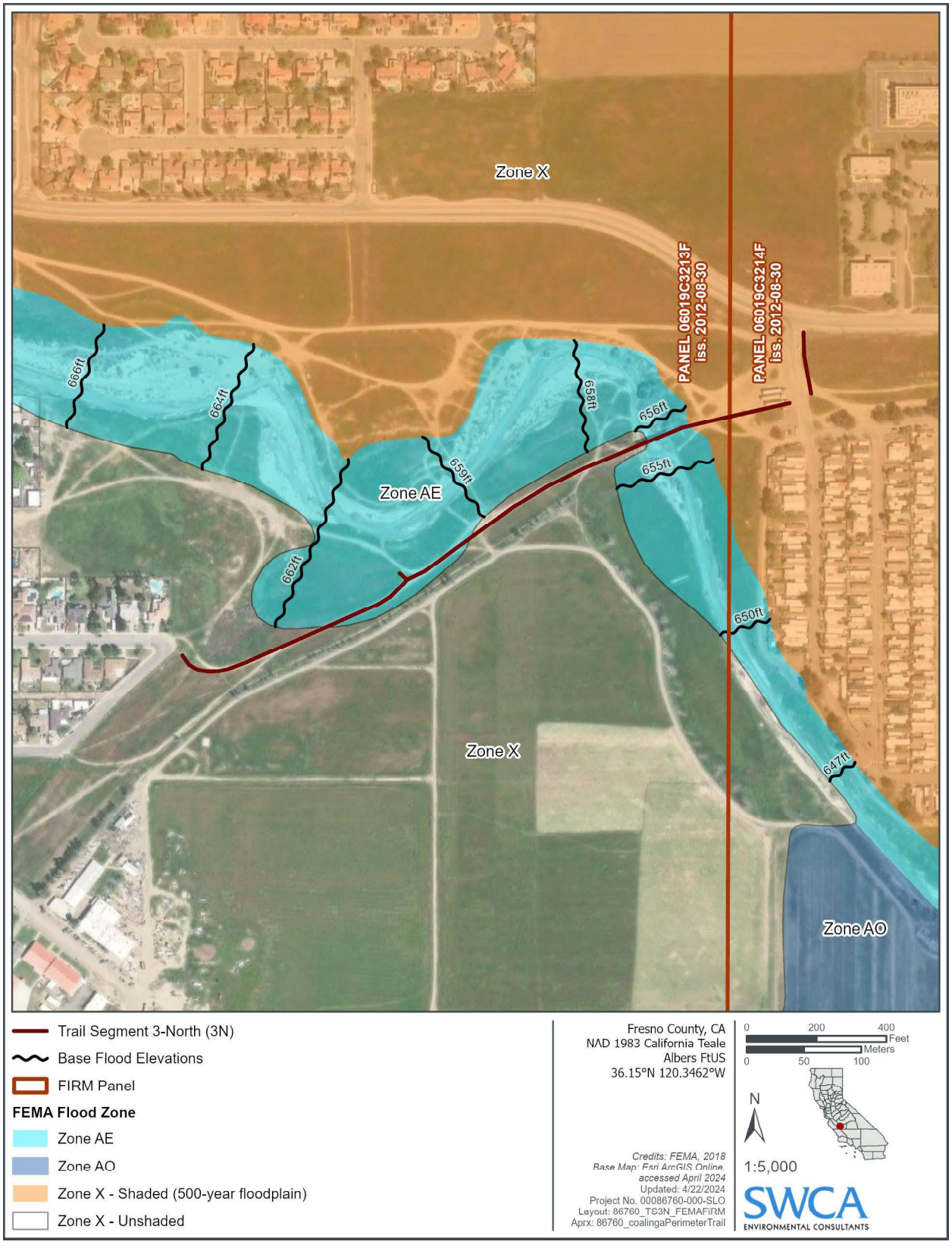

Figure 4. FEMA flood hazard map.

1.2.5 *Discretionary Actions*

Implementation of the proposed project would require the following discretionary action by the City of Coalinga:

- Approval of the IS/MND prepared for this project
- Right-of-way and/or partial acquisition from parcels not owned by the City
- Union Pacific Railroad encroachment permit
- USACE, Central Valley RWQCB, and CDFW permits

2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact," as indicated by the environmental resource area evaluations in this Initial Study.

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

Environmental 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 measure 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.

Date: 12/2/2024 **Signed:** 

I. Aesthetics

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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 points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The city of Coalinga is located on the eastern side of the Southern Coast Ranges, along the western edge of California's Central Valley. The Coalinga General Plan characterizes the visual setting of the city as being a wide, flat valley floor bounded by rolling foothills to the west and south (City of Coalinga 2009a). The city is generally surrounded by rural open space with agriculture, oil production, scattered ranches, and residences making up the visual landscape. The landscape surrounding the city generally consists of tilled or grazed grassland, agricultural crops, sparse trees, and scattered riparian corridors. As viewed from most parts of the city, the rolling hills to the west provide scenic and topographic features in the visual backdrop (City of Coalinga 2009a).

The *City of Coalinga Community-Wide Design Guidelines* serve as a discretionary tool to guide a range of development types and projects within the city and are intended to reduce a project's impact on the community (City of Coalinga 2015a). The objective of these guidelines is to preserve the small-town character of Coalinga in future single-family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, and mixed-use development through implementation of applicable implementation measures of the Coalinga General Plan (City of Coalinga 2009a), detailed below:

> **Implementation Measure LU1-1.3:** New infill development shall demonstrate consistency with the density, scale, appearance, and rural community character of Coalinga's existing neighborhoods during project review.
>
> **Implementation Measure LU1-1.5:** Establish city-wide architectural design guidelines that preserve the small-town, rural character of Coalinga. These guidelines should promote urban design features that provide artful integration of building sites with the environment emphasizing earth-tone colors, desert architecture, historic building façades, exterior building materials, monumental signs, large building setbacks, appropriate landscaping, berms, and other features that hide or reduce the visibility of negative urban features such as parking lots.

Implementation Measure LU1-1.6: Adopt specific design standards for entry signs, landscaping, and other appropriate amenities in the Gateway Overlay areas.

Implementation Measure LU1-1.10: New development proposals shall be located within or adjacent to the City limits in accordance with the proposed phases to provide for orderly expansion of the city.

Implementation Measure LU1-1.11: The City shall develop guidelines for the preparation of lighting plans. In order to minimize light trespass and greater overall light levels in the city, new development and projects making significant parking lot improvements or proposing new lighting shall be required to prepare a lighting plan for review by City planning staff.

The project site includes one 1,917-foot-long trail segment (Segment 3N) in the northern portion of the city. Surrounding land uses include previously disturbed and undeveloped land and Los Gatos Creek to the north and south and single-family residences to the east and west.

Environmental Evaluation

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

According to the Coalinga General Plan, Los Gatos Creek provides a vegetated riparian corridor that is visible through town and the adjacent countryside (City of Coalinga 2009a). The project site bisects Los Gatos Creek and associated vegetated corridor. The project includes the construction of a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trail and associated trail components, including a sidewalk; a bike/pedestrian bridge with 42-inch-tall guardrails; and an island consisting of signage, shade trees, and a bench. The project would not result in the construction of any new structures that would result in a substantial visible change in the project site or surrounding areas, referred to as the project area. Construction activities may require trimming of trees located along Los Gatos Creek; however, no trees would be removed, and the project would not substantially alter the existing vegetated corridor along the creek. Therefore, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, and impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

According to the Caltrans State Scenic Highway System Map, there are no designated state scenic highways within or in the immediate vicinity of the project site. The nearest eligible scenic highway is State Route (SR) 198/SR 33, located approximately 0.3 mile west of the project site (Caltrans 2024). Due to the distance and intervening development, the project site would not be visible from SR 198/SR 33. Further, the project would not result in the removal or modification of any trees, rock outcroppings, historic building, or other scenic resources. Therefore, the project would not damage scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and *no impacts* would occur.

c) In non-urbanized areas, would the project 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 points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

The project site is located in an urban area in the city of Coalinga. As previously identified, the Community-Wide Design Guidelines and Coalinga General Plan provide goals and policies intended to guide development and protect scenic resources. The project would not result in any new structures or architectural features that would substantially change the visual character of the project site or surrounding area. Construction activities may require trimming of trees located along Los Gatos Creek; however, no trees would be removed, and the project would not substantially alter the existing vegetated corridor surrounding the creek. The project would be consistent with the city's rural character and would not conflict with any policies or guidelines established in the Community-Wide Design Guidelines or Coalinga General Plan. Construction of the new bicycle and pedestrian trail would result in temporary visual impacts associated with the operation of construction equipment and vehicles. However, these visual impacts would be typical of general construction activities, short term, and limited to localized, temporary impacts during the construction period. The project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the project site or its surroundings or conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

Existing nighttime lighting in the project area consists of vehicle headlights along proximate roadways and limited lighting from surrounding residential land uses. The project includes the installation of one solar light on the west side of the Gregory Way crosswalk, approximately 100 feet north of existing residences. The proposed solar light would be used for illumination purposes only and pointed downward to avoid light spillover to surrounding residential land uses. In addition, the proposed solar light would be required to comply with the City's requirements for outdoor lighting (Municipal Code Section 9-4.206 Lighting and Illumination). Therefore, impacts related to light and glare would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The project would not substantially affect a scenic vista, damage a scenic resource, conflict with zoning, or create a source of new light or glare; therefore, impacts related to aesthetics would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

II. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 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. 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The California Department of Conservation (CDOC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) produces maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts on California's agricultural resources. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and current land use. For environmental review purposes under CEQA, the FMMP categories of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and Grazing Land are considered "agricultural land." Other non-agricultural designations include, but are not limited to, Urban and Built-up Land, Other Land, and Water. According to the FMMP, the project site is located on land that is designated as Grazing Land and Urban and Built-Up Land (CDOC 2022).

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey, the project site is underlain by the following soil types (NRCS 2024):

- **(445) Excelsior sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, Major Land Resource Area (MLRA) 17.** This well-drained soil has a negligible runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of more than 80 inches. The typical soil profile consists of sandy loam. This soil is considered Prime Farmland if irrigated by the NRCS.
- **(474) Westhaven loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes.** This well-drained soil has a low runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of more than 80 inches. The typical soil profile consists of loam, stratified loam to silty clay loam, and stratified loamy sand to silty clay loam. This soil is considered Prime Farmland if irrigated by the NRCS.

- **(960) Excelsior, sandy substratum-westhaven association, flooded, 0 to 2 percent slopes.** This well-drained soil has a low runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of more than 80 inches. The typical soil profile consists of sandy loam and stratified loamy sand to silt loam. This soil is not considered Prime Farmland.

The Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agriculture or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments that are much lower than normal because they are based on farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. The project site and surrounding parcels are not subject to a Williamson Act contract.

According to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 12220(g), forest land is defined as land that can support 10% native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits. Timberland is defined as land, other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection as experimental forest land, which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees. The project area is not considered forestland by PRC Section 12220(g).

Environmental Evaluation

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

The project site is underlain by land designated as Grazing Land and Urban and Built-Up Land by the FMMP; therefore, the project site does not consist of designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance by the FMMP (CDOC 2022). The project site is underlain by three soil types, two of which are considered Prime Farmland if irrigated by the NRCS; however, the project site is not irrigated for agricultural production. Therefore, soils at the project site are not considered Prime Farmland and the project would not convert Prime Farmland to non-agricultural use. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the conversion of Farmland, and *no impacts* would occur.

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

The proposed trail alignment is located on land within the City's OS and RMD land use and zoning designations and is not located within the City's Agriculture land use or zoning designation (City of Coalinga 2015b). Additionally, the project site and surrounding parcels are not subject to a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, the project would not result in a conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract, and *no impacts* would occur.

c) Would the project 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))?

The project area is not within forest land, timberland, or timberland production land use or zoning designations; therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the zoning, or cause rezoning of, designated forest land, timberland, or timberland production, and *no impacts* would occur.

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

The project area is not designated or zoned for forest land uses and do not meet the definition of forest land established in PRC Section 12220(g). Further, the project may require the trimming of existing trees; however, the project does not include the removal of any trees. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, and *no impacts* would occur.

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

According to the Coalinga General Plan, the city is surrounded by agricultural land uses and the nearest agricultural uses to the project site are located approximately 1.1 miles north. As previously evaluated, the project would not result in the conversion of Farmland or forest land and would not interfere with zoning for agricultural or forest land uses. The proposed project would not result in new land uses or other activities that could reduce the availability of water for existing agricultural uses in the vicinity of the project site. In addition, proposed trail improvements would predominantly be paved and would not increase dust that could inadvertently damage crops in the vicinity of the project site. Therefore, the project would not indirectly result in the conversion of Farmland or forest land, and *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

The project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to agriculture or forestry resources and mitigation measures are not required.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

III. Air Quality

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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:				
(a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA), as amended, is the primary federal law that governs air quality, while the California Clean Air Act (CCAA) is its companion state law. These laws, and related regulations by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB), set standards for the concentration of pollutants in the air. At the federal level, these standards are called National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). National and state standards have been established for six criteria pollutants that have been linked to potential health concerns: carbon monoxide (CO); nitrogen dioxide (NO_2); ozone (O_3); particulate matter, which is broken down for regulatory purposes into particles of 10 micrometers and smaller (PM_{10}) and particles of 2.5 micrometers and smaller ($PM_{2.5}$); lead (Pb); and sulfur dioxide (SO_2). In addition, state standards exist for visibility-reducing particles, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide (H_2S), and vinyl chloride. The NAAQS and state standards are set at levels that protect public health with a margin of safety and are subject to periodic review and revision.

The California Department of Public Health established California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) in 1962 to define the maximum amount of a pollutant (averaged over a specified period of time) that can be present without any harmful effects on people or the environment. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted the CAAQS developed by the Department of Public Health in 1969, which had established CAAQS for 10 criteria pollutants: CO, NO_2, O_3, particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$), Pb, SO_2, sulfates, visibility-reducing particles, H_2S, and vinyl chloride.

The city of Coalinga is located in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB). The SJVAB is under the jurisdiction of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD), which regulates air quality in the southern portion of the Central Valley. The San Joaquin Valley is prone to one of the most challenging air quality problems in the nation, as it is home to over 4,000,000 residents and includes several major metropolitan areas, vast expanses of agricultural land, industrial sources, highways, and schools. The SJVAB is designated as Nonattainment-Extreme for the 8-hour O_3 standard, Maintenance-Serious for the PM_{10} standard, and Nonattainment-Moderate for the $PM_{2.5}$ standard under the NAAQS and as Nonattainment for the 1-hour O_3 standard, the 8-hour O_3 standard, the PM_{10} standards, and the $PM_{2.5}$ standards under the CAAQS.

In compliance with regulations, due to the non-attainment designations of the area, the SJVAPCD periodically prepares and updates air quality plans that provide emission reduction strategies to achieve attainment of the NAAQS, including control strategies to reduce air pollutant emissions through regulations, incentive programs, public education, and partnerships with other agencies. The most recent O_3 plans are the *2023 Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request for the Revoked 1-Hour Ozone Standard* (2023 Maintenance Plan; SJVAPCD 2023) and the *2022 Plan for 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard* (2022 Ozone Plan; SJVAPCD 2022). The most recent federal attainment plan for particulate matter is the *2024 Plan for the 2012 $PM_{2.5}$ Standard* (2024 $PM_{2.5}$ Plan; SJVAPCD 2024).

The SJVAPCD has established air quality thresholds of significance for CO, nitrogen oxides (NO_X), reactive organic gases (ROG), sulfur oxides (SO_X), PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. SJVAPCD Thresholds

Pollutant/Precursor	Construction Emissions (TPY[1])	Operational Emissions (TPY[1])	
		Permitted Equipment and Activities	Non-Permitted Equipment and Activities
CO	100	100	100
NO_X	10	10	10
ROG	10	10	10
SO_X	27	27	27
PM_{10}	15	15	15
$PM_{2.5}$	15	15	15

Source: SJVAPCD (2015).

[1] TPY = tons per year

OZONE

O_3 occurs in two layers of the atmosphere. The layer surrounding the earth's surface is the troposphere. Here, at ground level, troposphere, or "bad," O_3 is an air pollutant that damages human health, vegetation, and many common materials. It is a key ingredient of urban smog. The troposphere extends to a level about 10 miles up where it meets the second layer, the stratosphere. The stratospheric, or "good," O_3 layer extends upward from about 10 to 30 miles and protects life on earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays.

"Bad" O_3 is what is known as a photochemical pollutant. It needs ROG, NO_X, and sunlight to form. ROG and NO_X are emitted from various sources throughout Fresno County. Significant O_3 formation generally requires an adequate number of precursors in the atmosphere and several hours in a stable atmosphere with strong sunlight. To reduce O_3 concentrations, it is necessary to control the emissions of these O_3 precursors.

O_3 is a regional air pollutant. It is generated over a large area and transported and spread by the wind. As the primary constituent of smog, O_3 is the most complex, difficult to control, and pervasive of the criteria pollutants. Unlike other pollutants, it is not emitted directly into the air by specific sources but is created by sunlight acting on other air pollutants (the precursors), specifically NO_X and ROG. Sources of precursor gases number in the thousands and include common sources, such as consumer products, gasoline vapors, chemical solvents, and combustion byproducts of various fuels. Originating from gas stations, motor vehicles, large industrial facilities, and small businesses such as bakeries and dry cleaners, the O_3-forming chemical reactions often take place in another location, catalyzed by sunlight and heat.

Thus, high O_3 concentrations can form over large regions when emissions from motor vehicles and stationary sources are carried hundreds of miles from their origins.

COMBUSTION EMISSIONS

Combustion emissions (ROG and NO_X) are most significant when using large diesel-fueled scrapers, loaders, bulldozers, haul trucks, compressors, generators, and other heavy equipment. Emissions can vary substantially from day to day, depending on the level of activity and the specific type of operation. ROG and NO_X are the critical pollutants caused by construction work because of the high output of these pollutants by heavy diesel equipment normally used in grading operations.

CARBON MONOXIDE

CO, an odorless, colorless, poisonous gas that is highly reactive, is emitted by mobile and stationary sources as a result of incomplete combustion of hydrocarbons or other carbon-based fuels. CO is a byproduct of motor vehicle exhaust, which contributes more than 66% of all CO emissions nationwide. In cities, automobile exhaust can cause as much as 95% of all CO emissions. These emissions can result in high concentrations of CO, particularly in local areas with heavy traffic congestion. Other sources of CO emissions include industrial processes and fuel combustion in sources, such as boilers and incinerators. Despite an overall downward trend in concentrations and emissions of CO, some metropolitan areas still experience high levels of CO. High CO concentrations develop primarily during winter when periods of light winds combine with the formation of ground-level temperature inversions (typically from the evening through early morning). These conditions result in reduced dispersion of vehicle emissions. Motor vehicles also exhibit increased CO emission rates at low air temperatures.

SULFATES

Sulfates (SO_4^{-2}) are particulate products that come from the combustion of sulfur-containing fossil fuels. When sulfur monoxide (SO) or SO_2 is exposed to oxygen, it precipitates out into sulfates (SO_3 or SO_4). Sulfates are the fully oxidized ionic form of sulfur. Sulfates occur in combination with metal and/or hydrogen ions. In California, emissions of sulfur compounds occur primarily from the combustion of petroleum-derived fuels (e.g., gasoline, diesel fuel) that contain sulfur. This sulfur is oxidized to SO_2 during the combustion process and subsequently converted to sulfate compounds in the atmosphere. The conversion of SO_2 to sulfates takes place comparatively rapidly and completely in urban areas of California because of regional meteorological features.

PARTICULATE MATTER

Particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) pollution consists of very small liquid and solid particles floating in the air. Some particles are large and dark enough to be seen as soot or smoke, and others are so small they can only be detected with an electron microscope. Particulate matter is a mixture of materials that can include smoke, soot, dust, salt, acids, and metals and can form when gases emitted from motor vehicles and industrial sources undergo chemical reactions in the atmosphere. Particulate matter or airborne dusts are the small particles that remain suspended in the air for long periods of time. Particulates of concern are PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$, which are small enough to be inhaled, pass through the respiratory system, and lodge in the lungs, possibly leading to adverse health effects. $PM_{2.5}$ is a subset of PM_{10}.

The composition of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ can vary greatly with time, location, the sources of the material, and meteorological conditions. Dust, sand, salt spray, metallic and mineral particles, pollen, smoke, mist, and acid fumes are the main components of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$. In addition to those listed previously, secondary particles can also be formed as precipitates from photochemical reactions of gaseous SO_2 and NO_X in the atmosphere to create sulfates (SO_4) and nitrates (NO_3), respectively. Secondary particles are of greatest

concern during the winter months when low inversion layers tend to trap the precursors of secondary particulates.

In the western United States, there are sources of PM_{10} in both urban and rural areas. PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ are emitted from stationary and mobile sources, including diesel trucks and other motor vehicles; power plants; industrial processes; wood-burning stoves and fireplaces; wildfires; dust from roads, construction, landfills, and agriculture; and fugitive windblown dust. Because particles originate from a variety of sources, their chemical and physical compositions vary widely.

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element* (Coalinga General Plan Chapter 5; City of Coalinga 2009a) identifies several goals, policies, and implementation measures associated with new development projects and air quality, including, but not limited to, the following:

> **Goal AQ1:** Effective communication, cooperation and coordination in developing and operating community and regional air quality programs.
>
> > **Policy AQ1-1:** Air quality impacts associated with new development projects must be considered during the development review process.
>
> **Goal AQ2:** Reduction of motor vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled.
>
> > **Policy AQ2-1:** Encourage and support development projects that propose alternatives to standard vehicle trips.
> >
> > **Policy AQ2-2:** Support upgrades and improvements to the transportation system that benefit bicycle, pedestrian, and other non-vehicular forms of circulation.
>
> **Goal AQ3:** Minimize exposure of the public to toxic air pollutant emissions and noxious odors from industrial, manufacturing and processing facilities.
>
> > **Policy AQ3-1:** Mitigate impacts from toxic air pollutant emissions and noxious odors from industrial, manufacturing, and processing facilities.
>
> **Goal AQ4:** A reduction in particulate, fugitive dust, and other emissions.
>
> > **Policy AQ4-1:** Implement measures that effectively reduce particulate, dust and other emissions.
> >
> > > **Implementation Measure AQ4-1.1:** Require new development to reduce short-term emissions during construction by implementing conditions on major new development projects in accordance with Table 5-8 of the General Plan.

Environmental Evaluation

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

The project would not result in a significant amount of criteria air pollutants (see *Impact Discussion III(b)* for further analysis) and would not conflict with the attainment strategies set forth in the SJVAPCD's 2023 Maintenance Plan, 2022 Ozone Plan, and 2024 $PM_{2.5}$ Plan.

The City's Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element sets forth policies to reduce air quality pollutant emissions. Implementation Measure AQ4-1.1 states that the City shall require new development to reduce short-term emissions during construction by implementing conditions on major new development projects

in accordance with Table 5-8 of the Coalinga General Plan. Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2 have been identified to minimize construction-generated emissions through implementation of measures to reduce fugitive dust and combustion emissions, which would be consistent with the policies and implementation measures of the Coalinga General Plan. With implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2, the project would not conflict with an applicable air quality plan; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

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

The SJVAB is designated as Nonattainment-Extreme for the 8-hour O_3 standard, Maintenance-Serious for the PM_{10} standard, and Nonattainment-Moderate for the $PM_{2.5}$ standard under the NAAQS and as Nonattainment for the 1-hour O_3 standard, 8-hour O_3 standard, PM_{10} standards, and $PM_{2.5}$ standards under the CAAQS. The project would primarily generate emissions during construction of the proposed roadway improvements.

Construction Emissions

Project construction and operational air pollutant emissions were estimated using the most recent version of the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod; California Air Pollution Control Officers Association [CAPCOA] 2024). Based on estimated construction phase length, grading volumes, and other factors, estimated construction-related emissions that would result from the project were calculated and compared to applicable SJVAPCD thresholds in Table 2. The CalEEMod results are included in Appendix A.

Table 2. Proposed Project Estimated Construction Emissions

Pollutant/Precursor	Maximum Project Construction Emissions (TPY)	SJVAPCD Emissions Threshold (TPY)	Exceeds Threshold?
Carbon monoxide (CO)	0.13	100	No
Nitrogen oxides (NO_X)	0.09	10	No
Reactive organic gases (ROG)	0.01	10	No
Sulfur oxides (SO_X)	<0.005	27	No
Particulate matter 10 micrometers and smaller in diameter (PM_{10})	1.33	15	No
Particulate matter 2.5 micrometers and smaller in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$)	0.14	15	No

Based on the analysis provided above, the project would not result in emissions of criteria pollutants that would exceed construction-related thresholds established by the SJVAPCD. Therefore, the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the region is in non-attainment, and construction-related impacts would be *less than significant.*

Operational Emissions

The project does not include the establishment of new land uses or activities that could generate long-term air pollutant emissions in the region; therefore, the project would not exceed SJVAPCD operational thresholds. In addition, the project would connect residents in Coalinga to activity centers such as schools, parks, a college, shopping, neighborhoods, and jobs and would provide a safe option to enable

increased bicycle/pedestrian transportation use. As such, the project would contribute to a reduction in vehicle emissions by facilitating the use of alternative modes of transportation. Based on an overall improvement of active transportation and a reduction in existing vehicle emissions, operational impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

The project site is located in close proximity to existing residential uses. There are sensitive receptors located adjacent to each end of the proposed trail segment, with the nearest sensitive receptor located approximately 60 feet south of the eastern portion of the proposed trail segment. Construction equipment would not operate for long periods of time and would be used at different locations throughout the project site; therefore, construction equipment and fugitive dust emissions would not occur at the same location for long periods of time. Due to the temporary nature of proposed construction activities, limited air pollutant emissions associated with proposed construction activities, and relatively short duration of potential exposure to associated emissions, sensitive receptors in the area would not be exposed to pollutants for a permanent or extended period of time. In addition, Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2 would further reduce construction-related emissions in the vicinity of sensitive receptors. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not expose nearby sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

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

Construction activities have the potential to emit odors from diesel equipment, paints, solvents, fugitive dust, and adhesives. Odors from construction activities would be intermittent and temporary, and generally would not extend beyond the construction area. Upon completion of the construction phase, the proposed project would not include any components or operational activities expected to generate substantial odor. Therefore, odors generated by the project would be short-term, intermittent, and undetectable.

Asbestos is surface mined in large quantities approximately 20 miles northwest of Coalinga. The serpentine host rock in which it is found covers approximately 2,000 square miles, and as much as 50% of this rock could be asbestos. Total reserves are not known, but the deposit has been estimated to contain more than 100 million tons of ore. This area is one of the nation's principal producers of asbestos and contains one of the world's largest deposits of short-fiber asbestos (City of Coalinga 2009a). The CARB has identified naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) as a toxic air contaminant. Any ground disturbance proposed in an area identified as having the potential to contain NOA must comply with the CARB Airborne Toxics Control Measure for Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations (17 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 93105). The project segment would not be located in an area that has been identified as having a potential for NOA (California Geologic Survey [CGS] 2011).

Asbestos-containing material (ACM) and lead-based paint (LBP) may be present in the existing pedestrian bridge. Mitigation Measures AQ-3 and AQ-4 have been included to require ACM and LBP testing and identify the proper protocol for the handling and removal of ACM and LBP if identified within materials proposed for demolition. With implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-3 and AQ-4, the proposed project would not result in odors or other emissions; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

Conclusion

The project would not result in a conflict with current regional clean air plans and, with implementation of mitigation, the project would not conflict with the City's Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element. The project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to criteria pollutant emissions or expose nearby sensitive receptors to substantial air pollutant emissions. With implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-4, residual impacts associated with air quality would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

AQ-1 The following measures shall be implemented and shown on grading and construction plans to minimize construction-generated fugitive dust emissions:

a. All disturbed areas, including storage piles, which are not being actively utilized for construction purposes, shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using water, using a chemical stabilizer/suppressant, or covered with a tarp or other suitable cover or vegetative ground cover;

b. All on-site unpaved roads and off-site unpaved access roads shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using water or San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD)-approved chemical stabilizer/suppressant;

c. All land clearing, grubbing, scraping, excavation, land leveling, grading, cut and fill, and demolition activities shall be effectively controlled of fugitive dust emissions utilizing application of water or by presoaking;

d. When materials are transported off-site, all material shall be covered, or effectively wetted to limit visible dust emissions, and at least 6 inches of freeboard space from the tip of the container shall be maintained;

e. All operations shall limit or expeditiously remove the accumulation of mud or dirt from adjacent public streets at the end of each workday. The use of dry rotary brushes is expressly prohibited except where preceded or accompanied by sufficient wetting to limit the visible dust emissions. Use of blower devices is expressly forbidden;

f. Following the addition of materials to, or the removal of materials from, the surface of outdoor storage piles, said piles shall be effectively stabilized of fugitive dust emissions utilizing sufficient water or chemical stabilizer/suppressant;

g. Within urban areas, track out shall be immediately removed when it extends 50 or more feet from the site and at the end of each workday;

h. Any site with 150 or more vehicle trips per day shall prevent carryout and track out;

i. Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour (mph);

j. Install sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff to public roadways from sites with a slope greater than 1%;

k. Install wheel washers for all exiting trucks, or wash off all trucks and equipment leaving the site;

l. Install wind breaks at windward side(s) of construction areas;

m. Suspend excavation and grading activity when winds exceed 20 mph; and

n. Limit area subject to excavation, grading, and other construction activity at any one time.

AQ-2 The following measures shall be implemented and shown on grading and construction plans to minimize construction equipment-generated emissions:

a. Substitute alternative fueled or catalyst equipped diesel construction equipment, when available;

b. Utilize the cleanest available off-road construction equipment, including the latest tier equipment;

c. Minimize idling time to not exceed 10 minutes;

d. Minimize the hours of operation of heavy-duty equipment and/or the amount of equipment in use to the greatest extent feasible;

e. Replace fossil-fueled equipment with electrically driven equivalents (provided they are not run through a portable generator set) when available;

f. Curtail construction during periods of high ambient pollutant concentrations if feasible; this may include ceasing construction activity during the peak-hour of vehicular traffic on adjacent roadways; and

g. Implement activity management (e.g., reschedule activities to reduce short-term impacts).

AQ-3 **Asbestos-Containing Material.** An asbestos-containing material (ACM) survey consisting of a visual inspection, sampling, testing, and reporting shall be performed by a Certified Asbestos Consultant to determine if building materials contain ACM and would require special handling and disposal during demolition. If ACM is detected, proposed construction activities shall be conducted in full compliance with the requirements stipulated in the National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP; 40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 61, Subpart M – National Emission Standard for Asbestos). These requirements include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Written notification, within at least 10 business days of activities commencing, to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District;

b. Preparation of an asbestos survey conducted by a Certified Asbestos Consultant; and

c. Implementation of applicable removal and disposal protocol and requirements for identified naturally occurring asbestos.

AQ-4 **Lead-Based Paint.** A lead-based paint (LBP) survey consisting of a visual inspection, sampling, testing, and reporting shall be performed to determine if building materials within the project site contain LBP. If elevated concentrations of metals from LBP are detected, construction activities shall be conducted in full compliance with the requirements of Sections 402 and 406 of the Toxic Substances Control Act.

IV. Biological Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) of 1973 provides legislation to protect federally listed plant and animal species. The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) of 1984 ensures legal protection for plants listed as rare or endangered and animal species formally listed as endangered or threatened, and also maintains a list of California Species of Special Concern (SSC). SSC status is assigned to species that have limited distribution, declining populations, diminishing habitat, or unusual scientific, recreational, or educational value. Under state law, the CDFW has the authority to review projects for their potential to impact special-status species and their habitats.

In addition, the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) maintains a list of plant species ranging from presumed extinct to limited distribution, based on the following:

- California Rare Plant Ranks (CRPR)
    - 1A: Plants presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere
    - 1B: Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere
    - 2A: Plants presumed extirpated in California, but common elsewhere
    - 2B: Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere
    - 4: Plants of limited distribution – a watch list

- California Rare Plant Threat Ranks
    - 0.1: Seriously threatened in California
    - 0.2: Moderately threatened in California
    - 0.3: Not very threatened in California

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) protects all migratory birds, including their eggs, nests, and feathers. The MBTA was originally drafted to put an end to the commercial trade in bird feathers, popular in the latter part of the 1800s. The MBTA is enforced by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and potential impacts to species protected under the MBTA are evaluated by the USFWS in consultation with other federal agencies and are required to be evaluated under CEQA.

Focused botanical and reconnaissance-level wildlife surveys of the project area were conducted by Aardvark Biological Services Senior Biologist Stephanie Hines on May 8 and July 1, 2024. Based on the results of the survey efforts, the project area consists of five different land cover types, including red brome or Mediterranean grass grasslands, tamarisk thickets, cultivated crops, disturbed land, and developed land. There is no critical habitat located within the project area.

Based on a query of the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) planning tool (USFWS 2024) and nine-quadrant queries of the CDFW California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) (CDFW 2024) and California Native Plant Society (CNPS) (CNPS 2024) databases, the following special-status species have been previously documented in the project vicinity:

SPECIAL-STATUS PLANTS

- **California jewelflower (*Caulanthus californicus*; Federal Endangered [FE], State Endangered [SE], and CRPR 1B.1).** This species typically occurs in chenopod scrub, pinyon-juniper woodland, and valley and foothill grassland with sandy soils between elevations of 200 and 3,280 feet and flowers between February and May. The project site is within a 1-mile buffer area of the nearest recorded occurrence of this species (CNDDB Occ. 36). The project area does not support suitable chenopod scrub, pinyon-juniper woodland, or valley and foothill grassland habitat due to the extent of disturbance and invasive species. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **San Joaquin wooly-threads (*Monolopia congdonii*; FE, SE, CRPR 1B.2).** This species typically occurs in chenopod scrub and valley and foothill grassland with sandy soils between elevations of 196 and 2,624 feet and flowers between January and May. The project site is within a 1-mile buffer area of the nearest recorded occurrence of this species (CNDDB Occ. 7). The project area does not support suitable chenopod scrub or valley and foothill grassland due to the extent of disturbance and invasive species. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **Lost Hills crownscale (*Atriplex coronata* var. *vallicola*; CRPR 1B.2).** This species typically occurs in chenopod scrub, valley and foothill grassland, and vernal pools between elevations of 164 and 2,083 feet and flowers between April and September. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 15.5 miles northwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 94). The project area does not support suitable chenopod scrub, valley and foothill grassland, or vernal pool habitat due to the extent of disturbance and invasive species. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.

- **brittlescale (*Atriplex depressa*; CRPR 1B.2).** This species typically occurs in chenopod scrub, meadows and seeps, playas, valley and foothill grassland, and vernal pools with alkaline and clay soils between elevations of 3 and 1,049 feet and flowers between April and October. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 7.9 miles southeast of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 66). The project area does not support suitable chenopod scrub, meadows and seeps, playas, valley and foothill grassland, or vernal pool habitat or suitable soil for this species. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **Lemmon's jewelflower (*Caulanthus lemmonii*; CRPR 1B.2).** This species typically occurs in pinyon and juniper woodland and valley and foothill grassland between elevations of 262 and 4,002 feet and flowers between March and May. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 3.8 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 46). The project area does not support suitable pinyon or juniper woodland or valley and foothill grassland habitat due to the extent of disturbance and invasive species. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **Hall's tarplant (*Deinandra halliana*; CRPR 1B.1).** This species typically occurs in chenopod scrub, cismontane woodland, and valley and foothill grassland with clay and sometimes alkaline soils between elevations of 853 and 3,116 feet and flowers between March and May. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 8.2 miles north of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 20). The project area is not located within the appropriate elevation range and does not support suitable chenopod scrub, cismontane woodland, or valley and foothill grassland habitat due to lack of clay and alkaline soils. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **recurved larkspur (*Delphinium recurvatum*; CRPR 1B.2).** This species typically occurs in chenopod scrub, valley and foothill grassland, and cismontane woodland with alkaline soils between elevations of 9 and 2,591 feet and flowers between March and June. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 5.2 miles northeast of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 119). The project area does not support suitable chenopod scrub, valley and foothill grassland, or cismontane woodland habitat due to the extent of disturbance and invasive species and lack of alkaline soils. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **Hoover's eriastrum (*Eriastrum hooveri*; CRPR 4.2).** This species typically occurs in chenopod scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland, and valley and foothill grassland with gravelly soils between elevations of 164 and 3,000 feet and flowers between March and July. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 3.4 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 6). The project area supports suitable gravelly soils; however, the habitat is heavily disturbed and consists of invasive species that reduces the suitability of the habitat. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **Eastwood's buckwheat (*Eriogonum eastwoodianum*; CRPR 1B.3).** This species typically occurs in cismontane woodland and valley and foothill grassland with sandy, shale, talus, and barren clay soils between elevations of 656 and 3,280 feet and flowers between May and September. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 9.7 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 1). The project area does not support suitable cismontane woodland or valley and foothill grassland habitat due to the extent of disturbance and invasive species. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.

- **stinkbells (*Fritillaria agrestis*; CRPR 4.2).** This species typically occurs in clay and sometimes serpentine soils in chaparral, cismontane woodland, pinyon and juniper woodland, and valley and foothill grassland between elevations of 32 and 5,101 feet and flowers between March and June. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 12.4 miles northwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 15). The project area does not support suitable chaparral, cismontane woodland, pinyon and juniper woodland, or valley and foothill grassland due to the extent of disturbance and invasive species or clay or serpentine soils. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **Diablo Range hare-leaf (*Lagophylla diabloensis*; CRPR 1B.2).** This species typically occurs in cismontane woodland and valley and foothill grassland with clay soils between elevations of 365 and 5,101 feet and flowers between April and September. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 5.6 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 3). The project area is not located within the appropriate elevation range and does not support suitable cismontane woodland or valley and foothill grassland habitat due to the extent of disturbance and invasive species and lack of clay soils. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **alkali-sink goldfields (*Lasthenia chrysantha*; CRPR 1B.1).** This species typically occurs in alkali sink, valley and foothill grassland, and vernal pools between elevations of 1,197 and 2,903 feet and flowers between April and September. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 5.8 miles northeast of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 20). The project area does not support suitable alkali sink, valley and foothill grassland, or vernal pool habitat due to the extent of disturbance and invasive species. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **pale-yellow layia (*Layia heterotricha*; CRPR 1B.1).** This species typically occurs in alkaline or clay soils in cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland, and valley and foothill grassland between elevations of 984 and 5,593 feet and flowers between March and June. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 3.2 miles northeast of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 22). The project area is not located within the appropriate elevation range and does not support suitable cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, pinyon or juniper woodland, or valley and foothill grassland habitat due to the extent of disturbance and invasive species and lack of alkaline and clay soils. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **Panoche pepper-grass (*Lepidium jaredii* ssp. *album*; CRPR 1B.2).** This species typically occurs in valley and foothill grassland with steep slopes and clay soils between elevations of 606 and 902 feet and flowers between February and June. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 8.2 miles north of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 22). The project area does not support suitable valley and foothill grassland habitat due to lack of steep slopes and clay soils. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **showy golden madia (*Madia radiata*; CRPR 1B.1).** This species typically occurs in cismontane woodland and valley and foothill grassland between elevations of 82 and 3,986 feet and flowers between March and May. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 7.3 miles north of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 68). The project area does not support suitable cismontane woodland or valley and foothill grassland habitat due to the extent of disturbance and

invasive species. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.

- **Indian Valley bushmallow (*Malacothamnus aboriginum*; CRPR 1B.2).** This species typically occurs in rocky, granitic soils, often in burned areas, in chaparral and cismontane woodland between elevations of 492 and 5,577 feet and flowers between April and October. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 4.9 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 3). The project area does not support suitable chaparral or cismontane woodland habitat or suitable soil conditions. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **shining navarretia (*Navarretia nigelliformis* ssp. *radians*; CRPR 1B.2).** This species typically occurs in cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland, and vernal pools at elevations between 249 and 3,280 feet and flowers between April and July. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 12.1 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 7). The project area does not support suitable vernal pool habitat, cismontane woodland, or valley and foothill grassland due to the extent of disturbance and invasive species. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **Panoche navarretia (*Navarretia panochensis*; CRPR 1B.3).** This species typically occurs in the Panoche Hills and Panoche Valley region in desert badland habitat with alluvial deposits of sand, clay, and pebbles of sandstone, shale, and serpentinite soils between elevations of 1,312 and 2,132 feet and flowers between April and June. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 15.9 miles northwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 1). The project area is not located within the appropriate elevation range and does not support suitable desert badland habitat. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **prostrate vernal pool navarretia (*Navarretia prostrata*; CRPR 1B.2).** This species typically occurs in coastal scrub, meadows and seeps, valley and foothill grassland with alkaline soils between elevations of 9 and 3,969 feet and flowers between April and July. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 11.2 miles northwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 34). The project area does not support suitable coastal scrub, meadows and seeps, or valley and foothill grassland habitat due to lack of alkaline soils and vernal pools. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **chaparral ragwort (*Senecio aphanactis*; CRPR 2B.2).** This species typically occurs in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and coastal scrub, sometimes with alkaline soils between elevations of 49 and 2,624 feet and flowers between January and May. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 4 miles south of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 68). The project area does not support suitable chaparral, cismontane woodland, or coastal scrub habitat or alkaline soils. Further, this species was not observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.

As discussed above, no special-status plant species were observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys. Further, no special-status plant species are expected to occur within the project area due to a lack of suitable habitat and extent of disturbance and invasive species.

SPECIAL-STATUS WILDLIFE

- **San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*; FE, State Threatened [ST]).** This species typically occurs in annual grasslands or grassy open stages with scattered shrubby vegetation and needs loose-textured sandy soils for burrowing and suitable prey base. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 3.2 miles northeast of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 437). There is marginally suitable grassland habitat for this species present within the project area and suitable burrows were also observed that could support this species. This species was not observed during field surveys and no dens were observed. However, this species is considered to have the potential to occur within the project area.
- **blunt-nosed leopard lizard (*Gambelia silus*; FE, SE, CDFW Fully Protected [FP]).** This species typically occurs in sparsely vegetated alkali and desert scrub habitats, in areas of low topographic relief, and seeks cover in mammal burrows, under shrubs, or in structures, such as fence posts. The project site is within a 1-mile buffer area of the nearest recorded occurrence of this species (CNDDB Occ. 1). There is no suitable alkali or desert scrub habitat within or in close proximity to the project area. Further, this species was not observed during field surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **northwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*; Federal Candidate [FC], CDFW SSC).** This species typically occurs in quiet waters of ponds, lakes, streams, and marshes with basking sites. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 36.5 miles northeast of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 425). Los Gatos Creek does not support suitable aquatic habitat for this species. Further, this species was not observed during field surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **western spadefoot (*Spea hammondii*; FC, SSC).** This species typically inhabits vernal pools primarily in grassland, but also in valley and foothill hardwood woodlands. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 1.4 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 1,243). There is no suitable vernal pool or woodland habitat for this species within or in close proximity to the project area. Further, this species was not observed during field surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*; SSC).** This species typically occurs in open water and tall and dense cattails or tules and large nesting colonies occur near cropland and insect prey base. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 1.2 miles northwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 221). Los Gatos Creek does not support suitable aquatic habitat for this species. Further, this species was not observed during field surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **Nelson's antelope squirrel (*Ammospermophilus nelsoni*; ST).** This species occurs in western San Joaquin Valley in dry, sparsely vegetated loam soils. This species digs burrows or uses kangaroo rat burrows and needs widely scattered shrubs, forbs, and grasses in broken terrain with gullies and washes. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 4 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 166). The project area does not support suitable habitat for this species due to the density of annual vegetation. Further, this species was not observed during field surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **temblor legless lizard (*Anniella alexanderae*; SSC).** This species occurs in sandy soil at the southeast base of the Temblor Ranges in the southwestern San Joaquin Valley in Kern County. Microhabitat is poorly known; however, other legless lizard species occur in sparsely vegetated areas with moist, loose soil. Often found underneath leaf litter, rocks, and logs. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 2 miles southwest of the project site

(CNDDB Occ. 16). The project area does not support suitable habitat for this species due to the absence of permanent moist, loose soil. Further, this species was not observed during field surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.

- **Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*; Candidate SE, CNDDB Special Animal).** This species occurs in coastal California east to Sierra/Cascades Crest and south into Mexico and feeds on flowering plants. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 2.8 miles southeast of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 8). The project area supports limited suitable habitat due to the absence of food plants and the extent of disturbance. This species was not observed during field surveys. However, due to the presence of limited suitable habitat, this species is considered to have the potential to periodically inhabit the project area.
- **Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*; ST).** This species typically breeds in grasslands with scattered trees, juniper-sage flats, riparian areas, savannahs, and agricultural or ranch lands with groves or lines of trees. Requires adjacent suitable foraging areas, such as grasslands or alfalfa or grain fields supporting rodent populations. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 1.4 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 2,519). There are scattered large trees that are suitable for nesting and open grassland and agricultural areas with large populations of small mammals within and in the surrounding 0.5 mile of the project area that provide suitable habitat for this species. This species was not observed during field surveys. However, due to the presence of potentially suitable habitat, this species is considered to have the potential to occur within the project area.
- **foothill yellow-legged frog – Central Coast Distinct Population Segment (DPS) (*Rana boylii* pop. 4; FC, SE, SSC).** This species typically occurs in partly shaded, shallow streams and riffles with rocky substrate in variety of habitats. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 1.4 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 169). There is no suitable aquatic habitat for this species within or in close proximity to the project area. Further, this species was not observed during field surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*; SSC).** This species typically occurs in sparsely vegetated, moist, loose soils in sandy washes, coastal dunes, valley-foothill hardwood, chaparral, and coastal scrub on the San Joaquin Valley floor from San Joaquin County south, the west slope of the southern Sierra Nevada, the Tehachapi Mountains west of the desert, and the mountains of Southern California. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is approximately 7.1 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 117). The project area may support suitable habitat for this species within the bed of Los Gatos Creek, where loose and, possibly, permanently moist soil and sparse vegetation occur. This species was not observed during field surveys; however, due to the presence of potentially suitable habitat, this species is considered to have the potential to occur within the project area.
- **California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*; SSC).** This species typically occurs in open sandy areas with scattered brush in desert scrub, chaparral, sagebrush, valley-foothill hardwood, pine-juniper, and annual grasslands. The project site is within a 1-mile buffer area of the nearest recorded occurrence of this species (CNDDB Occ. 32). The project area may support suitable habitat for this species within the bed of Los Gatos Creek, where loose and, possibly, permanently moist soil and sparse vegetation occur. This species was not observed during field surveys. However, due to the presence of potentially suitable habitat, this species is considered to have the potential to occur within the project area.
- **San Joaquin coachwhip (*Masticophis flagellum ruddocki*; SSC).** This species typically occurs in open, arid areas, such as saltbrush scrub, grasslands, chaparral and pastures with few trees. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is 3.8 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB

Occ. 57). The project area may support suitable habitat for this species within the open red brome/Mediterranean grass grasslands. This species was not observed during field surveys. However, due to the presence of suitable habitat, this species is considered to have the potential to occur within the project area.

- **coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*; SSC).** This species typically occurs in open country, especially sandy areas, washes, floodplains and wind-blown deposits, valley-foothill hardwood, conifer and riparian, pine-cypress, juniper, and annual grassland habitats. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is 13.3 miles northwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 637). The project area may support suitable habitat for this species within the bed of Los Gatos Creek, where sandy soil occurs in open areas. This species was not observed during field surveys. However, due to the presence of suitable habitat, this species is considered to have the potential to occur within the project area.
- **long-eared owl (*Asio otus*; SSC).** This species typically inhabits dense vegetation and open coniferous or deciduous woodlands, and forages in open grasslands or shrublands. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is 5.7 miles northeast of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 60). A few large, dense trees and open areas for foraging occur within and adjacent to the project area that may potentially suitable habitat for this species. This species was not observed during field surveys. However, due to the presence of suitable habitat, this species is considered to have the potential to occur within the project area.
- **LeConte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*; SSC).** This species typically occurs in sparsely vegetated desert flats, desert wash, dunes, alluvial fans, or gently rolling hills having a high proportion of shrubs that are well scattered with contiguous or closed cover, ground bare or with sparse patches of grasses, and annuals as low ground cover. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is 2.8 miles southeast of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 74). The project area is not considered to support suitable habitat for this species due to the lack of shrubs and areas of open, sparse vegetation. Further, this species was not observed during field surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*; SSC).** This species typically occurs in generally mesic areas in a large variety of vegetation communities with caves, mines, tunnels, buildings, and/or other human-made structures for roost sites. This species is sensitive to disturbance. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is 4.7 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 618). No suitable roosting habitat occurs within the project area. In addition, areas within the project area experience consistent and frequent anthropogenic disturbance that further reduces the potential for this species to occur. This species was not observed during field surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **short-nosed kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys nitratoides brevinasus*; SSC).** This species typically occurs in grasslands with scattered shrubs and desert-shrub associations on friable soils, sandy bottoms, and banks of arroyos and other sandy areas. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is 3.4 miles southeast of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 3). Although suitable soils occur in Los Gatos Creek, this area experiences intermittent flooding and ponding, which is not suitable habitat for this species. In addition, suitable grassland with scattered shrubs habitat does not occur within the project area and adjacent area is heavily disturbed by anthropogenic activity. This species was not observed during field surveys. Therefore, this species is not expected to occur within the project area.
- **western mastiff bat (*Eumops perolis californicus*; SSC).** This species typically occurs in many open, semi-arid to arid habitats, including conifer and deciduous woodlands, coastal scrub, annual and perennial grasslands, palm oases, chaparral, desert scrub, and urban. This species roosts within crevices in cliff faces, high buildings, trees, and tunnels at least 9 feet high. In addition, a

large waterbody must be within foraging distance. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is 1.1 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 99). Suitable grasslands and urban areas occur within and adjacent to the project area. Although no large waterbody suitable for foraging occurs nearby, the pedestrian bridge over Los Gatos Creek does provide suitable roosting habitat for this species. This species was not observed during field surveys, and no guano deposits were observed during the diurnal field surveys. However, this species is considered to have the potential to occur within the project area.

- **Tulare grasshopper mouse (*Onychomys torridus tularensis*; SSC).** This species typically inhabits arid shrubland communities in hot, arid grassland and shrubland associations with low to moderate shrub cover. The project site is within a 1-mile buffer area of the nearest recorded occurrence of this species (CNDDB Occ. 114). There is marginally suitable habitat for this species within the red brome/Mediterranean grass grassland and wash scrub within the project area; however, the project area is heavily disturbed by anthropogenic activity, which reduces the suitability of the habitat. This species was not observed during field surveys. However, due to the presence of marginally suitable habitat, this species is considered to have the potential to occur within the project area.
- **American badger (*Taxidea taxus*; SSC).** This species typically occurs in grasslands, parklands, farms, and other treeless areas with friable soil and a supply of rodent prey. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is 4.8 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDB Occ. 274). Suitable grassland and agricultural habitat for this species occurs within the project area. In addition, small mammal burrows suitable for badger were observed throughout the project area. This species was not observed during field surveys. However, due to the presence of marginally suitable habitat, this species is considered to have the potential to occur within the project area.

As discussed above, no special-status animal species were observed during field surveys. Based on habitat conditions observed during field surveys, San Joaquin kit fox, Crotch's bumble bee, Swainson's hawk, northern California legless lizard, California glossy snake, San Joaquin coachwhip, coast horned lizard, long-eared owl, western mastiff bat, Tulare grasshopper mouse, and American badger have the potential to occur within the project area.

Environmental Evaluation

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

The project includes construction and ground-disturbing activities, which would have the potential to result in direct impacts to special-status plant species if present within the project site during construction. In addition, proposed construction activities have the potential to result in direct (i.e., take) or indirect (e.g., noise, dust, light pollution) disturbance to special-status animal species if present within the project area during project construction. Potential impacts to special-status species are described in detail, below.

Special-Status Plant Species

As described above, no special-status plant species were observed during appropriately timed botanical surveys and no special-status plant species are expected to occur within the project area due to a lack of suitable habitat and the extent of disturbance and invasive species. Therefore, the project would not result in adverse effects to special-status plant species, and *no impacts* would occur.

Special-Status Animal Species

As described above, no special-status animal species were observed during field surveys. Based on habitat conditions observed during field surveys, the following 11 special-status animal species have the potential to occur within the project area: San Joaquin kit fox, Crotch's bumble bee, Swainson's hawk, northern California legless lizard, California glossy snake, San Joaquin coachwhip, coast horned lizard, long-eared owl, western mastiff bat, Tulare grasshopper mouse, and American badger.

Special-Status Mammals

There is marginally suitable grassland habitat for San Joaquin kit fox, western mastiff bat, Tulare grasshopper mouse, and American badger present within the project area; therefore, proposed construction activities may have the potential to result in direct or indirect impacts to these species if present within the project area during construction activities. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-5 have been identified in this IS/MND to reduce potential impacts to San Joaquin kit fox, western mastiff bat, Tulare grasshopper mouse, and American badger through preconstruction survey requirements, environmental awareness training, biological construction monitoring, and construction best management practices (BMPs). With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-5, the project would not result in adverse effects to special-status mammals, and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Special-Status Reptiles

There is marginally suitable grassland habitat for San Joaquin coachwhip, coast horned lizard, California glossy snake, and northern California legless lizard present within the project area; therefore, proposed construction activities may have the potential to result in direct or indirect impacts to these species if present within the project area during construction activities. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3 and BIO-5 have been identified to reduce potential impacts on San Joaquin coachwhip, coast horned lizard, California glossy snake, and northern California legless lizard through preconstruction survey requirements, environmental awareness training, biological construction monitoring, and construction BMPs. With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3 and BIO-5, the project would not result in adverse effects to special-status reptiles, and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Special-Status Insects

There is marginally suitable grassland habitat for Crotch's bumble bee present within the project area; therefore, proposed construction activities may have the potential to result in direct or indirect impacts to this species if present within the project area during construction activities. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3 and BIO-5 have been identified to reduce potential impacts to Crotch's bumble bee through preconstruction survey requirements, environmental awareness training, biological construction monitoring, and construction BMPs. With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-4 through BIO-6, the project would not result in adverse effects to special-status insects, and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Special-Status and Migratory Birds

There is marginally suitable grassland habitat for Swainson's hawk, long-eared owl, and other migratory birds protected under the MBTA present within the project area; therefore, proposed construction activities may have the potential to result in direct or indirect impacts to these species if present within the project area during construction activities. Mitigation Measure BIO-6 has been identified to reduce impacts to special-status and migratory bird species through implementation of preconstruction survey

requirements. With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-6, the project would not result in adverse effects to special-status or migratory birds, and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Conclusion

Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-6 have been included to require preconstruction surveys, employee awareness training, avoidance measures, and other measures intended to avoid indirect and direct impacts to special-status species. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

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, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

The project area consists of five land cover types, including red brome or Mediterranean grass grasslands, tamarisk thickets, cultivated crops, disturbed land, and developed land. There is no riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities within the project area; therefore, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community, and *no impacts* would occur.

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

Coalinga is located within the Arroyo Pasajero watershed, which encompasses a drainage area of approximately 530 square miles that extends from the Diablo Range to the west into the San Joaquin Valley to the east. Warthan, Los Gatos, Jacalitos, Coalmine Canyon, and Arroyo Pasajero Creeks are located within the City's Sphere of Influence, flowing past the city in a northeasterly direction. Los Gatos and Warthan Creeks flow easterly out of the southern hills of the Diablo Range and converge at the eastern edge of the Coalinga city limits, then form the Arroyo Pasajero. Jacalitos Creek converges with Los Gatos Creek approximately 5 miles east outside of the city limits. In the far southeast corner of the project area, Zapato Chino Creek flows through the Palvarado Gap into the San Joaquin Valley. These creeks all flow northeast within the Arroyo Pasajero watershed (City of Coalinga 2009a).

The project site intersects Los Gatos Creek, and construction of the new bridge would require approximately 200 cubic yards of cut and 200 cubic yards of fill activity within the creek. Construction activities may require trimming of trees located along Los Gatos Creek; however, no tree or vegetation removal would be necessary. Mitigation Measure BIO-7 has been included to reduce impacts to Los Gatos Creek through limitation of work within the creek to the dry season, adherence to permitting regulations, and implementation of construction BMPs. Upon implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-7, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands, and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

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

As previously discussed, the project site is located over and would require work within Los Gatos Creek, which does not support a consistent flow of water that could support migratory fish species. Further, Mitigation Measure BIO-7 would ensure all work within Los Gatos Creek is limited to the dry season; therefore, the project would not adversely affect migratory fish passage. The project does not include the removal of any trees that could reduce the availability of nesting habitat for migratory bird species or the construction of buildings, tall fencing along the entire length of the trail, or other features that could impede wildlife movement through the project area. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-7, the project would not interfere substantially with the movement of wildlife, and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

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

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Open Space and Conservation Element* (Coalinga General Plan Chapter 3; City of Coalinga 2009a) identifies goals and policies for the protection of biological resources within the city, including special-status wildlife species, special-status plant species, riparian corridors, and other sensitive habitats. As previously mentioned, with implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-7, the project would not result in adverse impacts to biological resources protected in the City's Open Space and Conservation Element. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the local policies, and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

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?

The City authorized the preparation of the Coalinga Habitat Conservation Plan on March 20, 1997, which has yet to be adopted. The project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan, and *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-7 have been included to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts related to biological resources. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-7, potential impacts related to biological resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

BIO-1 Prior to initiation of any site preparation/construction activities, the City of Coalinga shall prepare and supply a PowerPoint presentation and sign-in sheets for all construction personnel. All individuals who will be involved in site preparation or construction activities shall be required to review the PowerPoint presentation and acknowledge they reviewed the materials through the sign-in sheets. At a minimum, the presentation shall include a description of the natural history of the species with the potential to be affected by the proposed project and their habitats, the general measures that are being implemented to conserve these species as they relate to the proposed project, the penalties

for non-compliance, and the boundaries of the work area within which the project must be accomplished. To ensure that employees and contractors understand their roles and responsibilities, training may have to be conducted in languages other than English. The sign-in sheets shall be returned to the City of Coalinga Planning Department.

BIO-2 Prior to initiation of any site preparation and/or construction activities, the City of Coalinga shall retain a qualified on-call biological monitor to provide oversight over ground-disturbing construction activities and implementation of avoidance and minimization efforts. The monitor shall coordinate with the City of Coalinga Resident Engineer regarding any special-status species detections or requests to stop construction activities.

BIO-3 Within 30 days prior to any ground disturbance, a preconstruction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist for special-status species that have the potential to occur within the project area. A letter report documenting the results of the preconstruction surveys shall be prepared and submitted to the City of Coalinga Planning Department for review and approval. If special-status species are identified during preconstruction surveys, project activities shall be modified (if necessary) and implemented in a manner that avoids all direct and indirect effects to these species. The City of Coalinga shall coordinate with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, if necessary, to identify appropriate methods for avoiding all direct and indirect effects to special-status species within the project area.

BIO-4 Prior to or during project activities, if any observations are made of San Joaquin kit fox, or any known or potential San Joaquin kit fox dens are discovered within the project limits, the qualified biologist will notify the City of Coalinga, and the City of Coalinga shall contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to discuss ways to proceed with the project and avoid take. All work will stop until such time that the City of Coalinga in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determines that it is appropriate to resume work.

BIO-5 Prior to and during any site preparation and/or construction activities associated with the proposed project, the City of Coalinga and/or the project contractor shall implement the following conservation measures:

a. Project employees will be directed to exercise caution when commuting within unpaved project areas. A 20-mile-per-hour speed limit will be enforced on unpaved roads.

b. Project employees will be provided written guidance governing vehicle use, speed limits on unpaved roads, fire prevention, and other hazards.

c. A litter control program shall be instituted at the project site. All workers shall ensure their food scraps, paper wrappers, food containers, cans, bottles, and other trash from the project area are deposited in covered or closed trash containers. The trash containers shall be removed from the project area at the end of each working day.

d. No canine or feline pets or firearms (except for federal, state, or local law enforcement officers and security personnel) shall be permitted on construction sites to avoid harassment, killing, or injuring of listed species.

e. At the end of each working day, maintenance and construction excavations greater than 2 feet deep shall be covered, filled-in, or equipped with earthen

escape ramps no greater than 200 feet apart to prevent entrapment of listed species.

f. All construction activities shall be confined within the project construction area, which may include temporary access roads, haul roads, and staging areas specifically designated and marked for these purposes. At no time shall equipment or personnel be allowed outside the project construction area without authorization from the City of Coalinga and/or biological monitor.

g. Environmentally Sensitive Areas within the project site, such as active burrows and trees to be preserved, shall be delineated with high-visibility temporary fencing at least 4 feet in height, flagging, or other barrier to prevent encroachment of construction personnel and equipment onto any sensitive areas during project work activities. Such fencing shall be inspected and maintained daily until completion of the project. The fencing will be removed only when all construction equipment is removed from the site.

h. If necessary, tightly woven fiber netting or similar material shall be used for erosion control or other purposes at the project site to ensure that special-status species do not get trapped. This limitation will be communicated to the contractor through use of Special Provisions included in the bid solicitation package.

i. Use of rodenticides and herbicides at the project site shall be avoided to the maximum extent feasible to prevent primary or secondary poisoning of special-status species and depletion of prey populations on which they depend. In the event that the use of herbicides is necessary for invasive species control, all uses of such compounds shall observe labels and other restrictions mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Pesticide Regulation, and other appropriate federal and state regulations, as well as additional project-related restrictions deemed necessary by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

BIO-6 Prior to initiation of any site preparation/construction activities, if work is planned to occur between February 1 and September 15, a qualified biologist shall survey the area for nesting birds within 1 week prior to initial project activity beginning, including ground disturbance and/or vegetation removal/trimming. If nesting birds are located on or near the proposed project site, they shall be avoided until they have successfully fledged, or the nest is no longer deemed active, as detailed below:

a. A 50-foot exclusion zone shall be placed around non-listed, passerine species and a 250-foot exclusion zone will be implemented for raptor species. Each exclusion zone shall encircle the nest and have a radius of 50 feet (non-listed passerine species) or 250 feet (raptor species). All project activities, including foot and vehicle traffic and storage of supplies and equipment, are prohibited inside exclusion zones. Exclusion zones shall be maintained until all exterior construction activities have been terminated for the current phase of work (e.g., if initial site improvements are completed, exclusion zones may be removed until initiation of site preparation for residence construction begins), or it has been determined by a qualified biologist that the young have fledged or that proposed project activities would not cause adverse impacts to the nest, adults, eggs, or young.

b. If special-status avian species are identified and nesting within the work area, no work will begin until an appropriate exclusion zone is determined in consultation with the City of Lompoc and any relevant resource agencies.

If applicable, the results shall detail appropriate fencing or flagging of exclusion zones and include recommendations for additional monitoring requirements. A map of the project site and nest locations shall be included with the results. The qualified biologist conducting the nesting survey shall have the authority to reduce or increase the recommended exclusion zone depending on site conditions and species (if non-listed).

If 2 weeks lapse between different phases of project activities (e.g., the start of grading), during which no or minimal work activity occurs, the nesting bird survey shall be repeated.

BIO-7 For demolition of the existing bridge crossing and construction of the new bridge crossing over Los Gatos Creek, the following measures shall be included at appropriate times to reduce potential impacts to Los Gatos Creek:

a. Prior to demolition of the existing bridge crossing, if required, the City of Coalinga shall obtain a Section 404 permit (anticipated to be Nationwide Permit 14 for linear transportation projects) from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a Section 401 Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirement from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and a Section 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The City of Coalinga shall comply with any additional protection and mitigation measures required by the regulatory agencies.

b. Construction activities within the bed and bank of Los Gatos Creek shall be conducted during the dry season when stream flows will be at annual lows (June 1–October 15) in any given year, or as otherwise directed by the regulatory agencies. Deviations from this work window can be made with permission from the relevant regulatory agencies.

c. Prior to initiation of any construction activities, sturdy high-visibility fencing shall be installed to protect the jurisdictional areas adjacent to the designated work areas. This fencing shall be placed so that unnecessary adverse impacts to the adjacent habitats are avoided. No construction work (including storage of materials) shall occur outside of the specified project limits. The fencing shall remain in place during the entire construction period, be monitored periodically by a qualified biologist, and be maintained as needed by the contractor.

d. Prior to construction, the contractor shall prepare a Hazardous Materials Response Plan to allow for a prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. Workers shall be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.

e. During construction, erosion control measures (e.g., silt fencing, fiber rolls, and barriers) shall remain available on-site and shall be utilized as necessary to prevent erosion and sedimentation in jurisdictional areas. No synthetic plastic mesh products shall be used for erosion control and use of these materials on-site is prohibited. Erosion control measures and other suitable Best Management Practices used shall be checked to ensure that they are intact and functioning effectively and maintained daily throughout the duration of construction. The

contractor shall also apply adequate dust control techniques, such as site watering, during construction to protect water quality.

f. During construction, the cleaning and refueling of equipment and vehicles shall occur only within a designated staging area and at least 50 feet from the creek banks. At a minimum, equipment and vehicles shall be checked and maintained daily to ensure proper operation and avoid potential leaks or spills.

V. Cultural Resources

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

Setting

Under PRC Section 5024.1, any properties that can be expected to be directly or indirectly affected by a proposed project are required to be evaluated for California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) eligibility. The purpose of the CRHR is to maintain listings of the state's historical resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from material impairment and substantial adverse change.

As defined by CEQA, a historical resource includes:

1. A resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the CRHR.
2. Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant. The architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural records of California may be considered to be a historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence.

Resources are evaluated for eligibility for the CRHR under the following four criteria:

- **Criterion 1:** The resource is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;
- **Criterion 2:** The resource is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
- **Criterion 3:** The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; and

- **Criterion 4:** The resource has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

LOCAL SETTING

The city of Coalinga and surrounding areas are located within the ethnographic territory of the Southern Yokuts people. The city of Coalinga is located in what was a traditional Tachi village. The Tachi were one of the largest of the Yokut Tribes. The Tachi lived along the northern and western shores of Tulare Lake, in the west side of the Central Valley, and throughout the Diablo Mountain Range. Coalinga is the village of Chah'kiu, the place of asphaltum. After invasions by the Spanish and Euro-Americans, the Tachi hid around Coalinga until oil was found, and they were forced to move to the current Rancheria.

The Southern Yokuts' homeland was centered near water sources, including the Tulare, Buena Vista, and Kern Lakes and connecting sloughs and rivers. Archaeological investigations and surveys in the immediate Coalinga area have identified archaeological sites to the west and southwest along Los Gatos and Warthan Creeks. In areas where extensive agriculture has occurred, the potential for finding significant archaeological resources is considered very remote.

In 1983 an earthquake caused severe damage and destroyed most of the city's historically significant buildings. However, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) lists two sites of historical significance in the Coalinga area: the Birdwell Rock Petroglyph Site and the Coalinga Polk Street School. Resources considered to be of local significance include the RC Baker Memorial Museum and the Wooden Walking Beam (City of Coalinga 2009b).

Environmental Evaluation

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

The project site includes one 1,917-foot-long trail segment in the northern portion of the city. The proposed trail alignment is located within an abandoned segment of the UPRR corridor and consists of predominantly undeveloped and disturbed areas. Existing development along the trail alignment is limited to a pedestrian bridge over Los Gatos Creek. Due to existing damage and safety concerns, the existing bridge will be replaced with a new pedestrian bridge.

Based on a California Historical Resource Information System (CHRIS) records search from the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC), there are two previously recorded resources within a 0.25-mile radius, including the former Southern Pacific Railroad (SPRR) alignment (P-10-003930) and Coaling Station A Point of Historical Interest (SHPI-FRE-003), and the former SPRR alignment is located within the proposed project area. The former SPRR alignment includes multiple segments throughout the San Joaquin Valley that were previously owned and operated by the SPRR, many of which have been previously recorded. The most recent and relevant evaluation was completed by SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) in 2021 as part of the *Historical Resources Evaluation Report for the City of Coalinga Trails Mater Plan Segments 3, 4, and 9, Coalinga, Fresno County, Californi*a (2021 HRER), which concluded that the former SPRR alignment would not qualify as eligible for either the NRHP or CRHR due to a lack of historical integrity resulting from the extensive alterations that have occurred, including the removal of the previous rails, tracks, and other elements associated with the former railroad (SWCA 2021).

The pedestrian bridge over Los Gatos Creek was originally constructed in 1888 and in use as a railroad trestle until 1978 (SWCA 2021). Due to the age of the proposed bridge, the *Historic Resource Assessment for the Coalinga Perimeter Trail Interconnect Gregory North, Coalinga, Fresno County, California*

(2024 HRER; SWCA 2024) was prepared to evaluate the pedestrian bridge over Los Gatos Creek that would be demolished as part of the proposed project. Based on the findings of the 2024 HRER for the proposed project, the pedestrian bridge over Los Gatos Creek does not exhibit any historical significance under the four criteria that determine eligibility for listing in the CRHR (SWCA 2024). Therefore, the pedestrian bridge is not identified as a historical resource, and demolition of the bridge would not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Based on the findings of the 2021 and 2024 HRERs, there are no historical resources located within the project area. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, and *no impact* would occur.

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

The project site is within the known range of the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe. Mitigation Measure CR-1 requires coordination with representatives from the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe to conduct cultural resource awareness training for all construction personnel. Construction of the proposed trail segment would require minor grading, excavation, and vegetation removal. The project site consists of previous disturbance associated with grading, which reduces the potential for intact archaeological resources to be present within proposed areas of disturbance. Further, Mitigation Measure CR-2 requires that, in the unlikely event that previously unidentified cultural resources are uncovered during proposed ground-disturbing activities, all work shall cease within the vicinity of the find until a qualified archaeologist is retained to evaluate the significance of the find and determine the need for further study. Based on existing conditions of the project site and implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2, the project would not result in adverse impacts to known or unknown cultural resources, and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

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

No human remains are known to exist within the project site; however, the discovery of previously undocumented human remains is possible during ground-disturbing activities. The project would be required to comply with California Health and Safety Code (CHSC) Section 7050.5, which outlines the protocol for unanticipated discovery of human remains. CHSC Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County of Fresno (County) Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the coroner will notify the NAHC, which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The MLD shall complete the inspection of the project site within 48 hours of notification and may recommend scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American burials. Based on required compliance with CHSC Section 7050.5, the project would not result in disturbance to human remains; therefore, impacts related to disturbance of human remains would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

With implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2 and required compliance with CHSC Section 7050.5, the proposed project would not adversely affect archaeological resources or human remains, and impacts related to cultural resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

CR-1 Prior to construction activities, a City of Coalinga-qualified archaeologist shall coordinate with representatives from the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe to conduct cultural resource awareness training for all construction personnel, including the following:

a. Review the types of archaeological artifacts that may be uncovered;

b. Provide examples of common archaeological artifacts to examine;

c. Review what makes an archaeological resource significant to archaeologists and local Native Americans;

d. Describe procedures for notifying involved or interested parties in case of a new discovery;

e. Describe reporting requirements and responsibilities of construction personnel;

f. Review procedures that shall be used to record, evaluate, and mitigate new discoveries; and

g. Describe procedures that would be followed in the case of discovery of disturbed as well as intact human burials and burial-associated artifacts.

CR-2 If cultural resources are encountered during subsurface earthwork activities, all ground-disturbing activities within a 25-foot radius of the find shall cease and the City of Coalinga shall be notified immediately. Work shall not continue until a City of Coalinga-qualified archaeologist assesses the find and determines the need for further study. If the find includes Native American-affiliated materials, a local Native American tribal representative will be contacted to work in conjunction with the City of Coalinga-approved archaeologist to determine the need for further study. A standard inadvertent discovery clause shall be included in every grading and construction contract to inform contractors of this requirement. Any previously unidentified resources found during construction shall be recorded on appropriate California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms and evaluated for significance in terms of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) criteria by a qualified archaeologist.

If the resource is determined significant under CEQA, the qualified archaeologist shall prepare and implement a research design and archaeological data recovery plan, in conjunction with locally affiliated Native American representative(s) as necessary, that will capture those categories of data for which the site is significant. The archaeologist shall also perform appropriate technical analysis, prepare a comprehensive report, and file it with the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC), located at the California State University, Bakersfield, and provide for the permanent curation of the recovered materials.

VI. Energy

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

Setting

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) is the primary electricity provider for the city. The 2022 PG&E electric power mix consists of 38% renewable energy sources and 57% greenhouse gas (GHG)-free energy sources (PG&E 2022). The City is one of only three local jurisdictions in California that owns and operates a natural gas distribution system. The City purchases natural gas from PG&E at a large meter station and it is then distributed to households through the City's distribution infrastructure.

The California Building Code (CBC) contains standards that regulate the method of use, properties, performance, or types of materials used in the construction, alteration, improvement, repair, or rehabilitation of a building or other improvement to real property. The CBC includes mandatory green building standards for residential and nonresidential structures, the most recent versions of which are referred to as the *2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards*. These standards focus on four key areas: smart residential photovoltaic systems, updated thermal envelope standards (preventing heat transfer from the interior to the exterior and vice versa), residential and nonresidential ventilation requirements, and non-residential lighting requirements.

The Coalinga General Plan identifies several policies and implementation measures related to fuel use, energy conservation, and energy efficiency, including, but not limited to, the following:

> **Policy AQ2-2:** Support upgrades and improvements to the transportation systems that benefit bicycle, pedestrian, and other non-vehicular forms of circulation.
>
> > **Implementation Measure AQ2.2-4:** Within two years of adoption of the General Plan, prepare a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to provide a comprehensive system of bikeways and pedestrian paths.
>
> **Policy AQ5-1:** Actively seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the Planning Area.
>
> > **Implementation Measure AQ5-1.4:** All City-funded projects that involve the disturbance of more than one acre shall use construction equipment that utilizes fuels, such as biodiesel, which reduce GHG emissions by 10% compared to typical fuels.

Policy AQ5-2: Identify opportunities for creating energy conservation and efficiency programs for application in all City facilities, schools, and local businesses.

Implementation Measure AQ5-2.1: City buildings and facilities will be operated in the most energy-efficient manner without endangering public health and safety and without reducing public safety or service levels.

Policy C1-6: Encourage the use of transportation alternatives that reduce the use of personal vehicles.

Policy C2-1: Promote non-motorized bike and pedestrian circulation facilities to serve all areas of the City and link regional systems, with priority coordination with school, park, transit, and other major facilities.

Environmental Evaluation

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

During construction, fossil fuels, electricity, and natural gas would be used by construction vehicles and equipment. The energy consumed during construction would be temporary in nature and would be typical of other similar construction activities in the city. Federal and state regulations in place require the use of fuel-efficient equipment and vehicles and require wasteful activities, such as diesel idling, to be limited. Construction contractors, in an effort to ensure cost efficiency, would not be expected to engage in wasteful or unnecessary energy and fuel practices. Energy consumption during construction would not conflict with a state or local plan for renewable energy and would not be wasteful, unnecessary, or inefficient.

Following construction, the project would operate as a pedestrian and bicycle trail and would not require significant use of energy resources, such as electricity and natural gas. The project includes the installation of one new outdoor light that would be powered by solar energy; therefore, the project would not require any additional electricity use. The project would not include the establishment of new land uses or activities that could generate a substantial increase in vehicle trips to or from the project site or otherwise increase the use of fossil fuels. Additionally, the project would connect residents in Coalinga to activity centers such as schools, parks, a college, shopping, neighborhoods, and jobs and would provide a safe option to enable increased bicycle/pedestrian transportation use, which would allow for an overall reduction in fossil fuel use. Therefore, the project would not result in a substantial increase in short- or long-term energy consumption, and impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

As described in *Impact Discussion VI(a)*, the proposed project would not result in a significant new energy demand and there are no project components or operations that would conflict with the Coalinga General Plan goals, policies, or implementation measures, or any other state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Upon completion of the construction phase of the project, the new pedestrian and bicycle trail and associated features would use a negligible amount of energy and would not conflict with applicable state or local regulations associated with renewable energy or energy efficiency. Therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

The project would not result in excessive energy use during construction or operation and would be consistent with applicable energy efficiency plans; therefore, impacts related to energy would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

VII. Geology and Soils

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
(i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	☒
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (Alquist-Priolo Act) is a California state law that was developed to regulate development near active faults and mitigate the surface fault rupture potential and other hazards. The Alquist-Priolo Act identifies active earthquake fault zones and restricts the construction of habitable structures over known active or potentially active faults. An active fault, as defined by state law, is a fault that has been proven by direct geologic evidence to indicate movement within the last 11,000 years.

The city of Coalinga is located in a region of California that is historically and currently seismically active. Numerous mapped faults in the area could produce significant ground shaking, including the San Andreas, Pond-Poso Creek, and White Wolf faults located west and south of the city. Active faults surrounding the San Andreas Fault produced large earthquakes in the twentieth century and are expected to produce similar large earthquakes in the future (City of Coalinga 2009b).

The two principal seismic hazards to property are: 1) damage to structures and foundations due to strong ground shaking, and 2) surface rupture of earth materials along fault traces. To protect structures from the hazards of surface ground rupture, the CDOC Division of Mines and Geology, under the state-mandated Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone Act of 1972, delineated special study zones along active or potentially active faults. The Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone Act zoned the area located along the Nunez Fault for special studies. The Nunez Fault is located approximately 6 miles northwest of Coalinga (City of Coalinga 2009b).

Ground shaking refers to the motion that occurs in response to local and regional earthquakes. Seismic ground shaking is influenced by the proximity of the site to an earthquake fault, the intensity of the seismic event, and the underlying soil composition. Ground shaking can endanger life and safety due to damage or collapse of structures or lifeline facilities. The CBC includes requirements that structures be designed to resist a certain minimum seismic force resulting from ground motion.

Liquefaction is the sudden loss of soil strength due to a rapid increase in soil pore water pressures resulting from ground shaking during an earthquake. Liquefaction potential increases with earthquake magnitude and ground shaking duration. Low-lying areas adjacent to creeks, rivers, beaches, and estuaries underlain by unconsolidated alluvial soil are most likely to be vulnerable to liquefaction. The CBC requires the assessment of liquefaction in the design of all structures.

Paleontological resources are fossilized remains of ancient environments, including fossilized bone, shell, and plant parts; impressions of plant, insect, or animal parts preserved in stone; and preserved tracks of insects and animals. Paleontological resources are considered nonrenewable resources under federal and state law. Paleontological sensitivity is defined as the potential for a geologic unit to produce scientifically significant fossils, as determined by rock type, past history of the rock unit in producing fossil materials, and fossil sites that have been recorded in the unit.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the project site is underlain by surficial sediments from the Holocene era (Qa) (Dibblee et al. 2007). Due to its relatively young age, Qa has a low paleontological sensitivity.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

a-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.

Fault rupture refers to the displacement of ground surface along a fault trace that typically occurs during earthquakes of a magnitude 5 or higher. Based on the CDOC Fault Activity Map of California, the city of Coalinga is not located within a mapped Alquist-Priolo earthquake hazard zone (CDOC 2015). In addition, there are no mapped faults within the city of Coalinga. The nearest mapped Alquist-Priolo fault is the Nunez Fault, located approximately 6 miles northwest of the city. In addition, the San Andreas Fault, which is an Alquist-Priolo fault, is located approximately 15 miles west of the city (CDOC 2015). There are no mapped Alquist-Priolo faults or other faults within the city of Coalinga; therefore, fault rupture would not occur in any portion of the project site, and *no impacts* would occur.

a-ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Based on the presence of active fault zones in the vicinity of the city, there is potential for seismic ground shaking to occur in the project region. The project does not include the construction of new occupiable buildings or structures that could result in an increased risk of loss, injury, or death as a result of seismic ground shaking. Based on the nature of the proposed project, the project would not increase the risk of loss, injury, or death as a result of seismic ground shaking; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

a-iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Liquefaction occurs in an earthquake-prone area underlain by alluvium and where the groundwater table is less than 50 feet below the surface. Given the depth of the groundwater table in the Coalinga area (300–400 feet), the potential for liquefaction is considered very low (City of Coalinga 2009a). As previously identified, the project would be limited to the construction of a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trail and associated trail components and does not include the construction of new occupiable buildings or structures that could result in an increased risk of loss, injury, or death as a result of seismic activity, including liquefaction. Based on the nature of the proposed project, the project would not increase the risk of loss, injury, or death as a result of liquefaction; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

a-iv) Landslides?

Landslides and slope instability can occur as a result of wet weather, weak soils, improper grading, improper drainage, steep slopes, adverse geologic structure, earthquakes, or a combination of these factors. The project site consists of relatively flat topography and would not be located on or adjacent to steep slopes with the potential for landslides. The project would not result in the construction of new occupiable buildings or structures or other components that would be particularly sensitive to ground-failure, including landslides. Based on the nature of the proposed project, the project would not increase the risk of loss, injury, or death as a result of landslides; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

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

Construction of the proposed trail segment would require minor grading, excavation, and vegetation removal. Proposed ground-disturbing activities have the potential to increase erosion at the project site, which could run off into Los Gatos Creek and surrounding areas. The project would disturb more than 1 acre of soils and would be required to comply with RWQCB general construction permit requirements and prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) with BMPs to reduce potential impacts related to erosion and loss of topsoil. Mitigation Measure BIO-7 has also been included to reduce impacts to Los Gatos Creek through construction timing restrictions, adherence to permitting regulations, and implementation of construction BMPs. Following project construction, the project site would be covered with hardscapes, which would reduce the potential for long-term erosion to occur at the project site. Based on implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-7 and required compliance with RWQCB requirements, the project would not result in substantial erosion or loss of topsoil; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

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?

As previously identified, the project site is not located in an area with potential for landslides or liquefaction to occur. According to the USGS, the project site is not located in an area of known land subsidence (USGS 2024). The new bridge crossing over Los Gatos Creek would be constructed in accordance with applicable state and local regulations including, but not limited to, the CBC and City Engineering Department requirements to avoid bank instability resulting from the project. Based on the nature of the project and required compliance with state and local requirements, the project would not result in unstable earth conditions or increased risk of landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

d) Would the project 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?

Typically, expansive soils are comprised of clay. Soils at the project site include Excelsior sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes; Westhaven loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes; and Excelsior, sandy substratum-westhaven association, flooded, 0 to 2 percent slopes (NRCS 2024). Soils at the project site do not contain clay components; therefore, the project site does not contain expansive soils, and *no impacts* would occur.

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

The project does not include construction of new restroom facilities or other structures that would require installation of a sewer system or septic tank. Therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

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

According to the USGS, the project site is underlain by surficial sediments from the Holocene era (Qa) (Dibblee et al. 2007). Due to its relatively young age, Qa has a low paleontological sensitivity. Further, the project would require minimal excavation activities with an anticipated depth of 1 to 3 feet, which

would further reduce the potential to disturb the underlying bedrock. Based on the low paleontological sensitivity of the underlying geologic unit and limited excavation activity, the project would not disturb paleontological resources; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The project would not result in the risk of loss, injury, or death as a result of seismic or other geologic stresses. Based on implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-7 and required compliance with RWQCB requirements, the project would not result in impacts related to substantial erosion. The project does not include the installation of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. In addition, based on the low paleontological sensitivity of the underlying geologic unit and limited excavation activity, the project would not disturb paleontological resources. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-7, impacts related to geology and soils would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

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

Setting

GHGs are any gases that absorb infrared radiation in the atmosphere. The primary GHGs that are emitted into the atmosphere as a result of human activities are carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), NO_X, and fluorinated gases. These are most commonly emitted through the burning of fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, and coal), agricultural practices, decay of organic waste in landfills, and a variety of other chemical reactions and industrial processes (e.g., the manufacturing of cement). CO_2 is the most abundant GHG and is estimated to represent approximately 80% to 90% of the principal GHGs that are currently affecting the earth's climate. According to the CARB, transportation (vehicle exhaust) and electricity generation are the main sources of GHGs in the state.

In October 2008, the CARB published the Climate Change Proposed Scoping Plan, which is the state's plan to achieve GHG reductions in California required by AB 32. The initial Scoping Plan included CARB-recommended GHG reductions for each emissions sector of the state's GHG inventory. The largest proposed GHG reduction recommendations were associated with improving emissions standards for light-duty vehicles, implementing the Low Carbon Fuel Standard program, implementation of energy efficiency measures in buildings and appliances, the widespread development of combined heat and power systems, and developing a renewable portfolio standard for electricity production.

Senate Bill (SB) 32 and Executive Order (EO) S-3-05 extended the state's GHG reduction goals and require CARB to regulate sources of GHGs to meet the following goals:

- Reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020;
- Reduce GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030; and
- Reduce GHG emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

AB 1279 (the California Climate Crisis Act) was signed into law in September 2022. This law established the revised GHG reduction goals including the following (California Legislative Information 2022):

- Achieve net zero GHG emissions as soon as possible, but no later than 2045;
- Maintain net negative GHG emissions thereafter (following 2045); and
- Reduce statewide anthropogenic GHG to at least 85% below 1990 levels by 2045.

The initial Scoping Plan was approved by the CARB on December 11, 2008, and the plan is updated every 5 years. The first update of the Scoping Plan was approved by the CARB on May 22, 2014, which looked past 2020 to set mid-term goals (2030–2035) toward reaching the 2050 goals. The most recent update released by the CARB is the *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* (2022 Scoping Plan), which as finalized and adopted in December 2022 (CARB 2022). The 2022 Scoping Plan lays out the strategies for achieving carbon neutrality and reduce anthropogenic (i.e., human caused) GHG emissions by 85% below 1990 levels no later than 2045, as directed by AB 1279 (CARB 2022).

Plans, policies, and guidelines have also been established at the regional and local levels to address GHG emissions and climate change effects within the city. On December 17, 2009, the SJVAPCD adopted *District Policy: Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for Stationary Source Projects Under CEQA When Serving as the Lead Agency* (SJVAPCD 2009a) and *Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under CEQA* (SJVAPCD 2009b). The guidance and policy rely on the use of performance-based standards, otherwise known as Best Performance Standards (BPS), to assess significance of project-specific GHG emissions on global climate change during the environmental review process, as required by CEQA. Projects implementing BPS would be determined to have a less-than-cumulatively-significant impact. Alternatively, demonstration of a 29% reduction in GHG emissions, from business-as-usual, is required to determine that a project would have a less-than-cumulatively significant impact.

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element* (Coalinga General Plan Chapter 5; City of Coalinga 2009a) includes a policy and two implementation measures that address GHG emissions:

> **Policy AQ5-1:** Actively seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the Planning Area.
>
> > **Implementation Measure AQ5-1.1:** The City shall implement regulations issued by the California Air Resources Board to reduce the amount of GHG emissions that could potentially occur as a result of implementation of the proposed General Plan. The City may alter implementation of these regulations as new information becomes available from the State regarding GHG emissions and thresholds to determine the significance of these emissions. This implementation program shall not be construed as to prohibit the City of Coalinga from adopting more stringent regulations to reduce GHG emissions, should the City deem them appropriate.

Implementation Measure AQ5-1.2: The City should support the development and implementation of a Community Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan. At a minimum, this Plan should incorporate and implement feasible GHG mitigation measures to achieve the following:

(a) Reduce net emissions of GHG emissions from Coalinga
(b) Reduce the net impacts of energy production
(c) Reduce the costs of energy to the City and its residents and reduce the City's vulnerability to changes in energy availability and price
(d) Increase public awareness of energy issues and potential impacts
(e) Monitor the cost and effectiveness of the City's methods to reduce GHG emissions so that the City may learn by and improve on them
(f) Any additional impacts identified as relevant and current by the City of Coalinga.

Environmental Evaluation

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

During construction, fossil fuels, electricity, and natural gas would be used by construction vehicles and equipment. Federal and state regulations in place require fuel-efficient equipment and vehicles and prohibit wasteful activities, such as diesel idling. Construction contractors, in an effort to ensure cost efficiency, would not be expected to engage in wasteful or unnecessary energy and fuel practices. Therefore, construction activities are not anticipated to result in significant emissions and construction-related impacts would be *less than significant*.

Typically, operational components of a project have the potential to generate GHG emissions from electricity and fossil fuel use. The project includes the installation of one new outdoor light that would be powered by solar energy; therefore, the project would not require any additional electricity use. The project does not include the establishment of new land uses or activities that could generate a substantial increase in vehicle trips to or from the project site or otherwise increase the use of fossil fuels. Additionally, the project would connect residents in Coalinga to activity centers such as schools, parks, a college, shopping, neighborhoods, and jobs and would provide a safe option to enable increased bicycle/pedestrian transportation use, which would allow for an overall reduction in fossil fuel use. Based on the negligible amount of electricity and fossil fuel use required for operation of the project, the project would not generate a significant amount of GHG emissions; therefore, operational impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

Based on the SJVAPCD's *Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under CEQA* (SJVAPCD 2009b), GHG emissions from development projects primarily occur through energy consumption and vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Projects implementing BPS would be determined to have a less-than-cumulatively significant impact. Alternatively, demonstration of a 29% reduction in GHG emissions, from business-as-usual, is required to determine that a project would have a less-than-cumulatively significant impact (SJVAPCD 2009b). BPS are defined as the most effective achieved-in-practice means of reducing or limiting GHG emissions from a GHG emissions source. For traditional stationary source projects, BPS include equipment type, equipment design, and operational and maintenance practices for the identified service, operation, or emissions unit class and category. For development projects, BPS focus on measures that improve energy efficiency and those that reduce VMT.

As discussed in *Impact Discussion VIII(a)*, construction activities are not anticipated to result in significant emissions. In addition, the project would be limited to the operation of a pedestrian and bicycle trail and does not include the establishment of new land uses or activities that could generate a substantial increase in GHG emissions. Further, the project would connect residents in Coalinga to activity centers such as schools, parks, a college, shopping, neighborhoods, and jobs and would provide a safe option to enable increased bicycle/pedestrian transportation use, which would allow for an overall reduction in fossil fuel use and associated GHG emissions. Therefore, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs, and potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project would not generate significant GHG emissions above existing levels and would not exceed any applicable GHG thresholds, contribute considerably to cumulatively significant GHG emissions, or conflict with plans adopted to reduce GHG emissions. Therefore, potential impacts related to GHG emissions would be less than significant and mitigation measures are not necessary.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The Hazardous Waste and Substances Site (Cortese) List is a planning tool used by the state, local agencies, and developers to comply with CEQA requirements related to the disclosure of information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) to develop at least annually an updated Cortese List. Various state and local government agencies are required to track and document hazardous material release information for the Cortese List. The California Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database tracks DTSC cleanup, permitting, enforcement, and investigation efforts at hazardous waste facilities and sites with known contamination, such as federal superfund sites, state response sites, voluntary cleanup sites, school cleanup sites, school investigation sites, and military evaluation sites (DTSC 2024). The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) GeoTracker database contains records for sites that impact, or have the potential to impact, water in California, such as Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites, Department of Defense sites, and Cleanup Program Sites (SWRCB 2024). The remaining data regarding facilities or sites identified as meeting the "Cortese List" requirements can be located on the CalEPA website (CalEPA 2024). Based on a query of the DTSC EnviroStor and SWRCB GeoTracker databases, there are no hazardous materials sites located within or adjacent to the project site (DTSC 2024; SWRCB 2024).

Environmental Evaluation

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 project would require limited quantities of hazardous substances, including gasoline, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluid, solvents, oils, paints, etc. during construction, which have the potential to result in an accidental spill or release. Construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable federal and state environmental and workplace safety laws for the handling, transport, and storage of hazardous materials, including 22 CCR Division 4.5. Operation of the project would not require the use of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials. Therefore, impacts associated with the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would be *less than significant*.

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

As previously discussed, temporary construction activities would include the use of construction equipment, vehicles, and commonly used hazardous substances, including, but not limited to, paint, solvents, oils, fuel, and gasoline. Commonly used hazardous substances within the project site would be transported, stored, and used according to regulatory requirements and existing procedures for the

handling of hazardous materials. Further, Mitigation Measure BIO-7 requires the implementation of BMPs during construction activities, which would reduce the potential for construction-related spills to occur.

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was prepared by Haro Environmental to identify known, potential or historic recognized environmental conditions (RECs) resulting from historic and/or current uses of hazardous substances or petroleum products within the project site (Haro Environmental 2024). The findings of the Phase I ESA are based on a background literature review of the project site using historic aerial photographs, topographic maps, and city directories listings and a reconnaissance-level field survey of the project site conducted on August 30, 2024. The project site was previously used as a railroad corridor and other development on the project site included two water tanks; however, both were removed from the project site by approximately 1981, and the project site is currently undeveloped with the exception of a pedestrian bridge over Los Gatos Creek. In addition, no hazardous materials or petroleum products are present within the project site. There is potential for contaminants associated with leaks and spills from the railroad track and associated railcars and/or historic application of surface chemicals in support of railroad maintenance operations to occur within the project site. In addition, there is potential for contaminants associated with treated wood to be present within the existing pedestrian bridge (Haro Environmental 2024). Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 requires soil sampling within the former railroad corridor prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities to ensure no contaminants are present within the soil. In addition, Mitigation Measure HAZ-2 requires proper disposal of wood waste associated with demolition of the existing pedestrian bridge. As described in Section III, *Air Quality*, the project site is not located in an area with potential for NOA to occur. However, ACM and LBP may be present in the existing pedestrian bridge. Mitigation Measures AQ-3 and AQ-4 have been included to require ACM and LBP testing and identify the proper protocol for the handling and removal of ACM and LBP if identified within materials proposed for demolition.

With implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-3 and AQ-4, BIO-7, and HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, the project would not 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; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

c) Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?

The nearest school is Coalinga Middle School, located approximately 0.55 mile northeast of the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school, and *no impacts* would occur.

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

Based on a query of the DTSC EnviroStor and SWRCB GeoTracker databases, there are no previously recorded hazardous materials sites located within or adjacent to the project site (DTSC 2024; SWRCB 2024). The project site is not located on or adjacent to a site that is on a list of hazardous materials sites pursuant to California Government Code Section 65962.5; therefore, the project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment related to disturbance in a hazardous materials site, and *no impacts* would occur.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

The project site is not located within an airport land use plan and the nearest airport is Coalinga Municipal Airport, located 2.7 miles northeast of the project site. Therefore, the project would not result in airport-related safety or noise hazards, and *no impacts* would occur.

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

Construction activities would require the implementation of temporary traffic controls along Gregory Way; however, the project would not require the full closure of any proximate roadways, which would maintain emergency and other vehicle access within the project area during short-term construction activities. Following the completion of construction activities, temporary traffic controls would be removed, and the project site would be restored to preconstruction conditions. Therefore, the project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan during construction or operation, and impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

The project site is not located within a state responsibility area (SRA) or within land classified as a very high fire hazard severity zone (FHSZ) (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection [CAL FIRE] 2024). The project does not propose the development of any structures or buildings that could increase the potential for a wildfire to occur in the immediate or surrounding area; therefore, the project would not expose nearby residents to wildfire, and impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project would not result in significant hazards related to the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Potential impacts associated with disturbance of NOA, ACM, LBP, and other potential contaminants would be mitigated to less than significant through implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-3 and AQ-4, and BIO-7, and HAZ-1 and HAZ-2. The project is not located within 0.25 mile of a school, within or adjacent to a previously recorded hazardous materials site, or within 2 miles of an airport. The project would not impair implementation of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan or expose people or structures to a significant risk involving wildfires.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measures AQ-3 and AQ-4 and BIO-7.

HAZ-1 Prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities within the former railroad track alignment, soil sampling for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, total petroleum hydrocarbons, polychlorinated biphenyls, organochlorine pesticides, chlorinated herbicides, and metals should be conducted to determine if contaminants are present. If petroleum hydrocarbons, metals, polyaromatic hydrocarbons, or chlorinated herbicides are identified, the soils shall be handled and disposed of in accordance with state and local regulations.

HAZ-2 The wood waste associated with demolition of the existing pedestrian bridge shall be disposed of in accordance with state and local regulations, including Assembly Bill 332.

X. Hydrology and Water Quality

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water or groundwater quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
(i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☒	☐	☐
(ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☒	☐	☐
(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

Coalinga is located within the Arroyo Pasajero watershed, which encompasses a drainage area of approximately 530 square miles extending from the Diablo Range to the west into the San Joaquin Valley to the east. Warthan, Los Gatos, Jacalitos, Coalmine Canyon, and Arroyo Pasajero Creeks are located within the City's Sphere of Influence, flowing past the city in a northeasterly direction. Los Gatos and Warthan Creeks flow easterly out of the southern hills of the Diablo Range and converge at the eastern edge of the Coalinga city limits, then form the Arroyo Pasajero. Jacalitos Creek converges with Los Gatos Creek approximately 5 miles east outside of the city limits. In the far southeast corner of the project area, Zapato Chino Creek flows through the Palvarado Gap into the San Joaquin Valley. These creeks all flow northeast within the Arroyo Pasajero watershed (City of Coalinga 2009b). The project site is located over Los Gatos Creek.

The SWRCB and nine RWQCBs regulate the water quality of surface water and groundwater bodies throughout California. The proposed project is within the jurisdiction of the Central Valley RWQCB.

Construction activities that disturb 1 acre or more must obtain coverage under the SWRCB Construction General Permit, which requires the preparation of a SWPPP to minimize on-site sedimentation and erosion.

For planning purposes, the flood event most often used to delineate areas subject to flooding is the 100-year flood, which is a flood event of a magnitude that would be equal to or exceeded at an average of once during a 100-year period. Floodways are defined as stream channels plus adjacent floodplains that must be kept free of encroachment as much as possible so that 100-year floods can be carried without substantial increases (no more than 1 foot) in flood elevations. According to FEMA FIRM panels 06019C3213F and 06019C3214F (effective date 08/30/2012), the proposed trail alignment is located within shaded Zone X, a 500-year flood zone; Zone AE, a 100-year flood zone; and Zone X, an area of minimal flood hazard (see Figure 4) (FEMA 2024).

Environmental Evaluation

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

The project site intersects Los Gatos Creek, and construction of the new bridge would require approximately 200 cubic yards of cut and 200 cubic yards of fill activity within the creek. In addition, the project would require ground-disturbing activities and equipment and vehicle use during project construction, which has the potential to result in erosion or other pollutants that could run off from the project site to surrounding areas. The project would disturb more than 1 acre of soils and would be required to comply with the Central Valley RWQCB general construction permit requirements and prepare and implement a SWPPP with BMPs. Mitigation Measure BIO-7 has also been included to reduce impacts to Los Gatos Creek through adherence to permitting regulations and implementation of construction BMPs. Based on implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-7 and required compliance with RWQCB requirements, the project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

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?

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation provides domestic water service to Coalinga. The major source of water is the Central Valley Project through the Coalinga Canal. The *Final Master Environmental Impact Report for the City of Coalinga 2025 General Plan Update* (Coalinga General Plan FEIR; City of Coalinga 2009b) concluded that groundwater in the area is unsuitable for domestic water use and is only marginally suitable for agricultural uses given the elevated concentrations of total dissolved solids. Water use for the project would be limited to the use of water from off-site sources for dust suppression during construction activities and infrequent water use for new landscaping. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially increase the use of groundwater.

The project would develop an approximately 1,917-foot-long pedestrian trail and associated improvements, which would result in a marginal increase in impervious surface at the project site. The proposed trail segment would be linear and distributed over approximately 0.36 mile; therefore, the project would not interfere with groundwater recharge or otherwise impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin, and impacts would be *less than significant.*

c) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

c-i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

As discussed in *Impact Discussion X(a)*, the project would require ground-disturbing activities and equipment and vehicle use during project construction, which has the potential to result in erosion or other pollutants that could run off from the site to surrounding areas. The project would disturb more than 1 acre of soils and would be required to comply with the Central Valley RWQCB general construction permit requirements and prepare and implement a SWPPP with BMPs. In addition, Mitigation Measure BIO-7 has been included to reduce impacts to Los Gatos Creek through adherence to permitting regulations and implementation of construction BMPs. Based on implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-7 and required compliance with RWQCB requirements, the project would not result in substantial erosion or siltation; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

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

The project would result in a marginal increase in impervious surface area at the project site. The proposed trail would be cradled by 2-foot-wide unpaved shoulders on each side of the trail segment, which would reduce the amount of new impermeable surfaces associated with the project. Additionally, the proposed trail design would maintain drainage patterns within the project area and would control long-term surface runoff and potential flood flows within the project area. Because the new pathway would be linear and distributed over 0.36 mile, the project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area or result in flooding on- or off-site; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

c-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?

The proposed trail would be linear and distributed over 0.36 mile; therefore, the project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, result in the creation or contribution of runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing stormwater drainage systems, or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Project construction activities would be required to prepare and submit a SWPPP, which would be administered throughout project construction. The SWPPP would be required to incorporate BMPs to ensure that potential water quality impacts during construction from soil erosion would be sufficiently reduced. In addition, Mitigation Measure BIO-7 has been included to reduce impacts on Los Gatos Creek through adherence to permitting regulations and implementation of construction BMPs. Based on project design, implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-7, and required compliance with RWQCB requirements, the project would not create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

c-iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

According to FEMA FIRM panels 06019C3213F and 06019C3214F (effective date 08/30/2012), the proposed trail alignment is located within shaded Zone X, a 500-year flood zone; Zone AE, a 100-year flood zone; and Zone X, an area of minimal flood hazard (see Figure 4) (FEMA 2024). The proposed trail would be cradled by 2-foot-wide unpaved shoulders on each side of the trail segment. This design would continue to allow for drainage within the proposed project area and would reduce potential hazards related to flood events in the project area. Therefore, based on proposed project design, the project would not impede or redirect flood flows and potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

According to FEMA FIRM panels 06019C3213F and 06019C3214F (effective date 08/30/2012), the proposed trail alignment is located within shaded Zone X, a 500-year flood zone; Zone AE, a 100-year flood zone; and Zone X, an area of minimal flood hazard (see Figure 4) (FEMA 2024). The project site is not located in an area that would be subject to tsunami risk and is not located in proximity to any impounded body of water that would be subject to seiche. The project site is not within a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zone and would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

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

As discussed in *Impact Discussion X(b)*, the project would not decrease groundwater supply or interfere with groundwater recharge in a manner that would impede sustainable management of the groundwater basin. The project site is under the jurisdiction of the Central Valley RWQCB and would be subject to *The Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the California Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Valley Region* (Basin Plan; RWQCB 2019), which establishes water quality objectives for beneficial uses of water resources within the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins. The project would be required to comply with the Central Valley RWQCB general construction permit requirements. In addition, Mitigation Measure BIO-7 has been included to reduce impacts to Los Gatos Creek through adherence to permitting regulations and implementation of construction BMPs. Based on implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-7 and required compliance with RWQCB requirements, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan. The project would be consistent with sustainable management of the San Joaquin Valley groundwater basin and the Basin Plan; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Conclusion

The project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to hydrology and water quality with preparation of a SWPPP and implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-7.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-7.

XI. Land Use and Planning

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The proposed trail alignment is located on land within the City's OS and RMD land use and zoning designations. Land uses surrounding the project site include previously disturbed and undeveloped land and Los Gatos Creek to the north and south and single-family residences to the east and west. The proposed trail alignment occurs within an abandoned segment of the UPRR corridor.

The Coalinga General Plan identifies several policies applicable to the project (City of Coalinga 2009a):

> **Policy AQ2-1:** The City shall encourage and support development projects that propose alternatives to standard vehicle trips.
>
> **Policy AQ2-2:** The City shall support upgrades and improvements to the transportation system that benefit bicycle, pedestrian, and other non-vehicular forms of circulation.
>
> **Policy C1-6:** The City shall encourage the use of transportation alternatives that reduce the use of personal vehicles.
>
> **Policy C2-1:** Promote non-motorized bike and pedestrian circulation facilities to serve all areas of the City and link regional systems, with priority coordination with school, park, transit, and major facilities.
>
> **Policy OSC1-3:** Protect special-status plant and animal species and their habitat in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations.
>
> **Policy OSC2-1:** Identify and protect significant historic and archaeological resources in the City of Coalinga.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

The purpose of the project is to connect areas on the periphery of the city to downtown areas. The project does not propose project elements or components that would physically divide surrounding areas and uses or an established community. The project would be consistent with the general level of development in the project vicinity and would not create, close, or impede any existing public or private roads, or create any other barriers to movement or accessibility in the city. Therefore, the proposed project would not physically divide an established community, and *no impacts* would occur.

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

The Coalinga General Plan identifies goals, policies, and implementation measures for the protection of natural resources, including scenic resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, mineral resources, open space, and water resources. Mitigation measures have been identified to avoid and/or minimize potential project impacts associated with air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, and noise, which would be consistent with the *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element* (Chapter 5), *Open Space and Conservation Element* (Chapter 3), and *Circulation Element* (Chapter 4) (City of Coalinga 2009a). With implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-4, BIO-1 through BIO-7, CR-1 and CR-2, HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, and N-1 through N-2, the project would be consistent with standards and policies set forth in the Coalinga General Plan, SJVAPCD regulations, and other land use policies applicable to the project. In addition, the project would be required to be consistent with standards set forth by the Coalinga Fire Department and the City Public Works Department; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Conclusion

The project would not result in the division of an established community and the project would be consistent with local and regional land use designations, plans, and policies with implementation of identified mitigation measures. Therefore, potential impacts related to land use and planning would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-4, BIO-1 through BIO-7, CR-1 and CR-2, HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, and N-1 through N-2.

XII. Mineral Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Coalinga's history is deeply rooted in the minerals and other extracted natural resources known to occur in the area. Extracted natural resources include fossil fuels, such as oil and coal; aggregate products, such as sand and gravel; and other metals and minerals. Oil development in the Coalinga area began as early as 1864, when efforts were made to produce oil from hand-dug oil wells. Today, extensive oil recovery

operations are located mostly to the north of the city. Oil companies such as Chevron USA, Union Oil Company, Shell Production, and Santa Fe Energy have substantial land holdings in the area. Coal, in the form of lignite, occurs northwest and southwest of Coalinga but has not been commercially mined for 100 years (City of Coalinga 2009a).

Asbestos is surface mined in large quantities approximately 20 miles northwest of Coalinga. Serpentine rock, which covers approximately 2,000 square miles of the city, has the potential to contain up to 50% of asbestos. Total reserves are not known, but the deposit has been estimated to contain more than 100 million tons of ore. This area is one of the nation's principal producers of asbestos and contains one of the world's largest deposits of short-fiber asbestos (City of Coalinga 2009a).

Environmental Evaluation

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

The project site is not zoned or designated for mineral extraction. The project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state nor would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

b) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

As discussed above, the project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource nor the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, and *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

The project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to mineral resources and mitigation measures are not required.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

XIII. Noise

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
(a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Community noise levels are typically measured in terms of A-weighted decibels (dBA). A-weighting is a frequency correction that correlates overall sound pressure levels with the frequency response of the human ear. Equivalent Noise Level (Leq) is the average noise level on an energy basis for a specific time period. The duration of noise and the time of day at which it occurs are important factors in determining the impact of noise on communities. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) and Day-Night Average Level (Ldn) account for the time of day and duration of noise generation. These indicators are time-weighted average values equal to the amount of acoustic energy equivalent to a time-varying sound over a 24-hour period. Primary sources of noise at the project site include noise from surrounding residential and commercial land uses and noise from vehicles on adjacent roadways.

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element* (Coalinga General Plan Chapter 5) provides a policy framework for addressing potential long-term noise impacts in the planning process and includes noise compatibility standards for noise exposure by land use as shown in Table 3 (City of Coalinga 2009a).

Table 3. Acceptable Noise Levels by Land Use

Land Use	Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) or Day-Night Level (Ldn), dB							
	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85
Residential: Low-Density Single-Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes								
Residential: Multi-Family								
Transient Lodging: Motels, Hotels								
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes								
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters								
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports								
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks								
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries								
Office Buildings, Business, Commercial and Professional								

Normally Acceptable		Specified land use is satisfactory, based on the assumption that any buildings are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.
Conditionally Acceptable		New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in design.
Normally Acceptable		New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in design.
Clearly Acceptable		New construction or development should generally be discouraged.

Nature of the noise environment where the CNEL or Ldn Level is:

Below 55 dB: Relatively quiet suburban or urban areas, no arterial streets within one block, no freeways within 0.25 mile.

55–65 dB: Mostly somewhat noisy urban areas, near but not directly adjacent to high volumes of traffic.

65–75 dB: Very noisy urban areas near arterials, freeways, or airports.

75+ dB: Extremely noisy urban areas adjacent to freeways or under airport traffic patterns. Hearing damage with constant exposure outdoors.

Source: City of Coalinga (2009a).

Note: dB = decibels

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Existing ambient noise sources in the project area consist of vehicle noise along proximate roadways and residential noise from surrounding residential land uses. During project construction, noise from construction activities may intermittently dominate the noise environment in the immediate project area. The project would require the use of typical construction equipment (e.g., dozers, excavators, etc.) during proposed construction activities. According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), noise from standard construction equipment generally ranges from 80 dBA to 85 dBA at 50 feet from the source, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Construction Equipment Noise Emission Levels

Equipment Type	Typical Noise Level (dBA) 50 Feet from Source
Concrete Mixer, Dozer, Excavator, Jackhammer, Man Lift, Paver, Scraper	85
Heavy Truck	84
Crane, Mobile	83
Concrete Pump	82
Backhoe, Compactor	80

Source: FHWA (2018).

There are noise-sensitive residences located adjacent to each end of the proposed trail segment. Construction-related noise would be short-term, would be intermittent, and would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise within the project area. Mitigation Measures N-1 and N-2 have been identified to minimize potential impacts related to construction noise. These measures include adherence to the City's construction work hours, implementation of noise control measures for stationary equipment, and proper maintenance of all equipment to avoid unnecessary increased noise levels. Construction-related noise would be variable, temporary, and limited in duration and nature. Therefore, potential construction-related impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

The project would result in the development of a new bicycle and pedestrian pathway in an area where there are no existing public recreational facilities. This would result in a minor increase in noise levels associated with users of the new trail; however, trail usership would not be expected to result in a noticeable increase in the ambient noise environment or produce noise levels above typical residential uses. The project does not propose any uses or features that would generate a new significant permanent source of mobile or stationary noise sources. Ambient noise levels at the project site and in surrounding areas after project implementation would not be significantly different than existing levels. Therefore, potential operational noise impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

The project would require the use of construction tools and equipment for the construction of the proposed trail segment. The project would not include pile-driving or other high-impact activities that would generate substantial groundborne noise or groundborne vibration during construction. Standard construction equipment would generate some groundborne noise and vibration during ground disturbance activities; however, these activities would be limited in duration and consistent with other standard construction activities. In addition, any groundborne noise or vibration generated by short-term construction activities would be limited to the immediate work area and not anticipated to disturb nearby residential land uses. Operation of the project does not include new features that could generate groundborne noise. Therefore, impacts related to groundborne vibration would be *less than significant*.

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 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

The project site is not located within an airport land use plan and the nearest airport is Coalinga Municipal Airport, located 2.7 miles northeast of the project site. The project site is not located within or adjacent to

an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or private airstrip; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

With implementation of Mitigation Measures N-1 and N-2, the project would not generate a substantial increase in temporary or permanent ambient noise levels or groundborne noise. The project site is not located within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of an airport. Therefore, with implementation of the identified mitigation, potential impacts related to noise would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

N-1 During project construction, construction activities shall be limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. in accordance with the *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element*. Construction equipment maintenance shall be limited to the same hours. Construction activities that do not require the use of mechanical equipment are not subject to these restrictions.

Stationary construction equipment that generates noise that exceeds 65 A-weighted decibels (dBA) at the project boundaries shall be shielded with the most modern noise control devices (e.g., mufflers, lagging, motor enclosures). Impact tools (e.g., jackhammers, pavement breakers, rock drills) used for project construction shall be hydraulically or electrically powered wherever possible to avoid noise associated with compressed air exhaust from pneumatically powered tools. Where use of pneumatic tools is unavoidable, an exhaust muffler on the compressed air exhaust shall be used.

N-2 All equipment shall be properly maintained to ensure that no additional noise, due to worn or improperly maintained parts, is generated. Stockpiling and vehicle staging areas shall be located as far as practical from sensitive noise receptors. Every effort shall be made to create the greatest distance between noise sources and sensitive receptors during construction activities.

XIV. Population and Housing

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The *City of Coalinga Housing Element* assesses the current and projected housing needs of the community and identifies available land and housing programs to provide adequate housing to meet those needs. The City's Housing Element was updated in 2016 as a part of the *Fresno Multi-Jurisdictional 2015-2023 Housing Element* with 11 of the 15 other cities in Fresno County, which allowed for countywide housing issues and needs to be more effectively addressed at the regional level rather than just at the local level (County of Fresno et al. 2016). Regional efforts also provide the opportunity for the local governments in the county to work together to accommodate the Regional Housing Needs Allocation assigned to the Fresno County region.

Coalinga had a population of 17,024 in 2022 and Fresno County had a total population of over 1,015,359 in 2020 (U.S. Census Bureau 2022).

The Coalinga General Plan states that the population of Coalinga could reach build-out by the year 2025. This population growth may be accompanied by the development of 14,719 additional dwelling units. The Coalinga General Plan goals, policies, and implementation measures aim to accommodate the city's projected level of growth while avoiding harm to the environment and improving the overall quality of life in Coalinga.

Environmental Evaluation

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

The project does not include the construction of new residences, businesses, or other uses that could induce direct or indirect population growth in the city. The purpose of the proposed project is to construct one segment of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system identified in the Coalinga TMP to provide active transportation facilities to existing residents in the city of Coalinga. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not result in any components that could otherwise induce population growth in the city. Proposed construction activities have the potential to generate short-term employment opportunities; however, project construction is expected to use workers from the local employment force and would not require workers to relocate to the project area. The project would be necessary to provide existing residents with active transportation opportunities; therefore, the project would not result in unplanned or substantial population growth, and impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

The project would not displace existing housing or necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

The project would not result in potentially significant impacts related to population or housing and mitigation measures are not required.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

XV. Public Services

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(c) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Fire protection in the city is provided by the Coalinga Fire Department, which is staffed by 20 full-time firefighters and located at 300 West Elm Avenue. The City also has “mutual aid” and “instant aid” agreements with the Fresno County Fire Protection District. Under the instant aid agreement, the Fresno County Fire Protection District automatically responds to critical facility fires in Coalinga. Critical facilities (i.e., those facilities which are occupied) in the city include schools, convalescent homes, prisons, and the hospital. In return, the Coalinga Fire Department responds to any fire within 0.5 mile of the City’s incorporated boundary.

Police protection is provided by the Coalinga Police Department, which is staffed by 15 sworn officers and supported by 10 full- and part-time non-sworn personnel. The Coalinga Police Department is located in the city center at 270 North Sixth Street.

The proposed project is located within the Coalinga-Huron Unified School District (CHUSD), which includes five elementary schools, two middle schools, two continuation high schools, a community day school, and one senior high school. All of the CHUSD facilities are located in Coalinga except for one elementary school, a middle school, and a continuation high school, which are located in the city of Huron. The Coalinga-Huron Recreation and Park District provides recreational facilities to the cities of Coalinga and Huron and the surrounding rural areas. The two developed parks in Coalinga include Keck Park and George E. Olsen Memorial Park.

The City charges development impact fees to require proposed developments to fund wastewater treatment and disposal; water treatment, storage, and distribution; police services; fire services; streets; storm drainage; parks; community facilities; and habitat conservation. In addition, residential and

commercial uses are subject to Coalinga-Huron Recreation and Park District impact fees. Residential, commercial, and rental self-storage developments are also subject to CHUSD impact fees. Lastly, all residential and non-residential developments (with the exception of educational and government facilities) are subject to Fresno Council of Governments transportation impact fees. The majority of these fees are scaled to the size and/or capacity of the proposed development, so that the fee reflects a fair-share contribution for the additional public services it would utilize (City of Coalinga 2018).

Environmental Evaluation

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?

The project area would continue to be served by the Coalinga Fire Department, which is located approximately 1.13 miles southwest of the project site. The project would not facilitate unplanned or substantial population growth in a manner that would increase demand on existing fire protection services. The project would not require new or physically altered governmental facilities for fire protection services; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

Police protection?

The project area would continue to be served by the Coalinga Police Department, which is located approximately 1 mile southwest of the project site. The project would not facilitate unplanned or substantial population growth in a manner that would increase demand on existing police protection services. The project would not require new or physically altered governmental facilities for police protection services; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

Schools?

As discussed in Section XIV, *Population and Housing*, the project would not induce direct or indirect population growth. The project would not result in an increase of school-aged children in the area; therefore, the project would not create an increased demand on local schools, and *no impacts* would occur.

Parks?

As discussed in Section XIV, *Population and Housing*, the project would not induce direct population growth. The project would not result in a population increase that could result in deterioration of existing recreation facilities or require the expansion of new facilities. Further, the project would facilitate the construction of a new perimeter trail and spur system that may ultimately reduce demand on other existing recreational facilities in the city. Therefore, the project would not require the construction of new or physically altered public recreation facilities, and *no impacts* would occur.

Other public facilities?

As discussed in Section XIV, *Population and Housing*, the project would not induce direct population growth. The project does not propose features that would significantly increase the demand on public facilities, such as libraries or post offices, or result in the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

The project would not increase demand for fire or police protection services, schools, parks, libraries, or other public facilities; therefore, no impacts related to public services would occur as a result of the project.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

XVI. Recreation

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The Coalinga-Huron Recreation and Park District provides recreational facilities to the cities of Coalinga and Huron and the surrounding rural areas. The two developed parks in the city of Coalinga include Keck Park, located approximately 1.3 miles southwest of the project site, and George E. Olsen Memorial Park, located approximately 0.7 mile south of the project site. There are no existing recreational facilities located within the project site or in the immediate vicinity of the project site.

The City charges development impact fees to require proposed developments to fund wastewater treatment and disposal; water treatment, storage, and distribution; police services; fire services; streets; storm drainage; parks; community facilities; and habitat conservation. In addition, residential and commercial uses are subject to Coalinga-Huron Recreation and Park District impact fees (City of Coalinga 2018).

Environmental Evaluation

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?

Construction of the proposed project would not result in any components that could otherwise induce population growth in a manner that could increase the use of existing recreational facilities in the city. Further, the project would facilitate the construction of a new perimeter trail and spur system that may ultimately reduce demand on other existing recreational facilities in the city. Therefore, the project would not 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, and *no impacts* would occur.

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?

As evaluated throughout this IS/MND, the project has the potential to result in adverse impacts related to Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Noise. Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-4, BIO-1 through BIO-7, CR-1 and CR-2, HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, and N-1 and N-2 have been included to avoid and/or minimize adverse impacts to less-than-significant levels. Therefore, with implementation of the identified mitigation measures, adjustment and relocation of utility infrastructure would not result in adverse impacts to the environment, and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with development of the proposed recreational bicycle and pedestrian trail would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-4, BIO-1 through BIO-7, CR-1 and CR-2, HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, and N-1 and N-2.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-4, BIO-1 through BIO-7, CR-1 and CR-2, HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, and N-1 and N-2.

XVII. Transportation

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

Setting

In 2013 SB 743 was signed into law with the intent to "more appropriately balance the needs of congestion management with statewide goals related to infill development, promotion of public health through active transportation, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions" and required the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research to identify new metrics for identifying and mitigating transportation impacts within CEQA. As a result, in December 2018, the California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted updates to the State CEQA Guidelines. The revisions included new requirements related to the implementation of SB 743 and identified VMT per capita, VMT per employee, and net VMT as new metrics for transportation analysis under CEQA (as detailed in Section 15064.3(b)). Since July 1, 2020, the newly adopted VMT criteria for determining significance of transportation impacts was required to be implemented statewide.

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Circulation Element* (Coalinga General Plan Chapter 4) identifies goals, policies, and implementation measures to guide short- and long-range decision-making by the community (City of Coalinga 2009a). Applicable goals, policies, and implementation measures to the project include, but are not limited to, the following:

> **Goal C1:** A balanced, safe, and efficient circulation system that includes cars, public transportation, bicycles, and pedestrians while accommodating future growth, maintaining acceptable Levels of Service.
>
> > **Policy C1-6:** The City shall encourage the use of transportation alternatives that reduce the use of personal vehicles.
>
> **Goal C2:** A network of multi-use recreational trails along Los Gatos and Warthan Creeks with inner City and regional connections for use by local residents and visitors.
>
> > **Policy C2-1:** Promote non-motorized bike and pedestrian circulation facilities to serve all areas of the City and link regional systems, with priority coordination with school, park, transit, and major facilities.

> **Goal C3:** Create a system of pedestrian and bicycle routes and transit-related facilities that provide an efficient alternative to automobile transportation.
>
> > **Policy C3-1:** Propose the installation of additional, distinctive transit stops at key activity areas and encourage covered shelters at new stops that are linked to safe pedestrian and bicycle routes.

The adopted Coalinga ATP advances the three goals detailed above and identifies improvements for the City's active transportation network. The Coalinga ATP identifies recommended trail facilities within and/or near the locations of the currently proposed trail segment (City of Coalinga 2017a).

Environmental Evaluation

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

The project includes the design, construction, and operation of one segment of the City's planned 8.8-mile perimeter trail and spur system identified in the Coalinga TMP using ATP funding. The project would be consistent with the goals and policies identified in the Coalinga General Plan related to the development of multi-use trails and bicycle infrastructure to reduce the use of personal vehicles and provide safe recreational opportunities for residents. The project would be consistent with the proposed active transportation network improvements detailed in the Coalinga General Plan, ATP, and TMP. Therefore, the project would not conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system and impacts would be *less than significant.*

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

The project does not include the establishment of new uses or activities that could substantially increase vehicle trips to and from the project site. The purpose of the proposed project is to facilitate the construction of a bicycle and pedestrian trail to increase mobility and active transportation throughout the city; therefore, the project may ultimately reduce VMT in the city, and impacts related to VMT would be *less than significant.*

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 proposed trail segment would include a 14-foot-wide shared-use bicycle and pedestrian trail and would consist of 10-foot-wide, paved AC between 2 feet of unpaved shoulders on both sides of the trail. The trail would be positioned away from the nearest roadways but with connectivity at key intersections to existing sidewalks and Class II and III bicycle routes on existing roads near the perimeter trail. Signage would be installed to alert trail users to places where the trail would interface with existing roads and destinations. The project has been designed to minimize potential safety hazards and restrict incompatible uses (e.g., all-terrain vehicles [ATVs]); therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

Construction activities would require the implementation of temporary traffic controls along Gregory Way; however, no full road closures are proposed and the project area would remain accessible during construction of the proposed trail segment. Following construction, the project would not result in any

road closures or otherwise impede emergency access throughout the city. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project would not alter existing transportation facilities, result in the generation of substantial additional trips or VMT, or result in inadequate emergency access. The project has been designed to minimize potential safety hazards and restrict incompatible uses (e.g., ATVs). Therefore, potential impacts related to transportation would be less than significant and mitigation measures are not necessary.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources

	Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	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:				
	(i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☐	☐	☒
	(ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

Approved in 2014, AB 52 added tribal cultural resources to the categories of resources that must be evaluated under CEQA. Tribal cultural resources are defined as either of the following:

1) Sites, features, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
    a. Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the CRHR; or
    b. Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k).

2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in PRC Section 5024.1(c). In applying these criteria

for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.

Recognizing that tribes have expertise with regard to their tribal history and practices, AB 52 requires lead agencies to provide notice to tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project if they have requested notice of projects proposed within that area. If the tribe requests consultation within 30 days upon receipt of the notice, the lead agency must consult with the tribe regarding the potential for adverse impacts on tribal cultural resources as a result of a project. Consultation may include discussing the type of environmental review necessary, the presence and/or significance of tribal cultural resources, the level of significance of a project's impacts on the tribal cultural resources, and available project alternatives and mitigation measures recommended by the tribe to avoid or lessen potential impacts on tribal cultural resources.

Environmental Evaluation

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

a-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)?

The project site includes one 1,917-foot-long proposed trail segment in the northern portion of the city. The proposed trail alignment occurs within an abandoned segment of the UPRR corridor and consists of predominantly undeveloped and disturbed areas, and existing development along the trail alignment is limited to a pedestrian bridge over Los Gatos Creek. Due to existing damage and safety concerns, the existing bridge will be replaced with a new pedestrian bridge. Based on the findings of the 2021 and 2024 HRERs, the existing pedestrian bridge is not identified as a historical resource and there are no other historical resources located within the project site; therefore, removal of this bridge would not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, and *no impacts* would occur.

a-ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

The City sent notification of a consultation opportunity to 15 tribes identified in a Native American Contact List from the NAHC regarding this project on August 21, 2024. Only one tribe, the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe, has requested consultation notification from the City pursuant to AB 52. Additionally, a response was received from the Table Mountain Rancheria on September 3, 2024, indicating the project site is beyond the Table Mountain Rancheria's area of interest. No other responses or requests for consultation pursuant to AB 52 were received. As previously discussed in Section V, *Cultural Resources*, the project site is within the known range of the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe. Mitigation Measure CR-1 requires coordination with representatives from the Santa Rosa

Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe to conduct cultural resource awareness training for all construction personnel. The project site consists of previous disturbance associated with grading, which reduces the potential for intact archaeological resources to be present within proposed areas of disturbance. Additionally, Mitigation Measure CR-2 requires that in the unlikely event that previously unidentified cultural resources are uncovered during proposed ground-disturbing activities, all work shall cease within the vicinity of the find until a qualified archaeologist is retained to evaluate the significance of the find and determine the need for further study. The project would also be required to comply with CHSC Section 7050.5, which outlines the protocol for the unanticipated discovery of human remains. CHSC Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98. Based on the implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2 as identified in Section V, *Cultural Resources*, the project would not result in disturbance to tribal cultural resources; therefore, impacts related to disturbance of tribal cultural resources would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

Conclusion

Based on implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2 and required compliance with CHSC Section 7050.5, the project would not result in adverse impacts to known or unknown tribal cultural resources. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2, impacts related to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2.

XIX. Utilities and Service Systems

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The City controls and administers the wastewater system for both domestic and industrial sewage. The oldest portions of the City's wastewater collection system were constructed in the first half of the twentieth century to serve what is now the central portion of the city. As the city has grown, the collection system has been extended to serve new development. The collection system currently serves all developed areas within the city limits. Maintenance of the City's sewer system is financed by sewer charges, and extension of sewer mains to new development is paid for by the developer. The City owns and operates a wastewater treatment plant under RWQCB Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 94-184. There are no significant industrial users currently discharging into the wastewater treatment plant. The wastewater treatment plant is located at the confluence of Los Gatos and Warthan Creeks, approximately 1 mile east of the city.

The City is one of only three local jurisdictions in California that owns and operates a natural gas distribution system. The city has over 35 miles of gas lines, which were upgraded substantially after the 1983 earthquake. Between 200 and 210 million cubic feet of gas per year are distributed to 3,100 customers.

Currently, the City subcontracts its solid waste collection and disposal services within the city limits. The Coalinga Disposal Site, operated by the County, is located 1 mile south of the city adjacent to SR 118. This landfill serves the cities of Coalinga and Huron, as well as the rural areas of southwestern Fresno County. Currently, the Coalinga Disposal Site averages 50 tons per day with a maximum daily permitted capacity of 100 tons per day; the city generates approximately 20 tons per day. The landfill is expected to serve the Coalinga region for the next 35 to 40 years. Once the landfill has reached capacity, local solid waste will be taken to the regional county landfill on American Avenue, approximately 45 miles east of the city. This landfill is presently expanding to 440 acres in order to accommodate regional growth (City of Coalinga 2009a).

Environmental Evaluation

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

The project would require relocation of existing City water and gas utility infrastructure and removal of an abandoned oil pipeline for construction of the proposed pedestrian bridge. In addition, a new connection to the existing water line would be installed under the trail to provide irrigation for the trees at the roundabout. Proposed utility relocation and installation would be occur within the footprint of the proposed project. As evaluated throughout this IS/MND, the project has the potential to result in adverse impacts related to Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Noise. Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-4, BIO-1 through BIO-7, CR-1 and CR-2, HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, and N-1 and N-2 have been included to avoid and/or minimize adverse

impacts to less-than-significant levels. Therefore, with implementation of the identified mitigation measures, relocation and connection of utility infrastructure would not result in adverse impacts to the environment, and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

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

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation provides domestic water service to the City. The major source of water is the Central Valley Project through the Coalinga Canal. The project would be consistent with existing and planned levels and types of development in the project area and would not create new or expanded water supply entitlements. Short-term construction activities would require limited amounts of water for dust suppression and other ancillary uses, which would be supplied by the City. Operational water demands would be limited to maintenance of proposed landscaping which would be supplied by the City. The City plans to use a native, drought-tolerant seed mix to reduce overall water demand. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

c) Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

The project does not include new connections to wastewater treatment facilities; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

d) Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Construction activities would result in the generation of limited solid waste materials, and no significant long-term increase in solid waste would occur. The City would install trash receptacles along the proposed trail and would service those trash receptacles. Local landfills have adequate permitted capacity to serve the project and the project does not propose to generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

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

The project would not result in a substantial increase in waste generation during project construction or operation. Construction waste disposal would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-4, BIO-1 through BIO-7, CR-1 and CR-2, HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, and N-1 and N-2 have been included to avoid and/or minimize adverse impacts related to installation of utility infrastructure to less-than-significant levels. The project would not result in significant increased demands on water, wastewater, or stormwater infrastructure and facilities. No substantial increase in solid waste generation would occur. Therefore, potential impacts to utilities and service systems would be less than significant and mitigation measures are not necessary.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-4, BIO-1 through BIO-7, CR-1 and CR-2, HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, and N-1 and N-2.

XX. Wildfire

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

Setting

In central California, the fire season usually extends from roughly May through October; however, recent events indicate that wildfire behavior, frequency, and duration of the fire season are changing in California. FHSZs are defined by CAL FIRE based on the presence of fire-prone vegetation, climate, topography, assets at risk (e.g., high population centers), and a fire protection agency's ability to provide service to the area. Based on the CAL FIRE FHSZ Map, Coalinga is located in a local responsibility area (LRA) (CAL FIRE 2024).

The *City of Coalinga General Plan 2005-2025 Safety, Air Quality and Noise Element* (Coalinga General Plan Chapter 5) addresses potential safety concerns related to wildland fires and includes goals and policies associated with wildfire threats (City of Coalinga 2009a):

> **Goal S1:** A safe community that ensures the protection and well-being of its residents.
>
> > **Policy S1-1:** The City shall maintain its emergency preparedness, including evacuation procedures, to address potential manmade and natural disasters in order to guarantee the safety of, and accessibility to, all its residents. Procedures shall be developed in coordination with local, State, and Federal emergency operations and Plans.

Goal S2: Minimize loss of life, structures, and environment that may result from natural and man-made disasters.

Policy S2-1: The City shall ensure that developments, structures, and public facilities are sited within consideration to safety.

Policy S2-5: The City shall ensure new development in high fire risk areas is carefully sited and configured.

Environmental Evaluation

a) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The project site is not located within an SRA or within land classified as a very high FHSZ (CAL FIRE 2024). Construction activities would require the implementation of temporary traffic controls along Gregory Way; however, the project would not require the full closure of any proximate roadways, which would maintain emergency and other vehicle access within the project area during short-term construction activities. Following the completion of construction activities, temporary traffic controls would be removed, and the project site would be restored to preconstruction conditions. Therefore, the project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan during construction or operation, and impacts would be *less than significant*.

b) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

The project site is located in an urban area and is not located within an SRA or within land classified as a very high FHSZ (CAL FIRE 2024). The project site consists of developed and disturbed land and is characterized by relatively flat topography. The project includes the construction of a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trail and associated trail components, including a sidewalk; a bike/pedestrian bridge with 42-inch-tall guardrails; and an island consisting of signage, shade trees, and a bench. The project does not propose the development of any structures or buildings that could increase the potential for a wildfire to occur in the immediate or surrounding area; therefore, the project would not expose nearby residents to wildfire, and impacts would be *less than significant.*

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

The project site is not located within an SRA or within land classified as a very high FHSZ (CAL FIRE 2024). Construction of the proposed pedestrian bridge would require relocation of existing City water and gas utility infrastructure and removal of an abandoned oil pipeline. In addition, a new connection to the existing water line would be installed under the trail to provide irrigation for the trees at the proposed roundabout. The project does not include the construction of new or additional utilities that could increase

wildfire hazard within the project area. The proposed trail and associated improvements would be maintained by the City to reduce risk of wildfire ignition; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

As previously identified, the project site is not located in an area with potential for landslide, liquefaction, or other ground-failure to occur. Further, the project site is generally flat and would not be located near a hillslope or in an area subject to downstream flooding or landslides. The project site is not in an SRA or high or very high wildfire risk area and does not include any design elements that would 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. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The project would not expose people or structures to new or exacerbated wildfire risks or require the development of new or expanded infrastructure or maintenance to reduce wildfire risks, and impacts related to wildfire would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is not necessary.

XXI. Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(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.)	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Environmental Evaluation

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?

Based on the nature and scale of proposed development and the analysis provided in the resource sections above, the project has the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of 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. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-7 and CR-1 and CR-2 have been identified and would reduce potential impacts to less than significant. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

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.)

Based on the nature and scale of proposed development and the analysis provided in the resource sections above, the project would have the potential to result in environmental impacts associated with Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Noise that would have a cumulative effect with other development projects in the city and surrounding areas. Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-4, BIO-1 through BIO-7, CR-1 and CR-2, HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, and N-1 and N-2 have been identified to reduce potential environmental impacts to a less-than-significant level, which would result in the reduction of impacts to a less-than-cumulatively considerable level. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than cumulatively considerable with mitigation.*

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

Based on the nature and scale of proposed development and the analysis provided in the resource sections above, the project has the potential to have environmental effects that could result in substantial adverse effects on human beings during the construction phase of the project. Potential impacts associated with air quality, NOA, cultural resources, and noise would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with the implementation of Measures AQ-1 through AQ-4, BIO-1 through BIO-7, CR-1 and CR-2, and N-1 and N-2. Upon completion of the construction phase, the project would connect residents in Coalinga (and a disadvantaged census tract) to activity centers, such as schools, parks, a college, shopping, neighborhoods, and jobs. The project would provide a safe option to enable increased bicycle/pedestrian transportation use. Increased active transportation would address health disparities in a community that faces higher-than-average California city rates of asthma, obesity, and heart disease. Therefore, potential impacts associated with environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with mandatory findings of significance would be less than significant with mitigation.

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APPENDIX A

CalEEMod Results

Coalinga Perimeter Trail Summary Report

Table of Contents

1. Basic Project Information

1.1. Basic Project Information

Data Field	Value
Project Name	Coalinga Perimeter Trail
Construction Start Date	5/4/2027
Lead Agency	—
Land Use Scale	Project/site
Analysis Level for Defaults	County
Windspeed (m/s)	3.50
Precipitation (days)	16.8
Location	36.15023632304518, -120.34675345363186
County	Fresno
City	Coalinga
Air District	San Joaquin Valley APCD
Air Basin	San Joaquin Valley
TAZ	2531
EDFZ	5
Electric Utility	Pacific Gas & Electric Company
Gas Utility	City of Coalinga
App Version	2022.1.1.28

1.2. Land Use Types

Land Use Subtype	Size	Unit	Lot Acreage	Building Area (sq ft)	Landscape Area (sq ft)	Special Landscape Area (sq ft)	Population	Description
User Defined Linear	0.36	Mile	1.00	0.00	—	—	—	—

1.3. User-Selected Emission Reduction Measures by Emissions Sector

No measures selected

2. Emissions Summary

2.1. Construction Emissions Compared Against Thresholds

Criteria Pollutants (lb/day for daily, ton/yr for annual) and GHGs (lb/day for daily, MT/yr for annual)

Un/Mit.	TOG	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10E	PM10D	PM10T	PM2.5E	PM2.5D	PM2.5T	BCO2	NBCO2	CO2T	CH4	N2O	R	CO2e
Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unmit.	0.66	0.55	4.66	7.04	0.01	0.19	57.3	57.5	0.18	5.74	5.91	—	1,327	1,327	0.05	0.05	0.75	1,344
Average Daily (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unmit.	0.07	0.06	0.51	0.73	< 0.005	0.02	7.26	7.28	0.02	0.73	0.75	—	147	147	0.01	0.01	0.05	149
Annual (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unmit.	0.01	0.01	0.09	0.13	< 0.005	< 0.005	1.33	1.33	< 0.005	0.13	0.14	—	24.3	24.3	< 0.005	< 0.005	0.01	24.6

6. Climate Risk Detailed Report

6.2. Initial Climate Risk Scores

Climate Hazard	Exposure Score	Sensitivity Score	Adaptive Capacity Score	Vulnerability Score
Temperature and Extreme Heat	2	0	0	N/A
Extreme Precipitation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sea Level Rise	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wildfire	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Flooding	0	0	0	N/A
Drought	0	0	0	N/A

Snowpack Reduction	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Air Quality Degradation	0	0	0	N/A

The sensitivity score reflects the extent to which a project would be adversely affected by exposure to a climate hazard. Exposure is rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with a score of 5 representing the greatest exposure.
The adaptive capacity of a project refers to its ability to manage and reduce vulnerabilities from projected climate hazards. Adaptive capacity is rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with a score of 5 representing the greatest ability to adapt.
The overall vulnerability scores are calculated based on the potential impacts and adaptive capacity assessments for each hazard. Scores do not include implementation of climate risk reduction measures.

6.3. Adjusted Climate Risk Scores

Climate Hazard	Exposure Score	Sensitivity Score	Adaptive Capacity Score	Vulnerability Score
Temperature and Extreme Heat	2	1	1	3
Extreme Precipitation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sea Level Rise	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wildfire	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Flooding	1	1	1	2
Drought	1	1	1	2
Snowpack Reduction	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Air Quality Degradation	1	1	1	2

The sensitivity score reflects the extent to which a project would be adversely affected by exposure to a climate hazard. Exposure is rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with a score of 5 representing the greatest exposure.
The adaptive capacity of a project refers to its ability to manage and reduce vulnerabilities from projected climate hazards. Adaptive capacity is rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with a score of 5 representing the greatest ability to adapt.
The overall vulnerability scores are calculated based on the potential impacts and adaptive capacity assessments for each hazard. Scores include implementation of climate risk reduction measures.

7. Health and Equity Details

7.3. Overall Health & Equity Scores

Metric	Result for Project Census Tract
CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Score for Project Location (a)	81.0
Healthy Places Index Score for Project Location (b)	30.0

Project Located in a Designated Disadvantaged Community (Senate Bill 535)	No
Project Located in a Low-Income Community (Assembly Bill 1550)	Yes
Project Located in a Community Air Protection Program Community (Assembly Bill 617)	No

a: The maximum CalEnviroScreen score is 100. A high score (i.e., greater than 50) reflects a higher pollution burden compared to other census tracts in the state.
b: The maximum Health Places Index score is 100. A high score (i.e., greater than 50) reflects healthier community conditions compared to other census tracts in the state.

7.5. Evaluation Scorecard

Health & Equity Evaluation Scorecard not completed.