California Environmental Quality Act Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

HELL HOLE WORKER CAMPGROUND, POTABLE WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM, AND COMMUNICATIONS UPGRADE PROJECT

Placer County Water Agency
P.O. Box 6570
Auburn, CA 95604

March 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF APPENDICES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES AND MAPS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

APE	Area of Potential Effect
ARB	Air Resources Board
BCC	Birds of Conservation Concern
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CALFIRE	California Department of
CAT	Climate Action Team
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEC	California Energy Commission
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFP	California Fully Protected
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CRPR	California Rare Plant Rank
CSC	California Special Concern
CWHR	California Wildlife Habitat Relationships
DBH	diameter at breast height
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
ENF	Eldorado National Forest
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ETP	Environmental Training Program

FC	federal candidate
FCAA	Federal Clean Air Act
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zones
FPD	federal proposed for delisting
FRA	Federal Responsibility Area
FSS	Forest Service Sensitive
FT	federally threatened
GHG	Greenhouse gas
HPMP	Historic Properties Management Plan
in/sec	inches per second
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation
IS/MND	Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
L_{eq}	equivalent continuous sound level
MFP	Middle Fork American River Project
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MSL	mean sea level
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NNIP	Non-native invasive plants
NOA	Naturally occurring asbestos
NO_X	nitrogen oxide
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NSAQMD	Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District
O_3	ozone
OPR	California Governor's Office and Planning and Research
PAC	Protected Activity Centers
PAD	Preliminary Application Document
PCAPCD	Placer County Air Pollution Control District
PCCP	Placer County Conservation Plan
PCSP	Placer County Sustainability Plan
PCWA	Placer County Water Agency
$PM_{2.5}$	Inhalable particulate matter (diameter of 2.5 microns or less)
PM_{10}	Inhalable particulate matter (diameter of 10 microns or less)
ppv	peak particle velocity
ROG	Reactive Organic Gases
RV	recreational vehicle
SR	state rare
SRA	State Responsibility Areas
ST	state threatened
SVAB	Sacramento Valley Air Basin
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
TPZ	Placer County Zoning Code – Timber Production
TSMP	Transportation System Management Plan
UAIC	United Auburn Indian Community
USDA-FS	U.S. Department of Agriculture—Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

VIPMP	Vegetation and Integrated Pest Management Plan
WUI	wildland-urban interface
ZNE	Zero Net Energy

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Placer County Water Agency (PCWA or Agency) proposes to implement the Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply System, and Communications Upgrade Project, located in Placer County near Hell Hole Reservoir, approximately 20 miles west of Lake Tahoe. This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., and State CEQA Guidelines, Title 14 California Code of Regulations 15000 et seq.

1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Project is subject to approval by the PCWA Board of Directors and is subject to review under CEQA. As the Lead Agency, the Agency prepared an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND), which assesses the potential environmental impacts of the Project. In accordance with CEQA guidelines, the IS/MND will be circulated for 30 days for public review. Under CEQA guidelines, a significant impact on the environment is defined as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the Project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance (Guidelines Section 15382). This executive summary provides an overview of the findings of the IS/MND, including resources for which the Project would have: (a) no impact; (b) less than significant impacts; and (c) less than significant impacts with incorporation of mitigation measures. The mitigation measures are summarized in Table 1. Refer to Section 3 of the IS/MND for a more detailed analysis of potential impacts and proposed mitigation measures.

1.2 CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

1.2.1 No Impact

The Project would have no impact on the following resources:

- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services

1.2.2 Less Than Significant Impacts

The Project would have less than significant impacts on the following resources:

- Agriculture and Forest Resources
- Energy
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions

1.2.3 Less Than Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation

With implementation of mitigation, the Project would have less than significant impacts on the following resources:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Wildfire

As required by CEQA, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) (**Table 1**) will be adopted at the time of Project approval. It will include those mitigation measures that would reduce environmental impacts to less than significant levels.

1.2.4 Significant Unavoidable Impacts

There are no significant and unavoidable Project-specific or cumulatively considerable impacts associated with implementation of the Project.

Table 1. Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program.

Mitigation Measures	Timing	Implementation Responsibility	Monitoring/ Reporting Responsibility
GEN-01. General Construction Measures • Construction vehicles and ground-disturbing activities shall be restricted to public roads and parking areas, specifically designated access roads, Project work areas, and Project staging areas. These areas will be clearly identified, and will be staked and flagged where necessary prior to initiation of construction activities. • All construction activities, including site preparation and development, will be restricted to Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Work outside of these hours would require approval from PCWA's Director of Power Generation Services.	Prior To / Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor
AES-01. U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service Visual Quality Standards • PCWA will design and construct the new worker campground consistent with the following visual standards developed in consultation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service (USDA-FS). The final design will be approved by the USDA-FS. o Maintain a visual buffer of trees between the road and the site on either side of the entrance. Tree planting may be required. o Limit the removal of large trees (particularly those greater than 35 inches diameter at breast height (DBH) wherever reasonable. o Consult with the Forest Landscape Architect for approval on exterior finish and colors. o Refer to The Built Environment Image Guide for the National Forests and Grasslands (USDA-FS 2001) for guidance on regionally appropriate design.	During Project Design	PCWA	PCWA
AIR-01. Fugitive Dust Reduction Measures • PCWA will be required to implement all applicable Best Management Practices (BMPs) employed by the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD) under Rule 228 (as amended April 10, 2003) (**Appendix A**).	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor

Mitigation Measures	Timing	Implementation Responsibility	Monitoring/ Reporting Responsibility
These BMPs will be incorporated into Contractor's construction plans required and approved by PCWA, and implemented by the contractor during construction.			
AIR-02. Fuel Emissions Reduction Measures • Depending on equipment availability, require that all diesel construction engines with a rating of 50 horsepower or greater meet, at a minimum, the Tier 2 California emission standards for off-road engines (13 CCR 2423 per 40 CFR 89.112). • Require contractors to limit idling of construction vehicles and equipment on site to 15 minutes or less, unless idling is necessary for effective work progress or equipment operation. • Require contractors to maintain construction equipment in proper working order, and in accordance with manufacturer specifications. • Comply with the use of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel for all construction equipment, as required by the state of California, to minimize diesel particular matter emissions.	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor
BIO-01. Stebbins' Phacelia Avoidance and Protection • Excavation of trenches for the potable water supply system, electric powerline, and new communication lines within 50 feet of Stebbins' phacelia population PHST-06 will be restricted to a 2-foot-wide trench within the unvegetated shoulder of the road.	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor
BIO-02. Environmental Training • Construction crews or other contractors will receive environmental training prior to initiation of construction. The Environmental Training Program (ETP) will include the following: o Photographs, habitat, and life history information for special-status plant and wildlife species, including bald eagles, that are known to occur or may potentially occur in the vicinity of the Middle Fork American River Project (MFP);	Prior to Construction	PCWA	PCWA

Mitigation Measures	Timing	Implementation Responsibility	Monitoring/ Reporting Responsibility
○ Measures to be implemented to protect special-status plant and animal species and their habitats during routine Project maintenance activities; ○ Reporting procedures for discovery of raptor or other bird nests in the vicinity of the MFP; and ○ Photographs and life history information for NNIPs that are known to occur or may potentially occur in the MFP.			
BIO-03. Biological Resource Discovery • PCWA's Environmental Services Manager will be contacted immediately if any of the following are discovered: ○ Bald Eagle or other Raptor Carcass ○ Raptor or Songbird Nest ○ New Special-Status Species Occurrence ○ Aquatic Invasive Species Infestation	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor
BIO-04. Prevention of the Introduction or Spread of Non-native Invasive Plants • Revegetation and seeding will be implemented consistent with measures outlined in the Vegetation and Integrated Pest Management Plan (VIPMP)[1]. • PCWA will avoid driving off-road in non-native invasive plant (NNIP) infested areas. Vehicle and foot travel will be restricted to established roads and trails whenever possible.	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor

[1] The FERC license for PCWA's MFP, issued on June 8, 2020, commits PCWA to implementation of environmental programs and measures that are designed to protect, maintain, or enhance environmental and cultural resources over the term of the license. This includes implementation of a Vegetation and Integrated Pest Management Plan (VIPMP), which describes vegetation and pest management activities to be implemented at Project facilities and features, Project roads and trails, and Project recreation facilities and features, as well as measures for the enhancement and/or protection of environmental and cultural resources during implementation of these activities.

Mitigation Measures	Timing	Implementation Responsibility	Monitoring/ Reporting Responsibility
• All PCWA and PCWA contractor field vehicles and equipment previously used on non-paved surfaces outside of the watershed will be thoroughly cleaned before entering the Project area. • PCWA will ensure that off-road vehicles and heavy equipment are free of material that may contain seeds of NNIPs prior to leaving an area infested with weeds. All off-road vehicles and heavy equipment will be inspected for weed seeds stuck in tire treads or mud on the vehicle. PCWA will designate appropriate cleaning sites, and all such equipment will be cleaned (power or high-pressure cleaning) before entering weed-free areas and/or National Forest lands. • Vehicle and equipment cleaning need not be conducted in emergency situations. Instead, PCWA will notify the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service (USDA-FS) of the location after the emergency so that the site can be checked for the introduction of NNIPs the following year. Notification will include identifying the location of the equipment's most recent operations. • Workers will inspect, remove, and properly dispose of readily observable weed seeds and plant parts found on their clothing and equipment. Proper disposal includes bagging the seeds and plant parts prior to disposal. • Certified weed-free hay, mulch, or straw will be used for erosion control. If certified weed-free straw is not available, certified weed-free rice straw will be used. If weed-free material is not available, PCWA will consult with USDA-FS botanist regarding other options (e.g., sterilized straw pellets). • PCWA will maintain stockpiles of gravel and soil in a weed-free state. If stockpiles are found to be infested, PCWA will document the weed populations and discuss treatment with the USDA-FS prior to moving gravel or soil from an infested site.			

<table>
<tr><th>Mitigation Measures</th><th>Timing</th><th>Implementation Responsibility</th><th>Monitoring/ Reporting Responsibility</th></tr>
<tr><td>BIO-05. Post-Construction Non-Native Invasive Plant Monitoring
PCWA will conduct target non-native invasive plant (NNIP) treatment and monitoring, and implement measures to prevent the spread or introduction of NNIPs at all locations where ground disturbance occurs as a result of Middle Fork American River Project (MFP) activities or outside material such as rock, gravel, or fill is imported.
Monitoring will occur once annually after the modifications are completed until it is determined in consultation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service (USDA-FS) that a site has been successfully revegetated.</td><td>Annually, Following Completion of Construction</td><td>PCWA</td><td>PCWA</td></tr>
<tr><td>BIO-06. Pre-Construction Raptor Surveys
A qualified biologist will search within 0.25 mile of the site for raptor nests, and within 250 feet of the site for passerine nests.
Biologists will conduct a visual and aural search of the survey area on foot, using binoculars to scan tree tops for the presence of raptor nests.
If any active nests are identified, a species-appropriate buffer (see table below) for the nest will be applied and no activities may occur within that buffer until the young have fledged, as detailed below:<table><tr><th>Species</th><th>Buffer Size</th></tr><tr><td>American goshawk</td><td>0.25 mile</td></tr><tr><td>California spotted owl</td><td>0.25 mile</td></tr><tr><td>Bald Eagle</td><td>660 feet</td></tr><tr><td>All other raptors</td><td>500 feet</td></tr><tr><td>All other birds (i.e., passerines)</td><td>250 feet</td></tr></table>
If PCWA cannot comply with the buffers and timing provided above, they will consult with appropriate resources agencies (Forest Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and/or U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service) to</td><td>No More Than 30 Days Prior to Construction</td><td>PCWA</td><td>PCWA</td></tr>
</table>

Mitigation Measures	Timing	Implementation Responsibility	Monitoring/ Reporting Responsibility
develop site-specific buffers considering the species, the location of the nest, and the nature of the construction activities to be implemented. • If no active nests are detected during these surveys, no additional mitigation is required.			
BIO-07. Tree Removal • PCWA will reduce the number of trees to be removed for construction of the worker campground, where possible, during refinement of the engineering design (100% designs) and during on-site consultation with the contractor. • PCWA will prioritize retention of large trees (greater than 36 inches diameter at breast height [DBH]), and trees along the road and campground entrance to create visual screening.	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor
CUL-01. Historic Properties Management Plan PCWA will implement measures for the protection of cultural resources consistent with the Middle Fork American River Project Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP)[2].	Throughout Construction	PCWA	PCWA
CUL-02. Cultural Resources Awareness Training • PCWA will conduct cultural resource awareness training in the field with PCWA staff and subcontractors prior to any construction or ground-disturbing activities. • The Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP) coordinator (or designee) will be responsible for reviewing all construction plans to determine whether there are cultural resources present in the vicinity of the construction activities, and for organizing the cultural resource awareness training.	Prior to Construction	PCWA	PCWA

[2] The FERC license for PCWA's MFP, issued on June 8, 2020, commits PCWA to implementation of environmental programs and measures that are designed to protect, maintain, or enhance environmental and cultural resources over the term of the license. This includes implementation of a Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP) that addresses management of cultural resources that are eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), as well as implementation of an Employee Resource Awareness Training Program, development of public education materials, and implementation of avoidance measures and providing notification to local Tribes prior to construction or ground-disturbing activities.

Mitigation Measures	Timing	Implementation Responsibility	Monitoring/ Reporting Responsibility
• During the training, the HPMP coordinator, or their representative, will discuss the types of cultural resources potentially present in the area, and procedures for avoiding these resources. The HPMP coordinator will also review the protocols for inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources.			
CUL-03. Cultural or Tribal Resource Discovery • PCWA's Environmental Services Manager will be contacted immediately if any of the following are discovered: o Previously Unknown Cultural or Tribal Resource o Human Remains o Paleontological Resource o National Register of Historic Places Eligible Site Damage • If a previously unknown cultural resource is uncovered during ground disturbing activities, PCWA will immediately cease work in the area and will notify the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service (USDA-FS). Ground disturbing activities will not be resumed until appropriate protection and avoidance measures are identified in consultation with the USDA-FS, SHPO, and the local Native American Tribal representatives.	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor
GEO-01. Erosion Control Measures • PCWA shall develop site-specific temporary erosion control measures for each project to be approved by U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service (USDA-FS). These temporary measures will minimize the potential for erosion, dust, and soil mass movement during the period of construction-related ground disturbance.	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor
HAZ-01. Public and Worker Safety • Material Safety Data Sheets for all substances used on the job site will be on file at the job headquarters in the Rock Creek Yard at Auburn, as required by the Hazard Communication Law, General Industry Safety Orders, Sec 5194, and will be available as necessary.	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor

Mitigation Measures	Timing	Implementation Responsibility	Monitoring/ Reporting Responsibility
• Standard construction safety procedures, road signage, employee training and tailboards, and good housekeeping will be implemented to ensure that no unseen safety hazards exist. • Traffic control will consist of temporary construction signs, trucks entering roadway signs, and flaggers as needed. • Road closures will be implemented as necessary during construction activities.			
HAZ-02. Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan • PCWA's construction specifications will require the contractor to prepare and implement a Project-specific Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan that includes: o Procedures for the site handling, storage, and packaging of waste; o Rules requiring the refueling of construction equipment within designated construction staging areas; o Contingency plans in the event of a spill; and o Notification requirements and contact information. • The plan will be submitted to PCWA for review and approval. After the plan has been approved, it will be incorporated into Contractor's construction plans required and approved by PCWA and implemented as part of the construction contract.	Prior to Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor
HAZ-03. Well Drilling • Construction contract documents will require a licensed/qualified well driller (C57 Well Drilling licensed contractor) for performance of the work. • The drilling contractor will develop and submit well installation plan/drawings prepared and signed by geologist (or hydrogeologist) based on the test well and geotechnical analysis results, for review and approval of PCWA prior to the final well drilling, construction and development.	Prior to Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor

Mitigation Measures	Timing	Implementation Responsibility	Monitoring/ Reporting Responsibility
• The Project construction sequence will include a test well, sampling and geotechnical analysis to determine the expected flow, optimum depth for flow, water quality, and to identify the strata encountered.			
NOI-01. Noise Attenuation • Construction contracts shall specify that all construction equipment must be equipped with mufflers and other applicable noise attenuation devices.	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor
REC-01. Coordination with the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service • Upon Project approval, PCWA will coordinate with the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service (USDA-FS) to inform the public of road closures and/or closure of the Hell Hole Boat Ramp, including notification on the USDA-FS website. In addition, PCWA will also include notification on the PCWA website and post signs at the construction site.	Prior to Construction	PCWA	PCWA
TRANS-01. Consultation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service • Prior to implementation of the Project, PCWA will consult with the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service (USDA-FS) to obtain authorization for implementation of the Project. • PCWA will obtain authorization from the USDA-FS to construct this Project, including obtaining a Project-specific Road Use Permit.	Prior to Construction	PCWA	PCWA
TRANS-02. Traffic Control Plan • PCWA's contractor will prepare a construction traffic control plan. The purpose of the plan will be to: o Minimize construction-related impacts on public traffic and reduce the potential for accidents involving the public; o Provide notification to administrators of police and fire stations, ambulance service providers, and recreational facility managers of the timing, location, and duration of construction activities and the locations of detours and lane closures, where applicable;	Prepare Plan Prior to Construction; Implement Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor

Mitigation Measures	Timing	Implementation Responsibility	Monitoring/ Reporting Responsibility
○ Develop and implement a plan for notifications and a process for communication with affected users before the start of construction; and ○ Enhance on-site personnel and vehicle safety. • The plan will be submitted to PCWA for review and approval. After the plan has been approved, it will be incorporated into Contractor's construction plans required and approved by PCWA and implemented as part of the construction contract.			
WQ-01. Implementation of U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service Water Quality Best Management Practices • **Appendix B** of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) provides a list of USDA-FS Water Quality Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will be implemented, as applicable, during implementation of the Project. This includes measures for erosion control, hazardous materials, and water quality protection. • Applicable measures will be included in contractor specifications or memorialized in Project-specific plans (e.g., the Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan or the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan) and implemented as part of the Project.	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor
WQ-02. Coverage Under National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit • PCWA will file a Notice of Intent with the State Water Resources Control Board to obtain coverage under the General Construction National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. If required by the State Water Resources Control Board, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be developed and implemented. The SWPPP would include: ○ Pollution prevention measures (erosion and sediment control measures and measures to control non-stormwater discharges and hazardous spills); ○ Demonstration of compliance with all applicable local and regional erosion and sediment control standards;	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor

Mitigation Measures	Timing	Implementation Responsibility	Monitoring/ Reporting Responsibility
○ Identification of responsible parties; and ○ A Best Management Practices (BMPs) monitoring and maintenance schedule.			
WF-01. Fire Prevention and Suppression Plan • PCWA will comply with the Revised Fire Prevention and Suppression Plan developed for the Middle Fork American River Project, which states that: • The contractor, its employees, and subcontractors and their employees, will make all reasonable efforts to prevent and suppress wild fires, and will exercise diligence in protecting from damage the land and property of the United States, and will follow USDA-FS Project Activity Level restrictions. • No burning of any kind will occur as part of the construction activities. • The following fire equipment will be on site at all times: ○ One shovel, one axe and one fire extinguisher UL rated at 4 BC or more on each truck, personnel vehicle, tractor, grader, and any other heavy equipment will be used. ○ One shovel and one back-pack five-gallon water filled tank with pump with each welder. ○ One shovel and one chemical pressurized fire extinguisher (fully charged) located at a point no greater than a distance of 25-feet from the work site, for each gasoline powered tool, including but not limited to chain saws, rock drills, etc.	Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor
WF-02. Contractor Fire Prevention and Suppression Plan • The contractor shall create a Project specific plan to address fire risks while working on site and the measures to be taken and implemented to prevent and/or minimize risk.	Prepare Plan Prior to Construction; Implement Throughout Construction	PCWA/ Contractor	PCWA/ Contractor

Mitigation Measures	Timing	Implementation Responsibility	Monitoring/ Reporting Responsibility
WF-03. U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service Fire Restrictions • The usage of fire pits within the campground will adhere to the USDA-FS Forest Use Fire Restrictions to minimize the risk of wildfire when the campground is in use. Adherence to the USDA-FS restrictions will be strictly followed and enforced.	Post-construction	PCWA	PCWA

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 INTRODUCTION AND REGULATORY GUIDANCE

PCWA has prepared this IS/MND to evaluate the potential environmental effects of implementation of the Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply System, and Communication Upgrade Project (Project). This document has been prepared in accordance with CEQA, Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., and State CEQA Guidelines, Title 14 California Code of Regulations 15000 et seq. A summary of permits and agency approvals required for the implementation of the Project is provided in Section 2.9, Permits and Approvals.

This IS/MND was prepared by PCWA (the Lead Agency) to determine if the Project could have significant impacts on the environment. In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines 15064(a), an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared if there is substantial evidence that a Project may have significant impacts on the environment. If the Lead Agency determines that there is no substantial evidence for such impacts, or if the potential impacts can be reduced through Project revisions, a mitigated negative declaration or a negative declaration, can be prepared (CEQA Guidelines 15070(b)).

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

The Lead Agency has determined that an IS/MND is the appropriate document for compliance with CEQA. The purpose of this document is to present to the public the environmental consequences of implementing the Project. This document has been prepared consistent with the 20153 State CEQA Guidelines.

This disclosure document is being made available to the public for review and comment. The IS/MND is available for public review electronically, on the PCWA website Environmental Planning & Compliance | pcwa.net at https://www.pcwa.net/about-pcwa/environmental-planning.

Written comments must be received by 5:00 p.m. on April 22, 2025.

The PCWA encourages all commenters to submit their comments on the IS/MND in writing. All comments or questions regarding the Draft IS/MND should be addressed to:

Ben Ransom
Placer County Water Agency
P.O. Box 6570
Auburn, CA 95604
E-mail: bransom@pcwa.net

A public hearing on this Proposed Project is scheduled for May 19, 2025 at 2:00 PM which will be held in the American River Room at the Placer County Water Agency, 144 Ferguson Road, Auburn, California. The Project and the environmental analysis will be considered at that time.

The Board may: (1) adopt the mitigated negative declaration and approve the Project; (2) undertake additional environmental studies; or (3) abandon the Project.

2.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Section 3 of this document contains the analysis and discussion of potential environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the Project. Based on the resources evaluated, it was determined that the Project would have **no impact** on the following resources:

- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services

Impacts of the Project were determined to be **less than significant** for the following resources:

- Agriculture and Forest Resources
- Energy
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Impacts of the Project to the following resources would be **less than significant with incorporation of the mitigation measures** described in Section 3 and the MND included with this document:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Wildfire

As required by CEQA, an MMRP has been prepared and is included with this IS/MND (**Table 1**). It will be adopted at the time of Project approval. It will include those mitigation measures that would reduce any potential environmental impacts to less than significant levels.

2.4 DOCUMENT PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION

The purpose of this document is to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the Project. This document is organized in the following manner:

- **Section 3 — Project Description.** This section describes the purpose and need of the Project, the Project objectives, and a description of the Project's characteristics.

- **Section 4 — Environmental Checklist.** This section provides the environmental setting for the Project, analyzes the environmental impacts of the Project, and recommends mitigation measures where appropriate. Resource topics appear in the order that they occur in the CEQA Environmental Checklist from Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. Mitigation measures are incorporated and discussed, where appropriate, to reduce "potentially significant" impacts to a "less than significant" level. Mandatory Findings of Significance are also presented in this section.

- **Section 5 — Agencies and Persons Consulted.** This section identifies agencies and persons consulted regarding environmental resource topics during preparation of this document.

- **Section 6 — List of Preparers.** This section contains a list of people that assisted in the preparation of this document.

- **Section 7 — References.** This section identifies the references used in the preparation of this document.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project is the construction of the new approximately 1.7-acre Hell Hole Worker Campground that will provide recreational vehicle (RV) stalls and picnic sites for use by PCWA or others (as approved) working in the vicinity of the Middle Fork American Project (MFP) (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Project No. 2079) area. The Project also includes several improvements required under the FERC License for the MFP, including provision of potable water system and other minor improvements to the nearby Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area. PCWA therefore will construct a potable water system that will serve the worker campground, the existing Hell Hole Dormitory and operator cottages and shop, as well as the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area. As part of this Project, PCWA will also install communication lines to provide improved data and internet communications to the worker campground, Hell Hole Dormitory, operator cottages and shop, and the Hell Hole Boat Ramp. Refer to **Map 1** for a vicinity map and to **Map 2** for a plan view of the proposed location of the worker campground, new potable water system and communication line Project area.

3.1 PURPOSE AND NEED

PCWA has identified the need for construction of a designated worker campground that would reduce the need for use of public campgrounds to accommodate work crews and reduce the need for use of public roads to commute to/from work in this remote area from outside communities. In addition, the campground would concentrate use in a formalized area, reducing potential dispersed use and associated impacts to surrounding natural habitat.

The Recreation Plan for the MFP, which is required to be implemented under U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service (USDA-FS) Final 4(e) Condition 34 of the FERC license, requires several improvements to the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area, including restoration of portions of the parking area including removal/restoration of portions of the parking area that were not previously restored in 2010; chip sealing of parking areas and roadways; painting traffic markings; and replacing the existing chain link fence[3]. The Recreation Plan also requires provision of potable water to the Hell Hole General Parking Area. The existing water supply system, which currently serves the dormitory, cottages, and shop, consists of a water pump located in the Hell Hole Reservoir Tunnel (fed by Hell Hole Reservoir), 50,000-gallon storage tank, and distribution infrastructure. The current water supply system is non-potable, as it is sourced directly from the Hell Hole Reservoir Tunnel without treatment. Therefore, PCWA has identified the need to drill a new well that will provide potable water not only to the General Parking Area, as required under the license, but also to the new worker campground, and to improve the quality of water being provided to the dormitory, cottages, and shop.

[3] The Order Amending Recreation Management Plan and Granting Extension of Time to Complete Recreation Use Surveys and Recreation Facility Improvements (April 25, 2023) requires improvements to the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area to be completed by 2028.

Finally, considering that excavation and trenching is required for installation of the new water system, PCWA also is proposing to remove its dated and vulnerable above-ground telecommunication lines and install new communications cable along with the new water lines. This will improve data and internet service, and will improve the visual environment and scenic views of the reservoir and vicinity.

3.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The Project is approximately 22 miles northeast of Foresthill, Placer County, California in Township 14N, Range 14E, Sections 9 and 16 on the U.S. Geological Survey Bunker Hill 7.5-minute quad, Mount Diablo Meridian. The Project is located on lands that are currently owned and operated by the Eldorado National Forest (ENF) but, at some point in the near future, the land will be transferred to PCWA ownership as part of a land exchange. Refer to **Map 1** for a vicinity map and to **Map 2** for a plan view of the proposed location of the worker campground, new potable water system and communication line Project area.

Construction equipment and materials will arrive at the site via Mosquito Ridge Road (Forest Road [FR] 96), and Hell Hole Road (FR 2). Eleven Pines Road via Wentworth Springs Road from the Georgetown area may also be used.

3.3 SITE PREPARATION

Under existing conditions, a portion of the proposed worker campground construction site has been used for informal RV parking and informal camping for PCWA work crews conducting maintenance in the MFP. This existing informal camping area includes a gated dirt loop road and native ground where camping occurs. The remainder of the proposed worker campground site is undeveloped and supports mixed conifer–pine vegetation. The new well will be located on previously disturbed lands in the vicinity of the operator cottages and shop, and the existing waterline and above-ground communication line are located within or adjacent to existing roads.

Prior to initiation of construction of the worker campground, PCWA will clear existing vegetation and remove trees, as necessary—refer to Section 6.0 for a description of vegetation and tree removal. Next, PCWA will remove and dispose of existing facilities including the entrance gate and 142 linear feet of existing chain link fence lining FR 2 immediately west of the construction site will be removed. Temporary chain link fencing will be installed to secure the construction site. The temporary fence will be removed following completion of construction.

Because the new well will be installed on previously disturbed land, and the potable water system and communication line will be installed within the shoulder of existing roads, additional site preparation for these Project components will not be necessary.

The entire area of ground disturbance required for implementation of the Project is approximately 2.4 acres.

3.4 HELL HOLE WORKER CAMPGROUND

Provided below is a brief description of the features of the Hell Hole Worker Campground that will be constructed, including:

- Access roads and parking;
- RV parking and utility connections;
- Picnic/day use amenities;
- Sanitation system; and
- Electric powerline system.

Refer to **Figure 1A** for a concept design showing the location of each feature.

3.4.1 Access Roads, Parking, and Surface Water Drainage

The worker campground will be accessed off Hell Hole Road (FR 2), an existing paved, two-lane road. This portion of FR 2 is maintained by PCWA.

Access to the campground will be controlled by a double-arm gate that will be installed within the site. Access will be provided via a one-way loop road, approximately 16 feet wide and paved with asphalt concrete, that will be constructed. An 18-inch diameter corrugated metal culvert will be installed under the road at the entrance to allow movement of surface water through an existing drainage ditch. Rock will be placed at the ingress and egress of the culvert.

The north side of the loop will provide 11 standard tandem 10- by 20-foot parking stalls, each accommodating two vehicles (one parked behind the other); and one accessible parking stall located adjacent to the accessible RV camping stall.

Two rock-lined ditches will be constructed to channel surface water. This includes one approximately 200-foot long ditch on the south side of the campground; and one 30-foot ditch near the entrance of the campground.

Barrier logs and rocks will be installed as needed to delineate the perimeter of the campground, to control pedestrian and vehicle movement; and protect surrounding habitat.

3.4.2 Recreational Vehicle Camping Stalls and Utility Connections

The 1.7-acre campground will include 18 camping stalls, each paved in aggregate and designed to accommodate a 40-foot RV. One of the stalls is accessible. The terminus of each stall includes a concrete “connection pad” that includes hook-ups for electrical, water, and sanitary services for each RV.

3.4.3 Picnic/Day Use Amenities

The undeveloped area in the center of the loop road will provide outdoor picnic/day use amenities consisting of two picnic tables, two fire rings, and a covered picnic area containing two additional picnic tables. A 4-foot-wide dirt path will provide an accessible route from the accessible RV stall to the picnic area.

3.4.4 Sanitation System

PCWA will construct a new sanitation system that includes a 2,000-gallon septic tank. The RV stalls will be connected to the sanitation system via 3- and 4-inch lateral sewer lines. A dumpster pad will be constructed near the entrance of the campground.

The facility will also contain a 65-foot by 31-foot leach field with ten 63-inch-long sand filter bed lines. The sanitation/septic system will be constructed to meet the current Placer County Division of Environmental Health requirements for the site evaluation and design of sewage disposal systems. In addition, consistent with Placer County building codes, a second "reserve" leach field of comparable size will be located in the clearing just south of the covered picnic tables. This field will not be constructed, but will remain reserved for potential future development, if necessary.

3.4.5 Electric Powerline

Electric power for the new campground and potable water supply system (refer to Section 3.5) will be provided via a new underground electric power line. The powerline will begin at an existing pole transformer located west of the campground[4]. The new powerline will be installed underground, within the water line trenches described in Section 3.5, and will be located within previously disturbed and unvegetated land immediately adjacent to existing roads, to the extent possible. The existing power poles/powerlines (from the operator cottages to the dormitory and terminating in the Hell Hole Boat Ramp parking area) will be removed and disposed at an agency-approved disposal site

3.5 POTABLE WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM

Water will be supplied to the Hell Hole Worker Campground via a new potable water system. In addition, consistent with the Recreation Plan, the water lines will be extended to provide water to the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area. Potable water will also be provided to the operator cottages and shop, and the Hell Hole Dormitory.

There is an existing water supply system to the dormitory, cottages, and shop that consists of a water pump, 50,000-gallon storage tank, and distribution infrastructure. The current water supply is sourced directly from the Hell Hole – Middle Fork Tunnel and is treated at the dormitory and cottages for private use, but is not sufficient for public use. The existing water supply infrastructure will be converted to a fire suppression system for

[4] Part of the French Meadows Powerhouse and Switchyard to Hell Hole–Middle Fork Tunnel Gatehouse, Dormitory Facility, Operator Cottages and Hell Hole Powerhouse Communication Line/Powerline, an MFP facility.

facilities in the Hell Hole area (i.e., the worker campground, operator cottages, and dormitory).

The new potable water system will consist of a new vertical well, submersible centrifugal well pump and pressurized water tank with an operating volume of 1000-gallons that will be located just west of the Hell Hole Worker Campground. The well, pressure tank and water system controls will be housed in a 20- by 20-foot or smaller prefabricated building (up to 20 feet high) located east of the Operator Cottages and Shop Road (17N02S).

The well will be drilled by a licensed/qualified well driller (C57 Well Drilling licensed contractor). The well will not be placed within 100 feet of an existing or abandoned toilet, septic tank, or leach lines, per USDA-FS and California State standards. The system will include automated controls including a tank level float switch for generator/pump startup and shutdown to maintain water tank operational levels.

The well construction sequence will include a drilling a test well, sampling, and geotechnical analysis to determine the expected flow, optimum depth for flow, water quality, and to identify the strata encountered. The contractor will develop and submit well installation plans, prepared and signed by a geologist/hydrogeologist, based on the test well and technical analysis results for PCWA approval prior to drilling the well.

A new waterline will be installed from the new well site to the cottages, dormitory, worker campground, and faucets at the Boat Ramp General Parking Area. The waterline will be installed in previously disturbed and unvegetated land within the shoulder of the following existing roads:

- Operator Cottages and Shop Road (17N02S),
- Dormitory Facility Road (17N02U), and
- Hell Hole Road (FR 2).

Installation of the water line will require excavation of a trench approximately 4 feet deep and 2 feet wide. Following installation of the water line (and electric/communication lines—refer to Section 3.4), native soil will be backfilled into the excavation and native vegetation, where present, will be passively restored.

3.6 COMMUNICATION LINES

There is an existing above-ground communication line that extends from French Meadows Powerhouse and switchyard to the Hell Hole-Middle Fork Tunnel Gatehouse, dormitory, operator cottages and Hell Hole Powerhouse. A portion of this above-ground line—from the cottages to the dormitory and terminating in the Hell Hole Boat Ramp parking area—will be removed and disposed at an agency-approved disposal site.

A new underground communication line will be installed to provide data and internet services to the cottages, shop, dormitory, and worker campground (**Figure 1B**). The communication line will terminate in the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area, where it will rejoin the existing overhead communication line. The new communication

line will be installed within the water line trenches described in Section 3.3 and will be located within previously disturbed and unvegetated land within the shoulder of existing roads.

3.7 HELL HOLE BOAT RAMP GENERAL PARKING AREA

PCWA will implement improvements to the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area to satisfy the requirements of USDA-FS 4(e) Condition 34. Improvements will include: restoration of portions of the parking area including removal/restoration of portions of the parking area that were not previously restored in 2010; chip sealing of parking areas and roadways; painting traffic markings; and replacing the existing chain link fence with black plastisol fencing.

3.8 STAGING AREAS

Several areas are available for staging during construction, including within the undeveloped area proposed for the new worker campground; along existing roads; and near the helicopter landing zone adjacent to the dormitory (**Map 2**). Staging will only occur along within previously disturbed and unvegetated areas.

3.9 VEGETATION/TREE REMOVAL

The 60% designs indicate that a maximum of 267 trees may need to be removed for construction of the worker campground (refer to **Table 2**). The number of trees removed will be reduced, where possible, during refinement of the engineering design (100% designs) and during on-site consultation with the contractor. PCWA will retain large trees (greater than 36 inches diameter at breast height [DBH]) and trees along the road and the campground entrance to create visual screening, to the degree possible. Sparse understory shrubs and herbaceous vegetation will be cleared within the 1.7-acre campground site and along the water and communication line route.

Table 2. Maximum Number and Size of Trees to be Removed (60% Design)

Tree Size (DBH)	Total Number
10–18.9 inches	158
19–24.9 inches	53
25–35.9 inches	26
>36 inches	30
Total	267

3.10 PUBLIC ACCESS AND SIGNAGE DURING CONSTRUCTION

During installation of the new waterline and communication line, a section of FR 2 will be closed to public vehicle access for approximately 4 weeks. This closure will occur outside

the peak recreation season (Memorial Day–Labor Day). Construction of the worker campground will not require road closures. Temporary signage for the road closure and planned construction activities will be developed in coordination with the USDA-FS and posted on the PCWA website and on social media sites.

3.11 CONSTRUCTION VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

Construction activities will involve the use of heavy equipment, vehicles, and machinery. **Table 3** includes a list of vehicles and equipment that will be used during construction of the Project. Not all equipment would be used simultaneously.

Table 3. Construction Vehicles and Equipment.

Equipment	Quantity
Tractors	
Loader (Small/Medium/Large)	1
Skid Steer Loader	1
Excavator (Small/Medium/Large)	2
Backhoe	1
Grader	1
Drilling Equipment	1
Compaction Equipment	
Vibratory Pile Driver or Impact/drop Hammer Pile Driver	1
Large Vibratory Roller	1
Small Vibratory Roller	1
Hand Vibratory Compactor	2
Trucks	
Work Truck	1
Delivery Truck	1
Concrete Truck	4
Dump Truck	2
Cleaning	
Water Truck	1
Vegetation Removal	
Chainsaw	1
Power Tools/Equipment	
70 kW Generator	1

Compressor	1
Hydraulic Hammers/Breakers	1
Hydraulic Wire saws	1

3.12 PROJECT SCHEDULE

Construction of the Project is planned for May–November 2026 pending weather conditions. Installation of the communication line/waterline adjacent to Forest Road 2 is anticipated to take approximately two weeks and will be implemented outside of the peak recreation season (peak recreation season is Memorial Day – Labor Day).

3.13 PERMIT COMPLIANCE

The following authorizations and associated permits/approvals will be obtained for the Project:

- National Environmental Policy Act Environmental Assessment (EA)
- CEQA IS/MND
- UDSA-FS Biological Assessment/Biological Evaluation and Riparian Conservation Objectives Report
- USDA-FS Management Indicator Species Report
- USDA-FS Migratory Bird Report
- USDA-FS Special Use Permit
- Coverage under State Water Resources Control Board Construction General Permit/development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

3.14 Mitigation MEASURES

Table 1 provides a list of mitigation measures to minimize the potential for environmental impacts to resulting from implementation of the Project.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Following is the environmental checklist form (CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G) that provides discussion of the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply System, and Communications Upgrade Project. .

1. **Project title:** Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply System, and Communication Upgrade Project
2. **Lead agency name and address:** Placer County Water Agency (PCWA), 144 Ferguson Road, Auburn, CA 95603.
3. Contact person and phone number: Ben Ransom, (530) 308-4554
4. **Project location:** Project is located on U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service USDA-FS lands adjacent to Hell Hole Reservoir in Placer County, California, approximately 22 miles northeast of Foresthill, Placer County, California in Township 14N, Range 14E, Sections 9 and 16 on the U.S. Geological Survey Bunker Hill 7.5-minute quad, Mount Diablo Meridian.
5. **Project sponsor's name and address:** Placer County Water Agency 144 Ferguson Road, Auburn, CA 95603.
6. **General plan designation:** Placer County General Plan – FOR (Forestry)
7. **Zoning:** Placer County – TPZ (Timberland Production)
8. **Description of the Project:** The installation of a worker campground, new waterlines, powerlines, and communication lines to support PCWA and USDA-FS staff and facility needs.
9. **Surrounding land uses and setting:** Lands surrounding the Project area are forestlands owned by the Eldorado National Forest.
10. Other public agencies whose approval is or may be required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement): • **Federal:** USDA-FS, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) • **State:** State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) • **Local:** Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District (NSAQMD); Placer County

11. 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, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

- PCWA has completed the consultation process set forth under Assembly Bill (AB) 52.

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 checklist on the following pages.

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

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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

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

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

☐ I find that although the 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 Project, nothing further is required.

Signature	Date
Signature	Date

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to Projects like the one involved (e.g., the Project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on Project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the Project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a Project-specific screening analysis).

2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as Project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4. "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).

5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

    a. Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.

    b. Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.

    c. Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the Project.

6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a Project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

9. The explanation of each issue should identify:

    a. The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and

    b. The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

4.1 AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 point.) 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.1.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact related to aesthetics if the Project would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcrops, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;
- In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality; or
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

4.1.2 Setting

The Project is situated in the foothills and mountainous uplands of the western slope of the central Sierra Nevada, within the ENF. Hell Hole Reservoir is located in the rugged Rubicon River Canyon, which is characterized by steep and rocky slopes, vegetated with brush and mixed conifers. The reservoir and surrounding side slopes are primarily composed of granite with areas of glacial deposits on the surrounding side slopes. The upper reaches of the reservoir transition into a river canyon environment. The land is rural in nature and there are no residential or commercial developments in the immediate vicinity of the site. Eleven Pines Road (FR 2) provides primary access to the site.

Aesthetic resources include Hell Hole Reservoir, nearby rivers, streams, forested areas, wilderness areas, scenic forest routes, hiking trails, developed campgrounds, vista points, picnic areas, boat ramps, and special interest areas. Hell Hole Vista is the only designated scenic vista overlooking Hell Hole Dam and Reservoir. The vista is located along Eleven Pines Road (FR 2), about 1.7 road miles from the Hell Hole Boat Ramp, northwest of Hell Hole Reservoir.

4.1.3 Impacts Discussion

a) The Project will have less than significant effects to scenic vistas.

For purposes of CEQA, a scenic vista is defined as a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public. In addition, some scenic vistas are officially designated by public agencies, or informally designated by tourist guides. A substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista is one that would result if the view from such a designated viewpoint is degraded.

There are no designated scenic vistas in the vicinity of Hell Hole Reservoir. However, as stated above, the USDA-FS maintains the Hell Hole Vista, located on the north side of the reservoir, which provides visitors with a panoramic view of the reservoir. Panoramic views of the reservoir and the Rubicon River valley are also available to visitors from the surface of Hell Hole Dam.

The proposed worker campground will not be visible from, and will not degrade scenic vistas from either of these viewpoints. Installation of the water, power, and communication lines will require temporary excavation of a 2-foot-wide ditch along the shoulder of existing roads, portions of which would be visible to the public from the Hell Hole Vista or Hell Hole Dam. However, any minor degradation to views resulting from the excavation would be short-term and temporary. Following completion of installation, the ditch will be backfilled and the buried lines will not be visible. Finally, minor improvements to the existing Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area (e.g., chip sealing and painting) will not affect scenic vistas.

Considering that the worker campground will not be visible from public viewpoints along Hell Hole Reservoir and that the water, power, and communication lines will be buried following completion of construction, and that minor improvements to the parking area will not result in changes to the scenic vista, any effects to scenic vistas would be temporary and **less than significant**.

b) The Project will not affect scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway or Federal scenic byway.

According to the California Department of Transportation, California Scenic Highway Program Listing, there are no scenic highways in the vicinity of the Project. The National Scenic Byways Program is a voluntary, community-based program administered through the Federal Highway Administration to recognize, protect, and promote the country's most

outstanding roads. There are no federally designated scenic byways in Placer County (Scenic America 2024).

The Project will not affect rock outcroppings or historic buildings. Construction of the worker campground will require the removal of up to 267 trees within a 1.7-acre area. This will affect the visual character of the facility footprint; however, forested areas around the facility and along FR 2 (Eleven Pines Road) will be retained, and the site will not be visible from public viewpoints.

Considering that are no State scenic highways or national scenic byways in the vicinity of the Project, that forest vegetation will screen views of the worker campground, and that the new water lines, electric lines, and communication lines will be buried along the shoulder of existing roads, and that the Project requires only minor improvements to the existing boat ramp general parking area, the Project would have **no impact** on scenic resources associated with a State scenic highway or Federal scenic byway.

c) The Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings.

As described under items a) and b) above, there are no official scenic vistas, State scenic highways, or Federal scenic byways in the Project vicinity, and the worker campground will not be visible from public viewpoints such as the Hell Hole Vista or Hell Hole Dam.

The construction of the worker campground will alter the visual character of the 1.7-acre site where the worker camp facility will be located. However, the facility will be surrounded by forest habitat and will be located in close proximity to, and consistent with the overall visual character of, other existing PCWA staff and administrative buildings, such as the Hell Hole dormitory and staff cottages. The Project will be implemented consistent with the Visual Resources Management Plan developed for the MFP.[5] Furthermore, PCWA has designed the facilities for consistency with Forst Service visual standards included as mitigation measure AES-01. These measures state that: PCWA will maintain a visual buffer of trees between the road and either side of the campground entrance (and that tree planting may be required); the site design will limit the removal of large trees, to the extent possible; and that PCWA will consult with the USDA-FS Landscape Architect for approval on exterior finish and colors.

Water lines, electric lines, and communication lines to be installed as part of the Project will be buried along the shoulder of existing roads and will not be visible. Improvements

[5] The FERC license for PCWA's MFP, issued on June 8, 2020, commits PCWA to implementation of environmental programs and measures that are designed to protect, maintain, or enhance environmental and cultural resources over the term of the license. This includes implementation of a Visual Resources Management Plan (VRMP), which identifies and describes the measures that PCWA will implement over the term of the new license to help improve the existing visual condition of select MFP facilities with respect to USDA-FS objectives, standards, and guidelines. In addition, the VRMP describes how PCWA will consult and coordinate with the USDA-FS when implementing future projects that have the potential to affect visual resources on USDA-FS lands, including modification of existing MFP facilities or the construction of new MFP facilities.

to the existing boat ramp general parking area would improve the visual character of the facility.

With implementation of mitigation measure AES-01, any effects to the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings would be **less than significant with incorporation of mitigation**.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

All construction activities would take place during daylight hours. The Project does not include new permanent light sources, such as street lamps. Headlights from RVs traveling to or from the worker campground will emit temporary light within the area. Additionally, when in use, interior lights of RVs may emit low-level light during the nighttime hours. However, the campground will be obscured by surrounding forest and RV lights would not create a substantial light source that is visible from public views in the area. Therefore, the Project will have **a less than significant impact** from light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views.

4.1.4 Mitigation Measures

PCWA will implement the following mitigation measures to reduce potential aesthetic impacts to less-than-significant levels.

AES-01. U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service Visual Quality Standards

- PCWA will design and construct the new worker campground consistent with the following visual standards developed in consultation with the USDA-FS. The final design will be approved by the USDA-FS.
    - Maintain a visual buffer of trees between the road and the site on either side of the entrance. Tree planting may be required.
    - Limit the removal of large trees (particularly those greater than 35 inches DBH wherever reasonable.
    - Consult with the Forest Landscape Architect for approval on exterior finish and colors.
    - Refer to The Built Environment Image Guide for the National Forests and Grasslands (USDA-FS 2001) for guidance on regionally appropriate design.

4.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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)) or timberland (as defined in 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.2.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact related to agriculture or forest resources if the Project would:

- 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;
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract;
- Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land or timberland, as defined by the Public Resources Code;
- Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or
- 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.

4.2.2 Setting

The Project is located in a forested area on lands owned and managed by the USDA-FS, ENF. According to the ENF Land and Resource Management Plan, the Project area is within the High Country Management Area (Management Area 7) (USDA-FS 1990).

Management of this area emphasizes dispersed recreation, livestock forage, wildlife habitat, and snowpack retention. ENF recognizes the area's importance as a source of water for hydroelectric projects. Water stored and released from MFP reservoirs is used for agricultural purposes by downstream irrigators.

There are no lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance within the Project area. Further, no lands are in agricultural use or under a Williamson Act contract.

4.2.3 Impacts Discussion

a) The Project would have no impact related to the conversion of farmlands to non-agricultural use.

The Project is not located within agricultural farmland. Therefore, there would be **no impacts** related to the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use.

b) The Project would have no impact related to conflicts with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract.

The Project area is not designated for agricultural use. The Project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, nor conflict with a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, there would be **no impacts** related to zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract.

c) The Project would have a less than significant impact related to conflicts with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest lands or timberlands.

The Project area is located on USDA-FS land that is currently managed for a variety of resources, including wilderness, water, and dispersed recreation consistent with the ENF Land and Resource Management Plan (USDA-FS 1990). Construction of the campground and associated facilities for use by maintenance crews; provision of potable water and upgraded communication lines to existing staff housing and recreation facilities; and minor improvements to the existing boat ramp general parking area would not conflict with uses identified under the ENF Land and Resource Management Plan.

The land is zoned by Placer County for timber production (TPZ) and allowable land uses include forestry, accessory structures including pipelines and transmission lines, and campgrounds and caretaker and employee housing. Therefore, the Project would not have conflicts with existing zoning, nor would it cause rezoning of timberlands.

There is **no impact**.

d) The Project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

Construction of the worker campground will require the removal of up to 267 trees within a 1.7-acre area. The water, power, and communication lines will be located in previously disturbed land along existing roads. No tree removal will be required for the improvements to the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area. The Project, therefore, will result in the loss of 1.7-acre of previously undeveloped forest land. Removal of trees to develop facilities for use by PCWA, or other maintenance crews, for the purpose of maintaining hydroelectric and recreation infrastructure or for conducting forest management activities is consistent with designated USDA-FS uses and Placer County zoning. Therefore, this effect is **less than significant**.

e) The Project will not involve other changes in the existing environment which could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

Refer to checklist items c) and d) above. The Project would not involve other changes in the environment that could result in conversion of farmland, or convert forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, **no impact** would occur.

4.2.4 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts related to agriculture or forest resources would result from implementation of the Project. Therefore, no mitigation is required.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

4.3 AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

4.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact on the environment related to air resources if the Project would:

- Substantially conflict with or substantially obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan;
- 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;
- Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or
- Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.

4.3.2 Setting

Placer County exhibits large variations in terrain and consequently exhibits large variations in climate, both of which affect air quality. The western portions of the County slope relatively gradually, with deep river canyons running from southwest to northeast towards the crest of the Sierra Nevada. The warmest areas are found at the lower elevations along the west side of the County, while the coldest average temperatures are found at the highest elevations.

The prevailing wind direction over the County is westerly. However, the terrain of the area has a major influence on local winds, resulting in a wide variability in wind direction. Afternoon winds are generally channeled up-canyon, while nighttime winds generally flow down-canyon. Winds are, in general, stronger in spring and summer and weaker in fall and winter. Periods of calm winds and clear skies in fall and winter often result in strong,

ground-based inversions forming in mountain valleys. These layers of very stable air restrict the dispersal of pollutants, trapping these pollutants near the ground, representing the worst conditions for local air pollution occurring in the County (Placer County 2017).

Placer County crosses three distinct air basins: the Sacramento Valley, Mountain Counties, and Lake Tahoe basins. The Project area is within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB) and is under the jurisdiction of the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD), which is the local agency for air quality planning with authority over air pollutant sources. The SVAB is designated as nonattainment for federal and state ozone (O_3) standards, nonattainment for the federal particulate matter standard ($PM_{2.5}$), and nonattainment state particulate matter standard (PM_{10}) (Placer County 2017).

Natural occurrences of asbestos, which is classified as a known human carcinogen by state and federal agencies, are known to be present in some parts of Placer County. Based on a study by the California Geologic Survey, the Project area is moderately likely to contain naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) (California Department of Conservation 2006). This is based on the presence of metamorphosed mafic volcanic rocks underlying the Project area. NOA is known to be present in these rock types either in Placer County or in similar rocks in nearby counties. The most likely settings for NOA in these rocks are in fault zones and shear zones that contain slivers of serpentinite and/or high concentrations of the minerals talc and chlorite.

4.3.2.1 Regulatory Setting

Air quality within Placer County is regulated by several jurisdictions, including the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), the California Air Resources Board (ARB), and the PCAPCD. Each of these jurisdictions develops rules, regulations, and policies to attain the goals or directives imposed upon them through legislation. Although U.S. EPA regulations may not be superseded, both state and local regulations may be more stringent.

Concentrations of ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), respirable particulate matter (PM_{10}), fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$), and lead are used as indicators of ambient air quality conditions. Because these are the most prevalent air pollutants known to be deleterious to human health and extensive health-effects criteria documents are available, they are commonly referred to as “criteria air pollutants.” As stated previously, the Project area is within an area that is designated as nonattainment for federal and state O_3 standards, nonattainment for the federal particulate matter standard ($PM_{2.5}$), and nonattainment for state particulate matter standard (PM_{10}) (**Table 4**).

Table 4. Placer County – Mountain Counties Attainment Classification

Pollutant	Averaging Time	State Designation/ Classification	National Designation/ Classification
O_3	8-hour	Non-attainment	Unclassified/attainment
NO_2	1-hour Annual arithmetic mean	Attainment	Unclassified/attainment
CO	1-hour 8-hour	Unclassified	Unclassified/attainment
SO_2	1-hour 24-hour arithmetic mean	Attainment	Unclassified/attainment
PM_{10}	24-hour	Non-attainment	Unclassified/attainment
$PM_{2.5}$	24-hour	Unclassified	Unclassified/attainment
Pb	30-day average	Attainment	Unclassified/attainment

Sources: California ARB 2020 (state designation/classification), EPA 2022 (national designation/classification)

One of the most important reasons for air quality standards is the protection of those members of the population who are most sensitive to the adverse health effects of air pollution, termed “sensitive receptors.” The term “sensitive receptors” refers to specific population groups, as well as the land uses where they would reside for prolonged periods. Commonly identified sensitive population groups are children, the elderly, the acutely ill, and the chronically ill. Commonly identified sensitive land uses are residences, schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, retirement homes or convalescent homes, hospitals, and clinics. Toxic air contaminants (TAC), NOA, and odors are also factors that influence air quality and potential Project effects to air quality.

Federal Air Quality Regulations

At the federal level, the U.S. EPA has been charged with implementing national air quality programs. The U.S. EPA’s air quality mandates are drawn primarily from the Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA), which was signed into law in 1970. Congress substantially amended the FCAA in 1977 and again in 1990. The FCAA required the U.S. EPA to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and also set deadlines for their attainment. Two types of NAAQS have been established: primary standards, which protect public health, and secondary standards, which protect public welfare from non-health-related adverse effects, such as visibility restrictions.

California Air Quality Regulation

The 1988 California Clean Air Act (CCAA) requires that all air districts in the state endeavor to achieve and maintain California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) for ozone, CO, sulfur dioxide (SO_2), and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) by the earliest practical date. The CCAA specifies that districts focus particular attention on reducing the emissions from transportation and area-wide emission sources, and the act provides districts with authority to regulate indirect sources. Each district plan is required to either: (1) achieve

a 5% annual reduction, averaged over consecutive 3-year periods, in district-wide emissions of each nonattainment pollutant or its precursors, or (2) to provide for implementation of all feasible measures to reduce emissions.

Placer County Air Pollution Control District

The PCAPCD is the agency primarily responsible for ensuring that NAAQS and CAAQS are not exceeded and that air quality conditions within its District are maintained. Responsibilities of the PCAPCD include, but are not limited to, preparing plans for the attainment of ambient air quality standards, adopting and enforcing rules and regulations concerning sources of air pollution, issuing permits for stationary sources of air pollution, inspecting stationary sources of air pollution and responding to citizen complaints, monitoring ambient air quality and meteorological conditions, and implementing programs and regulations required by the FCAA and the CCAA.

4.3.3 Impacts Discussion

a) With implementation of mitigation, the Project would not conflict with or substantially obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.

A Project would be considered to conflict with or obstruct implementation of the regional air quality plan if it were inconsistent with the emissions inventories contained in applicable plans. The most recent air quality plan for Placer County was adopted in 2017 and includes an updated emission inventory for reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxide (NO_X). The Project would not result in emissions beyond those accounted for in the regional emissions inventory, which assumes routine use of on-road equipment such as trucks, as well as “other mobile source groupings” such as construction equipment (Placer County 2017). There would be no increase in emissions resulting from long-term use of the new worker campground, because campground will not induce an increase in the number of vehicles in the area and, conversely, may reduce the need for workers to commute in and out of the vicinity for future projects.

PCWA would implement the Proposed Project in accordance with applicable PCAPD rules and regulations and would obtain an Authority to Construct Permit from PCAPCD prior to any construction activities. Further, PCWA will implement mitigation measures AIR-01 and AIR-02, which require implementation of PCAPCD Best Management Practices (BMPs) for fugitive dust reduction (e.g., preparation of a dust control plan, compliance with applicable rules/regulations, and proper maintenance of construction equipment), as well as additional measures for minimizing fuels emissions.

Considering that construction activities would not exceed any of the PCAPCD’s thresholds of significance; and **with implementation of mitigation measure AIR-01 and AIR-02,** air quality **impacts would be less than significant.**

b) With implementation of mitigation, the Project would not 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 Project region is non-attainment for federal and state O_3 standards, nonattainment for the federal particulate matter standard ($PM_{2.5}$), and nonattainment for state particulate matter standard (PM_{10}) (Placer County 2017). Based on PCAPCD CEQA guidance, any Project that would individually have a significant air quality impact would also be considered to have a significant cumulative air quality impact. As described above, the Project would not exceed any of PCAPCD's construction-related thresholds of significance and air quality emissions would be further reduced with the implementation of **mitigation measure AIR-01 and AIR-02**. In addition, there would be no increase in emissions resulting from long-term use of the new worker campground, because campground will not induce an increase in the number of vehicles in the area and, conversely, may reduce the need for workers to commute in and out of the vicinity for future projects. Therefore, **with implementation of mitigation**, the Project would not contribute to a cumulatively significant increase of criteria pollutants and impacts would be **less than significant**.

c) With implementation of mitigation, the Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Sensitive receptors are defined as facilities or land uses that include members of the population who are particularly sensitive to the impacts of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, and people with illnesses. The nearest area to the Project that could house sensitive receptors is the town of Foresthill which is located approximately 22 miles to the southwest. Permanent human habitation in the surrounding National Forest areas of the Project is prohibited.

While not defined as sensitive receptors by PCAPCD, recreation visitors using Hell Hole Reservoir facilities (i.e., boat launch facility and Hell Hole Campground) could potentially be exposed to air pollutants as a result of construction activities. The boat launch for Hell Hole Reservoir closest to the Project area is approximately 0.3 mile away from the worker campground and Hell Hole Campground is approximately 0.7 mile away. Trench work for the installation of the power, water, and communication lines will occur closer to the public as work will be occurring along the public access roadway. The recreation season in the vicinity of Hell Hole Reservoir generally runs from late May to early September.

Based on the proximity of recreation facilities, it is expected that any pollutants would disperse prior to reaching them and recreation visitors would not be impacted. The potential for exposure will be further minimized through implementation of air quality and emissions mitigation measure AIR-01 to reduce fugitive dust emissions and AIR-02 to reduce fuels emissions during construction. In addition, PCWA will implement mitigation measure REC-01 which requires them to regularly coordinate with the ENF so that construction-related information can be disseminated to recreationists.

Based on the proximity of the Project to recreation facilities, the short-term potential exposure time, and **implementation of AIR-01, AIR-02, and REC-01**, the Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial amounts of air pollutants and impacts would be **less than significant**.

d) With implementation of mitigation, the Project would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.

Because offensive odors rarely cause any physical harm and no requirements for their control are included in state or federal air quality regulations, the PCAPCD has no rules or standards related to odor emissions, other than its Nuisance Rule 205, that states, "A person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause to have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property".

Recreation visitors using the Hell Hole Reservoir facilities in the vicinity of Project work and staging areas could be exposed to objectionable odors (e.g., from fuel emissions) as a result of construction activities. Based on the proximity of the recreation facilities to the Project area, it is expected that any odors would disperse prior to reaching them and recreation visitors would not be impacted. In addition, recreation users would only be in the vicinity of the Project area for a short duration and PCWA will implement mitigation measure REC-01 which requires them to regularly coordinate with the ENF so that construction-related information can be disseminated to recreationists. Based on the proximity of the Project to recreation facilities, the short-term potential exposure time, and implementation of mitigation REC-01, the Project would not create objectionable orders**.**

With **implementation of mitigation measure REC-01, this impact is less than significant**.

4.3.4 Mitigation Measures

PCWA will implement the following mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to air quality to less-than-significant levels.

AIR-01. Fugitive Dust Reduction Measures

- PCWA will be required to implement all applicable BMPs employed by the PCAPCD under Rule 228 (as amended April 10, 2003) (**Appendix A**). These BMPs will be incorporated into Contractor's construction plans required and approved by PCWA, and implemented by the contractor during construction.

AIR-02. Fuel Emissions Reduction Measures

- Depending on equipment availability, require that all diesel construction engines with a rating of 50 horsepower or greater meet, at a minimum, the Tier 2 California emission standards for off-road engines (13 CCR 2423 per 40 CFR 89.112).

- Require contractors to limit idling of construction vehicles and equipment on site to 15 minutes or less, unless idling is necessary for effective work progress or equipment operation.

- Require contractors to maintain construction equipment in proper working order, and in accordance with manufacturer specifications.

- Comply with the use of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel for all construction equipment, as required by the state of California, to minimize diesel particular matter emissions.

REC-01. Coordination with the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service

- Upon Project approval, PCWA will coordinate with the USDA-FS to inform the public of road closures and/or closure of the Hell Hole Boat Launch, including notification on the USDA-FS website. In addition, PCWA will also include notification on the PCWA website and post signs at the construction site.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.4.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact on the environment related to biological resources if the Project would:

- 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 (CDFW) or U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS);

- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS;

- 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;

- 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;

- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or

- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

4.4.2 Setting

This section describes the biological setting of the Project area, including aquatic and upland vegetation communities/wildlife habitats and special-status plants and wildlife. Provided below is a summary of the methods used to obtain information on biological resources in the Project area, and the resulting description of those resources.

4.4.2.1 Methods

This section summarizes the methods and results of the literature review and biological resource surveys completed to determine the presence of special-status plant and wildlife species or their habitat in the Project area.

Information on the resources described in this section is based on a review of existing literature and survey data, as well as Project -specific biological surveys. This report relies primarily on extensive technical studies conducted by PCWA as part of the relicensing of the MFP and documented in the following reports:

- TERR 1 – Vegetation Communities and Wildlife Habitat (PCWA 2011d);
- TERR 2 – Special-Status Plant Populations (PCWA 2011e);
- TERR 4 – Special-Status Wildlife (PCWA 2011f); and
- TERR 6 – Special-Status Bats (PCWA 2011g).

Additional information was obtained from the following sources:

- Preliminary Application Document (PAD) for the MFP (PCWA 2007);

- Biological Assessment/Biological Evaluation developed for the relicensing of the MFP (PCWA 2011h);

- CDFW California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB 2024);

- USDA-FS Pacific Southwest Regional Forester's List of Sensitive Plant Species by Forest (USDA-FS 2013);

- ENF lists of sensitive plant species, watch list plants, and NNIPs (USDA-FS 2019a; 2021, and 2022 [respectively]);

- Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment (USDA-FS 2004);
- USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) Species List (**Appendix C**);
- California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (CNPS 2024);

In addition, protocol-level special-status plant surveys were conducted in the Project area in June and July 2021 (PCWA 2021a).

The results of the literature review and field surveys conducted are discussed in the following subsections. Refer to **Map 3** for an overview of the location of known special-status plant populations and the location of wildlife occurrences in the vicinity of the Hell Hole Dam.

4.4.2.2 Results

The results of the biological resource surveys described above are presented in the following sections.

Under existing conditions, the proposed worker campground construction site is mostly undeveloped. However, there is an existing unpaved entrance and moderate disturbance from dispersed use in portions of the site. The proposed worker campground is bordered by developed MFP facilities including the Hell Hole Dormitory, Hell Hole operator cottages and shop, and the Hell Hole Boat Ramp and associated parking and picnic areas. The new well and associated structure will be located in previously developed lands near the operator cottages and shop.

Hell Hole Reservoir supports recreation-based activities such as camping, fishing, hiking, and boating during the recreation season, (typically Memorial Day through Labor Day).

Vegetation Communities

The elevation in the Project area is approximately 4,600 to 4,900 feet above mean sea level (msl). The Project area consists of barren/developed areas and mixed conifer-fir/mixed conifer-pine. These vegetation communities are described below.

Barren/Developed

The staging areas are restricted to barren and developed areas along the access road to Hell Hole Dam. These areas are paved and/or graveled and support only scattered grasses and herbaceous plants.

Mixed Conifer-Pine Habitat

Mixed conifer-pine vegetation is distributed on both the western and eastern slopes of the Northern Sierras at elevations between 1,900 to 7,800 ft. on mesic soils. The most common conifer species include ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), incense cedar

(*Calocedrus decurrens*), Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), white fir (*Abies concolor*), and sugar pine (*Pinus lambertiana*). Dominance is shared across species in this vegetation alliance type. Pines tend to dominate on south and west facing slopes, while Douglas-fir and white fir dominate on north-facing slopes. Incense cedar occurs throughout. Understory shrubs consist of deerbrush, whiteleaf manzanita, and greenleaf manzanita. The equivalent wildlife habitat is Sierran mixed conifer (California Wildlife Habitat Relationships [CWHR] classification system).

Aquatic Habitats

There are three aquatic features in the vicinity of the Project (**Map 3**):

- Hell Hole Reservoir, located approximately 0.3-mile northeast of the proposed worker campground;
- An emergent wetland, located in a depression approximately 300 feet west of the proposed worker campground.
- An unnamed intermittent stream, located just northwest of the proposed worker campground.

Special-Status Plants

For the purposes of this document, a special-status plant species is defined as any species that is granted special status by a federal agency or by the State of California. Federally listed species are defined as those species granted special-status by: (1) the USFWS under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and include threatened (FT), endangered (FE), proposed threatened or endangered (FPT, FPE), candidate (FC), or listed species proposed for delisting (FPD); or (2) the USDA-FS as a Forest Service Sensitive (FSS) species. Plant species protected by the State of California include those that are granted special-status by: (1) the CDFW under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), which includes rare (SR), threatened (ST), or endangered (SE) species or species proposed for listing (CST, CSE); and (2) special-status plants listed by the CNPS as rare, threatened, or endangered in California (California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) Lists 1B and 2) (CNPS 2024).

Appendix D provides a list of special-status plants developed through agency consultation; states whether a plant species is likely to occur considering the site location, elevation, and habitat characteristics; or whether a known plant population is present within 100 feet of Project sites.

Stebbins' phacelia (Phacelia stebbinsii) *FSS, CRPR 1B.2,*

Stebbins' phacelia is an annual flowering plant that is locally common in the vicinity of Hell Hole Reservoir. This species grows on dry, open, rocky sites (bedrock outcrops, rubble, or talus) on ledges or moderate to steep slopes from 2,000 to 6,800 feet in elevation.

There are 25 populations of Stebbins' phacelia in the vicinity of Hell Hole Reservoir, including one large population in the Project area (**Map 3**). This population, which is located in the vicinity of the Hell Hole Dormitory, covers approximately 11 acres and includes more than 50,000 individuals. Stebbins' phacelia was not identified directly in Project work areas or staging areas.

Special-Status Wildlife

For the purposes of this document, a special-status wildlife species is defined as:

- Any species that is granted special-status by a federal agency, including those identified by the USFWS as FT, FE FPT, FPE, FC, FPD, and species identified by the USDA-FS as FSS.

- Species listed by USFWS as Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC), which include "species, subspecies, and populations of all migratory nongame birds that, without additional conservation actions, are likely to become candidates for listing under the ESA of 1973" (USFWS 2021).

- Raptor species protected under Section 3503.5 of the Fish and Game Code and bird species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 USC 703–711).

- Wildlife species granted special status by the State of California including those identified as ST, SE, CST, California Fully Protected species (CFP), and California Species of Special Concern (CSC).

Appendix E provides a list of special-status wildlife species developed through agency consultation; states whether the animal is likely to occur considering the site location, elevation, and habitat characteristics; or whether a species is known to occur in the vicinity of the Project area. Refer to **Map 3** and **Map 4** for the location of known wildlife occurrences and habitations in the vicinity of the Project. Provided below, by taxonomic group, is a discussion of potential impacts to these species.

Western Bumble Bee (Bombus occidentalis) FSS, CSC

The western bumble bee is found throughout the mountain regions of the western United States. It typically occupies open habitats such as grasslands and meadows that support rodent burrows and sufficiently large populations of flowering plants. The western bumble bee overwinters in the ground in abandoned rodent burrows and emerges around mid-March.

Floral resources for foraging bees are not expected to be present (or present at very low densities) within 1.7-acre footprint of the proposed worker campground. This forested lot supports minimal understory vegetation (including flowering species). Flowering species may potentially be present in more open areas along the margins of the access roads and staging areas, as well as surrounding the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Lot.

There are no recorded occurrences of western bumble bee in the Analysis Area. No burrows were observed in proposed construction areas during reconnaissance surveys conducted in 2020.

Monarch Butterfly (Danaus plexippus plexippus) FC

The monarch butterfly has a western and eastern population in the United States and is a long-distance migrator in its North American range. In California, monarch butterflies are found in most habitats containing appropriate floral resources. The larvae are dependent on milkweed (Asclepias spp.) host plants for development. Adults can feed on a variety of floral resources. Western monarchs overwinter in forested locations along the coast of California and Mexico and show high fidelity to these wintering sites.

The Project area is located outside of overwintering habitat for monarch butterfly, which is restricted to coastal California and Mexico. However, the Project area is within the breeding range of the species. Milkweeds (Asclepias spp.) are a common plant species, and were generally observed during botanical surveys conducted across the MFP in 2021 (PCWA 2021a). Milkweeds, and other flowering species for foraging, are not expected to be present (or present at very low densities), in the understory of forested habitat within 1.7-acre footprint of the proposed worker campground. Milkweeds and other flowering species may potentially be present in more open areas along the margins of the access roads and staging areas, as well as surrounding the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Lot.

There are no recorded occurrences of monarch butterflies in the Project area.

American goshawk (Accipiter atricapillus) FSS, CSC

In the Sierra Nevada, American goshawks breed in a variety of forest types, typically selecting areas where tree size and canopy closure is high in relation to the surrounding forest. Foraging habitat should include snags and downed woody debris for prey base populations. An open understory for flight, nearby water, and relatively low slopes are also important breeding habitat characteristics.

USDA-FS Standards and Guidelines (S&Gs) require a 0.25-mile no disturbance buffer around American goshawk Protected Activity Centers (PACs), or around the nest tree, during the breeding season, if the nest location is known (USDA-FS 2004). The breeding season for American goshawk is February 15 to September 15. There are no American goshawk PACs within 0.25 mile of the Project area (**Map 4**). The nearest PAC is located approximately 1.3 miles to the northwest (in the vicinity of Big Meadows Campground).

Forested habitats in the Project area may provide suitable foraging habitat for American goshawks. However, habitat suitability for American goshawk in the area is low considering the extent of human activity during the recreation season and proximity to developed MFP and public recreation facilities.

Bald eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus) FSS, SE, CFP

Bald eagles typically select large conifers 41 to 46 inches DBH and greater than 100 feet tall for nest trees (Lehman 1980). In California, 73 percent of nest sites were within 0.5 mile of a body of water, and 89 percent within 1 mile. Roosting sites are typically in mature trees where eagles are somewhat sheltered from wind and weather and are in proximity to aquatic foraging habitat (USFWS 2007).

The USFWS National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (Guidelines) (USFWS 2007) recommend implementation of a 660-foot buffer around active bald eagle nests during the breeding season (February through August). This buffer may be reduced depending on site-specific factors such as the topography of the nest location and historical tolerances of eagles to human activities at the particular location (USFWS 2007).

The Project area includes potential aquatic habitat for this species (i.e., Hell Hole Reservoir).

Bald eagles are known to forage in Hell Hole Reservoir. In addition, there is a bald eagle territory located along the Rubicon River at the upper end of Hell Hole Reservoir, approximately 4 miles east of the Project area. Surveys in May 2024 confirmed that the nest within the territory is active.

California Spotted Owl (Strix occidentalis occidentalis) BCC, FSS, USDA-FS Management Indicator Species (MIS), CSC

The California spotted owl inhabits dense, old-growth, multi-layered mixed conifer, Douglas-fir, and mixed conifer-hardwood habitats from sea level to 7,600 ft. This species prefers large trees and high canopy cover for nesting and foraging. The Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment (USDA-FS 2004) specifies land allocations, desired conditions, and standards and guidelines for PACs and Home Range Core Areas (HRCAs) for the California spotted owl.[6]

USDA-FS S&Gs require a 0.25-mile no disturbance buffer around California spotted owl PACs, or around the nest tree, during the breeding season, if the nest location is known (USDA-FS 2004). The breeding season for California spotted owl is March 1 through August 30. There are no PACs or HRCAs within 0.25 mile of the Project area (**Map 4**).

[6] USDA-FS Region 5 is currently conducting ESA Section 7 consultation with USFWS regarding the potential effects of their management activities on the California spotted owl. As part of this process, the Region 5 forests will transition from management of habitat for California spotted owl as described in the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment (SNFPA) (USDA-FS 2004) to new management parameters as described in the Conservation Strategy for California Spotted Owl in the Sierra Nevada (USDA-FS 2019). Future management will focus on California spotted owl "areas of ecological importance" defined to include nest stands, PACs, territories or core areas, and home ranges. Pending issuance of the USFWS Biological Opinion and availability of new spatial data showing the location and extent of "areas of ecological importance", this document has framed impacts to California spotted owl in terms of PACs and HRCAs as currently defined in the SNFPA (USDA-FS 2004).

The nearest PACs are located approximately 1.3 miles to the northwest (in the vicinity of Big Meadows Campground), and approximately 1 mile to the south.

Forested habitats in the Project area may provide suitable foraging habitat for California spotted owls. However, habitat suitability for California spotted owl in the area is low considering the extent of human activity during the recreation season and proximity to developed MFP and public recreation facilities.

Other Raptors and Non-Raptorial Birds

In addition to the species listed above, additional special-status raptor species including (but not limited to) osprey (*Pandion haliaeetus*) have the potential to nest and forage in the vicinity of the Hell Hole Dam Project area, as well as non-raptorial birds including (but not limited to) olive-sided flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*) (BCC, CSC), black-throated gray warbler (*Setophagia nigrescens*) (BCC), and hermit warbler (*Setophaga occidentalis*) (BCC).

Pallid Bat (Antrozous pallidus) FSS, CSC; Townsend's Big-Eared Bat (Corynorhinus townsendii) Candidate CST, FSS, CSC; and Fringed Myotis Bat (Myotis thysanodes) FSS

Three FSS bat species may potentially occur in the Project area: pallid bat, fringed myotis and Townsend's big-eared bat. Because of their similar habitat requirements, the three bats will be grouped for this analysis.

In California, pallid bats are strongly associated with arid regions, and are found in a variety of habitats including rocky, arid deserts and canyons, shrub-steppe grasslands, karst formations, and high elevation conifer forests. Pallid bats can roost in a variety of locations, including rock crevices, tree hollows, mines, caves, man-made structures, and inside large conifer snags, basal hollows, and oak bole cavities.

In California, fringed myotis is found throughout the state, from the coast (including Santa Cruz Island to greater than 5,900 feet in elevation in the Sierra Nevada. Fringed myotis roosts in crevices found in rocks, cliffs, buildings, underground mines, bridges, and in large, decadent trees.

The Project area represents potential foraging and roosting habitat for the pallid bat and the fringed myotis; and potential foraging habitat for the Townsend's big-eared bat. All three species were observed in the vicinity of Hell Hole Reservoir during surveys implemented during the 2007 technical studies for relicensing of the MFP.

4.4.3 Impacts Discussion

a) With implementation of mitigation, the Project will not have a substantial adverse impact, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS.

The following section describes potential impacts to special-status plants and wildlife species and their habitats identified in the vicinity of the Hell Hole Dam Project area.

4.4.3.1 Special-Status Plants

There is a large population of Stebbins' phacelia located in open habitat surrounding the Hell Hole dormitory. While Stebbins' phacelia has not been identified directly in Project work areas or staging areas, there is some potential for individuals to be present in open, rocky areas in or adjacent to existing roads where trenches will be excavated for placement of the water and communication lines.

In order to minimize the potential for direct impacts to Stebbins' phacelia, mitigation measure BIO-01 states that excavation of trenches for the potable water supply system and new communication lines within 50 feet of Stebbins' phacelia populations PHST-06 will be will be restricted to a 2 foot wide trench within the unvegetated shoulder of the road. Requirements to implement environmental training regarding special-status species potentially present in the Project area (mitigation measure BIO-02) and reporting protocols for special-status species (including plants) would further minimize the potential for direct impacts to Stebbins' phacelia (mitigation measure BIO-03).

In addition, 12 NNIPs were identified in the Project vicinity during botanical surveys conducted in 2021. Ground disturbance, use of vehicles, and foot traffic could result in the spread of NNIPs. Importing equipment or materials from outside the watershed also could potentially result in the introduction of new NNIP species. The introduction or spread of NNIP species could potentially degrade native habitats for sensitive plants, including Stebbins' phacelia.

PCWA will implement mitigation measure BIO-04 to minimize the potential for introduction or spread of NNIPs. These measures includes, but are not limited to: cleaning of vehicles and equipment prior to entering the Project area; cleaning of vehicles of off-road vehicles and heavy equipment; inspecting and removing weed seed from clothing and shoes; using certified weed-free erosion control materials; and maintaining gravel and soil stockpiles in a weed-free state. PCWA will also implement post-Project NNIP monitoring and treatments (mitigation measure BIO-05). Implementation of these measures would minimize temporary impacts to suitable habitat for Stebbins' phacelia.

With implementation of measures BIO-01, BIO-02, BIO-03, BIO-04, and BIO-05 potential impacts to special-status plants resulting from the Project would be less than significant.

4.4.3.2 Special-Status Wildlife

The following subsections describe the impacts of the Project and management recommendations for special-status wildlife species identified in the vicinity of the Project area.

Western Bumble Bee and Monarch Butterfly

Western bumble bees and monarch butterflies potentially breeding or foraging in the Action Area could be directly affected (physically harmed or flushed) during ground disturbance and vegetation removal required for the Project. Direct effects are expected to be minimal considering that: the forested area within the 1.7-acre campground site supports a sparse understory and few floral resources; that the trenches for placement of the water and communication line will be within the footprint of existing roads/shoulder of roads; and that improvements to the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Lot will be confined to the footprint of the existing parking lot. Direct effects would be temporary and limited to the period of construction, and would be further minimized through implementation of mitigation measures including: implementation of environmental training regarding special-status species potentially present in the Project area (mitigation measure BIO-02); and general construction measures that limit ground-disturbing activities to defined work areas, staging areas, and access routes (mitigation measure GEN-01).

Indirect effects to western bumble bees and monarch butterflies could potentially occur through loss of degradation of habitat resulting from ground disturbance, vegetation removal, and introduction or spread of NNIPs, which could potentially displace or outcompete native plants, including milkweeds which are utilized by monarch butterflies for breeding.

As described above under direct effects, the Project will result in minimal loss of floral resources, and implementation of GEN-01 would limit ground-disturbing activities to defined work areas, staging areas, and access routes. Implementation of mitigation measures BIO-04 and BIO-05 would minimize the potential for introduction or spread of NNIPs. Refer to the discussion of potential indirect effects to Stebbins' phacelia for a description of these measures.

Implementation of mitigation measures BIO-02, BIO-04, BIO-05, and GEN-01 would minimize effects to western bumble bees and monarch butterflies to less-than-significant levels.

Bald Eagle, American goshawk, and California Spotted Owl and Other Forest-Dwelling Raptors and Non-Raptorial Bird Species

The Project would be implemented during the breeding season for bald eagle (February through August), American goshawk (February 15 through September 15), and California spotted owl (March through August), and nesting season for other forest-dwelling raptors and non-raptorial bird species. Therefore, equipment noise and increased human activity resulting from implementation of the Project could potentially result in disturbance of nests if present in forested habitat in the Project vicinity.

An active bald eagle nest is located along the Rubicon River at the upper end of Hell Hole Reservoir. USFWS National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (Guidelines) (USFWS 2007) recommend that activities be restricted within 660 feet of bald eagle nests, and also

provide general guidelines for modifying activities in the vicinity of bald eagle roosts. In addition, during the relicensing of the MFP, resource agencies requested that a 0.25-mile (1,320-foot) activity buffer around the bald eagle nest be used for impact analyses. The known nest is located more than 4 miles from the Project area. Therefore, the Project is outside the recommended no-activity buffer and will not affect the bald eagle nest.

USDA-FS standards and guidelines recommend a 0.25-mile no-activity buffer around American goshawk and California spotted owl PACs (or, alternately, within 0.25 mile around the nest tree within the PAC, if the nest location is known). No known American goshawk nests or PACs are near the Project area. Therefore, the Project would not result in disturbance to any known goshawk or California spotted owl nests.

In addition, as described in mitigation measure BIO-06, if construction occurs during the breeding season, PCWA will conduct preconstruction clearance surveys to determine whether there are raptor nests within 0.25 mile or non-raptorial nests within 250 feet of the Project area. If a new nest is documented, no construction activities will be initiated within the appropriate no-activity buffer (i.e., 0.25-mile for American goshawk, California spotted owl, and osprey; 500 feet for all other raptors; and 250 feet for passerines) until the fledglings have left the nest, unless appropriate alternative avoidance and protection measures have been developed and approved through consultation with resource agencies. Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-06 would reduce any potential impacts to new or previously undocumented nests to less than significant. Implementation of BIO-2, which requires implementation of environmental training regarding special-status wildlife and applicable measures to avoid and protect species, and BIO-3, which requires reporting of raptor or songbird nests in the course of construction, would further minimize direct effects of the Project.

The Project will require removal of up to 267 trees within the proposed worker campground. Removal of trees and development of the campground would result in a loss of approximately 1.7 acres of potential foraging habitat for American goshawk and California spotted owl and potential foraging or nesting habitat for other birds (raptors and passerines) potentially present in the area. As described previously, habitat suitability for American goshawk and California spotted owl within the proposed worker campground site is low considering the extent of human presence and proximity to previously developed facilities. Surrounding forested areas that represent potential habitat for American goshawk, California spotted owl, and other raptors or passerines.

With implementation of mitigation measures BIO-02, BIO-03, and BIO-06, effects to bald eagle, American goshawk, and California spotted owl and other forest-dwelling raptors and non-raptorial bird species would be **less than significant**.

Pallid Bat, Townsend's Big-Eared Bat, and Fringed Myotis Bat

Ground disturbance and tree removals required for implementation of the Project could potentially result in direct effects to foraging and roosting pallid bats, Townsend's big-eared bats and fringed myotis.

Pallid bats, Townsend's big-eared bats and fringed myotis are sensitive to roost site disturbance. Townsend's big-eared bats roost mostly in caves, mines, and buildings and are not likely to be disturbed or impacted by Project activities as these features are not present in the Project area. Pallid bat and fringed myotis, however, roost in large trees and snags, preferring large trees with deformities or loose bark for roosting. Construction of the worker campsite will require removal of up to 267 trees, including up to 30 large trees (greater than 36 inches DBH) that may support roosting bats. Removal of trees could result in mortality of non-volant young, if present. In addition, day-roosting bats may be flushed from tree roosts as a result of noise and human presence during tree removal or other project activities that require the use of mechanical equipment. Disturbance effects to bats potentially roosting in the vicinity of the campground would be minimal and short-term (limited to the duration of tree removal within the 1.7-acre site of the proposed worker campground).

To minimize impacts to roosting habitat for bats, PCWA will implement mitigation measure BIO-7, which states that the number of trees removed will be reduced, where possible, during refinement of the engineering design (100% designs) and during on-site consultation with the contractor. PCWA will prioritize retention of large trees (greater than 36 inches DBH) that have high wildlife habitat value. Potential disturbance of roosting bats would be further minimized by implementation of environmental training regarding special-status species potentially present in the Project area and associated avoidance and protection measures (BIO-2); and reporting protocols if special-status species, including pallid bats, Townsend's big-eared bats and fringed myotis, are observed during implementation of the Project (BIO-3).

With implementation of mitigation measures BIO-2, BIO-3, and BIO-7, impacts to special-status bats would be reduced to **less-than-significant levels.**

b) The Project will not have a substantial adverse impact on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS.

Project work and staging areas are located within areas classified as mixed conifer–pine vegetation alliance. While Hell Hole Reservoir and an unnamed intermittent stream are present within the Project area, these features do not support riparian habitat and will not be affected by the Project. Furthermore, the Project has been designed to avoid an emergent wetland located in a depression approximately 300 feet west of the proposed worker campground. There are no other sensitive habitats present that would be affected by construction activities. Therefore, there is **no impact**, and no mitigation is required.

c) The Project will not have a substantial adverse impact 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.

As described previously, the Project has been designed to avoid an emergent wetland located in a depression approximately 300 feet west of the proposed worker campground.

The Project will not result in direct removal, filling, or hydrological interruption of any protected wetlands.

Therefore, there is **no impact**, and no mitigation is required.

d) With implementation of mitigation, the Project would not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors because the Project is not located in a known migration corridor or recognized flyway; and the Project would not impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

Project work and staging areas are located in upland habitats, and therefore the Project would not affect movements of resident or migratory fish.

The Project area is not located in a recognized flyway, and would not impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

A variety of migratory birds may potentially occur in the Project area. Refer to the response under item a) for a discussion of potential impacts to special-status migratory birds including, but not limited to, American goshawk, bald eagle, and California spotted owl.

The IPaC report for the Project area listed four BCC: bald eagle (addressed under item a), black-throated gray warbler (*Setophaga nigrescens*), hermit warbler (*Setophaga occidentalis*), and olive-side flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*). Black-throated gray warbler, hermit warbler, and olive-sided flycatcher may potentially be present and nesting in the Project area during construction. Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) are known to nest on Hell Hole Reservoir (refer to **Map 4**). Refer to Attachment D for a summary of the habitat requirements of these species.

The Project requires removal of up to 267 trees within the proposed 1.7-acre worker campground site. Removal of trees during the breeding season could potentially result in disturbance or mortality for a wide variety of tree-nesting birds. In order to minimize the potential for impacts to breeding birds, PCWA would implement mitigation measure BIO-06, which requires PCWA to implement pre-construction surveys no more than 30 days prior to implementation of the activity. If active nests are identified during the survey, no activities would be implemented within a species-appropriate buffer around the nest until the end of the breeding season, or until written authorization to proceed is obtained from the appropriate resource agency.

Considering that the Project area would not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors; that the Project is not located in a known migration corridor or recognized flyway; and **with implementation of mitigation measures BIO-06** to minimize the potential for impacts to nesting birds, impacts to these resources would be **less than significant**.

e) With implementation of mitigation, the Project will not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

Placer County has a several policies and ordinances that protect native and landmark trees, oak woodlands, and riparian corridors. These policies are detailed in the Natural Resources Element of the Placer County General Plan (Placer County 2013), the Tree Preservation Ordinance (Article 12.16 of the Placer County Code), and the Oak Woodland Management Plan. The policies are applicable only to discretionary projects on private lands that require permits or other authorizations through Placer County. Project work and staging areas are on lands owned by USDA-FS and therefore would require authorization from ENF, rather than Placer County. The Project, therefore, would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances. There is **no impact**, and no mitigation is required.

f) The Project will 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.

Work and staging areas are not within the jurisdiction of any local, regional, or state conservation plan such as a Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan. Placer County has developed the Placer County Conservation Plan (PCCP), which includes a joint Natural Community Conservation Plan and Habitat Conservation Plan that will protect fish and wildlife and fulfill the requirements of the ESA, CESA, and the Natural Community and Conservation Plan Act. Placer County also implements a County Aquatic Resources Program that protects streams, wetlands, and other water resources and fulfill the requirements of the federal Clean Water Act and analogous state laws and regulations (Placer County 2020). However, the PCCP applies only to those portions of Placer County east and downslope of Auburn/Highway 49 (excluding the cities of Auburn, Loomis, Rocklin, and Roseville). In addition, the Project would not result in impacts to special-status species covered under the PCCP. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with the provisions of the PCCP. There is **no impact,** and no mitigation is required**.**

4.4.4 Mitigation Measures

GEN-01. General Construction Measures

- Construction vehicles and ground-disturbing activities shall be restricted to public roads and parking areas, specifically designated access roads, Project work areas, and Project staging areas. These areas will be clearly identified, and will be staked and flagged where necessary prior to initiation of construction activities.

- All construction activities, including site preparation and development, will be restricted to Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Work outside of these hours would require approval from PCWA's Director of Power Generation Services.

BIO-01. Stebbins' Phacelia Avoidance and Protection

- Excavation of trenches for the potable water supply system, electric powerline, and new communication lines within 50 feet of Stebbins' phacelia population PHST-06 will be restricted to a 2-foot-wide trench within the unvegetated shoulder of the road.

BIO-02. Environmental Training

- Construction crews or other contractors will receive environmental training prior to initiation of construction. The Environmental Training Program (ETP) will include the following:
    - Photographs, habitat, and life history information for special-status plant and wildlife species, including bald eagles, that are known to occur or may potentially occur in the vicinity of the MFP;
    - Measures to be implemented to protect special-status plant and animal species and their habitats during routine Project maintenance activities;
    - Reporting procedures for discovery of raptor or other bird nests in the vicinity of the MFP; and
    - Photographs and life history information for NNIPs that are known to occur or may potentially occur in the MFP.

BIO-03. Biological Resource Discovery

- PCWA's Environment Services Manager will be contacted immediately if any of the following are discovered:
    - Bald Eagle or other Raptor Carcass
    - Raptor or Songbird Nest
    - New Special-Status Species Occurrence
    - Aquatic Invasive Species Infestation

BIO-04. Prevention of the Introduction or Spread of Non-native Invasive Plants

- Revegetation and seeding will be implemented consistent with measures outlined in the Vegetation and Integrated Pest Management Plan (VIPMP).
- PCWA will avoid driving off-road in NNIP infested areas. Vehicle and foot travel will be restricted to established roads and trails whenever possible.
- All PCWA and PCWA contractor field vehicles and equipment previously used on non-paved surfaces outside of the watershed will be thoroughly cleaned before entering the Project area.

- PCWA will ensure that off-road vehicles and heavy equipment are free of material that may contain seeds of NNIPs prior to leaving an area infested with weeds. All off-road vehicles and heavy equipment will be inspected for weed seeds stuck in tire treads or mud on the vehicle. PCWA will designate appropriate cleaning sites, and all such equipment will be cleaned (power or high-pressure cleaning) before entering weed-free areas and/or National Forest lands.

- Vehicle and equipment cleaning need not be conducted in emergency situations. Instead, PCWA will notify the USDA-FS of the location after the emergency so that the site can be checked for the introduction of NNIPs the following year. Notification will include identifying the location of the equipment's most recent operations.

- Workers will inspect, remove, and properly dispose of readily observable weed seeds and plant parts found on their clothing and equipment. Proper disposal includes bagging the seeds and plant parts prior to disposal.

- Certified weed-free hay, mulch, or straw will be used for erosion control. If certified weed-free straw is not available, certified weed-free rice straw will be used. If weed-free material is not available, PCWA will consult with USDA-FS botanist regarding other options (e.g., sterilized straw pellets).

- PCWA will maintain stockpiles of gravel and soil in a weed-free state. If stockpiles are found to be infested, PCWA will document the weed populations and discuss treatment with the USDA-FS prior to moving gravel or soil from an infested site.

BIO-05. Post-Construction Non-Native Invasive Plant Monitoring

- PCWA will conduct target NNIP treatment and monitoring, and implement measures to prevent the spread or introduction of NNIPs at all locations where ground disturbance occurs as a result of MFP activities or outside material such as rock, gravel, or fill is imported.

- Monitoring will occur once annually after the modifications are completed until it is determined in consultation with the USDA-FS that a site has been successfully revegetated.

BIO-06. Pre-Construction Raptor Surveys

- A qualified biologist will search within 0.25 mile of the site for raptor nests, and within 250 feet of the site for passerine nests.

- Biologists will conduct a visual and aural search of the survey area on foot, using binoculars to scan tree tops for the presence of raptor nests.

- If any active nests are identified, a species-appropriate buffer (see table below) for the nest will be applied and no activities may occur within that buffer until the young have fledged, as detailed below:

Species	Buffer Size
American goshawk	0.25 mile
California spotted owl	0.25 mile
Bald Eagle	660 feet
All other raptors	500 feet
All other birds (i.e., passerines)	250 feet

- If PCWA cannot comply with the buffers and timing provided above, they will consult with appropriate resources agencies (USDA-FS, CDFW and/or USFWS) to develop site-specific buffers considering the species, the location of the nest, and the nature of the construction activities to be implemented.

- If no active nests are detected during these surveys, no additional mitigation is required.

BIO-07. Tree Removal

- PCWA will reduce the number of trees to be removed for construction of the worker campground, where possible, during refinement of the engineering design (100% designs) and during on-site consultation with the contractor.

- PCWA will prioritize retention of large trees (greater than 36 inches DBH), and trees along the road and campground entrance to create visual screening.

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource as defined in Section 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

4.5.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact on the environment related to cultural resources if the Project would:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical or archeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines; or
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.

4.5.2 Setting

The archaeological record for the northern Sierra Nevada and Lake Tahoe Basin postulates more than 8,000 years of Native American occupation in the region. The upper reaches of the Middle Fork American River and Rubicon River lies within the ethnographic territory of two indigenous Native American groups: the Hill Nisenan (Southern Maidu) and Washoe. The crest of the Sierra Nevada served as a dividing line between their territories, with the Nisenan to the west and the Washoe to the east. Linguistically distinct groups, their territories overlapped in the vicinity of the MFP.

Nisenan inhabited the drainages of the Yuba, Bear, and American rivers, and also the lower reaches of the Feather River, extending from the east banks of the Sacramento River on the west to the mid to high elevations of the western flank of the Sierra Nevada (Wilson and Towne 1978). Washoe historically inhabited the region east of the crest of the Sierra Nevada into Carson Valley, extending from the Walker River in the south to Honey Lake in the north, with peripheral territory extending to the mid-elevations of the west Sierran slope (d'Azevedo 1986). The two ethnographic groups fully exploited their territories by following a pattern of seasonal transhumance, acquiring different resources across a range of elevations and environments.

The first Euroamericans to make contact with Native Americans in the Project vicinity were either Spanish explorers or mountain men trapping in and exploring the region. Spanish exploration of the Central Valley did not begin until the late 1700s, and the eastern edges of the Central Valley and the Sierra Nevada were not explored until the early 1800s. Early explorations of the Sierra Nevada and its flanks were soon followed by groups of Euroamerican immigrants moving west.

The hub of non-Native American settlement in the 1840s was Sutter's Fort on the Sacramento River. California's gold rush began with the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill on the American River in 1848. By 1849, the gold discovery ignited a worldwide frenzy, as "forty-niners" dashed to the California gold country. The rush lasted only a few years, but it brought a major influx of people to California.

Early arrivals to the gold fields began prospecting in placer deposits in and along rivers and streams, which were easily accessible. Beginning in the 1850s, mining activity included the construction of dams, water ditches, and flumes to drain rivers and expose their beds for mining. Eventually, the surface placers became depleted, and it was necessary to access deeper gold deposits in streambeds and other areas. These deposits were initially accessed by drift mining, which involved the excavation of shafts and tunnels into auriferous gravels, and later by hydraulic mining. The environmental impacts associated with hydraulic mining eventually led to an injunction against the practice in 1884, and the subsequent banning of hydraulic mining. However, hydraulic mining and its associated ditch and water conveyance systems facilitated the development of hydroelectric systems in the Sierra Nevada (PCWA 2011a, b).

4.5.2.1 Methods

Area of Potential Effect

The Area of Potential Effect (APE) associated with the Project is defined to include the work areas, staging areas, and access routes plus surrounding areas up to and including the FERC Project boundary. Refer to **Map 5** for a depiction of the APE.

Cultural Resource Investigations

Efforts to locate cultural resources within the APE consisted of record searches, reviewing technical studies and environmental documents prepared for the MFP relicensing, conducting cultural resource field investigations, consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and local Native American representatives.

4.5.2.2 Records Searches and Field Survey Results

Record Searches and Report Review

The proposed work areas, staging areas, and access routes are located with the FERC Project boundary for the MFP. As part of the relicensing of the MFP, PCWA: (1) conducted records searches and field surveys to identify and inventory cultural resources in the vicinity of the MFP; (2) evaluated numerous resources to determine whether they are

eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP); and (3) consulted extensively with Native American Tribes and resource agencies. The methods and results of these efforts are documented in detail in the following reports:

- Final 2005 Cultural Resources Inventory Study Report (2006). Available in PCWA's Pre-Application Document filed with FERC on December 13, 2007. (PCWA 2006).

- Final 2006 Cultural Resources Inventory Study Report (2007). Available in PCWA's Pre-Application Document filed with FERC on December 13, 2007. (PCWA 2007).

- CUL-1 – Cultural Resources Technical Study Report (2007). Available in PCWA's Application for New License filed with FERC on February 23, 2011. (PCWA 2011a).

- CUL-1 – Cultural Resources Technical Study Report (2008). Available in PCWA's Application for New License filed with FERC on February 23, 2011. (PCWA 2011b).

- CUL 1 – Cultural Resources National Register of Historic Places Eligibility Study Report (PCWA 2010), which is available in PCWA's License Application (PCWA 2011a);

- Eldorado National Forest, Georgetown Ranger District – Hell Hole Boat Ramp Extension Project Cultural Resource Report – R201X05XX00XXX (complete number to be assigned by Eldorado National Forest)

- Eldorado National Forest, Georgetown Ranger District – Hell Hole Reservoir Low Water Survey Cultural Resource Report R2016-0503-30018.

Data from the following organizations, tribes, and agencies was reviewed in support of PCWA's relicensing studies and subsequent studies.

- Eldorado National Forest

- California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS)

- United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC)

- Shingle Springs Rancheria

- Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada

- Todd Valley Miwok-Maidu Cultural Foundation

- Colfax-Todd Valley Consolidated Tribe

- Miwok Tribe of the Eldorado Rancheria.

- Placer County Historical Society

- California State Library

- Bancroft Library at the University of California – Berkeley

Survey Results

As part of the relicensing studies, PCWA conducted pedestrian surveys within the FERC Project boundary, including the work areas, staging areas, and access routes that will be used to support the Project. Based on the records searches and the results of these surveys, no cultural resources are present in the immediate vicinity of the Project.

The following surveys were conducted to ensure that the MFP area has been surveyed for cultural resources.

- **2006/2008** — The following areas were surveyed for cultural resources as part of PCWA's relicensing studies:

    - All areas within the FERC Project boundary; and

    - Within 200 feet of any feature, facility or Project road located outside the FERC Project boundary.

- **2011** — The entire length of the Hell Hole Reservoir Trail from Hell Hole Dam to Upper Hell Hole Campground was surveyed.

- **2014** — The Hell Hole Boat Ramp area was surveyed for cultural resources during low water conditions in support of the Hell Hole Boat Ramp Extension Project.

- **2015** — All previously unsurveyed areas within the boundaries of Hell Hole Reservoir between 4,544 and 4.445 feet msl were surveyed when water surface elevation was unusually low.

4.5.2.3 Native American Consultation

As described above, PCWA conducted extensive consultation with local Native American Tribal representatives in association with the MFP relicensing. Further, to comply with Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), which became law on January 1, 2015, PCWA consulted with Native American Tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the Project. On August 7, 2024, PCWA contacted the NAHC via email requesting the NAHC to identify Native American Tribes that may have an interest in the Project area. The NAHC responded via email on August 19, 2024, providing a consultation list that included seven tribes. On October 9, 2024, PCWA sent formal notification letters to the tribes identified by the NAHC as being traditionally or cultural affiliated with the Project area. The notification letters included relevant background information and invited the

tribes to identify any Tribal Cultural Resources or issues that should be addressed in the CEQA document during a 30-day comment period. No responses were received. Since no Tribes requested consultation during the 30-day comment period, the AB 52 process is considered complete.

4.5.3 Impacts Discussion

a) The Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical or archeological resource as defined in Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines defines "substantial adverse change" as physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings. Based on the results of records searches and field surveys conducted during the MFP relicensing, there are no cultural (i.e., historical or archeological) resources within the Project APE. Therefore, the Project would not result in substantial adverse changes to any such resources.

During construction, it is possible that previously unknown historic resources could be discovered during ground-disturbing or other construction activities. In the unlikely event that historic or archaeological resources are discovered during construction activities, PCWA will implement Mitigation Measure CUL-01, which states that PCWA will implement all applicable measures for the protection of cultural resources, consistent with the Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP) for the MFP. In addition, as described in Mitigation Measure CUL-02 if a previously unknown cultural resource is uncovered during ground disturbing activities, PCWA will immediately cease work in the area and will notify the USDA-FS. Ground disturbing activities will not be resumed until appropriate protection and avoidance measures are identified in consultation with the USDA-FS, SHPO, and the local Native American Tribal representatives. Finally, PCWA will implement CUL-03, which states that PCWA will conduct cultural resources awareness training in the field with PCWA staff and subcontractors prior to any construction or ground-disturbing activities. The training will include protocols for inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources.

Considering that there are no cultural resources within the Project APE, and **with implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-01, CUL-02, and CUL-03** to minimize the potential for impacts to previously undiscovered cultural resources, impacts would be **less than significant**.

b) With incorporation of mitigation, the Project would not disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.

There are no dedicated cemeteries in the vicinity of the Project, therefore the Project will not affect human remains interred in a dedicated cemetery. In the event that human remains are discovered during ground-disturbing or other construction activities, PCWA will implement Mitigation Measures CUL-03 which describe the protocol for reporting, evaluating, and protecting any human remains, if encountered during the Project.

Implementation of training described under mitigation measures CUL-02 would further minimize the potential for impacts to tribal resources. **Implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-02 and CUL-03** would reduce any potential impacts to human remains to a **less-than-significant level**.

4.5.4 Mitigation Measures

PCWA will implement the following mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to cultural resources to less-than-significant levels.

CUL-01. Historic Properties Management Plan

PCWA will implement measures for the protection of cultural resources consistent with the MFP Historic Properties Management Plan.

CUL-02. Cultural Resource Awareness Training

- PCWA will conduct cultural resource awareness training in the field with PCWA staff and subcontractors prior to any construction or ground-disturbing activities.

- The HPMP coordinator (or designee) will be responsible for reviewing all construction plans to determine whether there are cultural resources present in the vicinity of the construction activities, and for organizing the cultural resource awareness training.

- During the training, the HPMP coordinator, or their representative, will discuss the types of cultural resources potentially present in the area, and procedures for avoiding these resources. The HPMP coordinator will also review the protocols for inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources.

CUL-03. Cultural or Tribal Resource Discovery

- PCWA's Environmental Services Manager will be contacted immediately if any of the following are discovered:

    - Previously Unknown Cultural or Tribal Resource
    - Human Remains
    - Paleontological Resource
    - National Register of Historic Places Eligible Site Damage

- If a previously unknown cultural resource is uncovered during ground disturbing activities, PCWA will immediately cease work in the area and will notify the USDA-FS. Ground disturbing activities will not be resumed until appropriate protection and avoidance measures are identified in consultation with the USDA-FS, SHPO, and the local Native American Tribal representatives.

4.6 ENERGY

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.6.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact on the environment related to energy if the Project would:

- Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation; or
- Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

4.6.2 Setting

In January 2018, the Governor of California's Office of Planning and Research transmitted its proposal for the comprehensive updates to the CEQA guidelines to the California Natural Resources Agency. This included an update to Section 15126.2(a) in response to the California Supreme Court's decision in California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District (2015) 62 Cal.4th 369. In late 2018, the Natural Resources Agency finalized the updates to the CEQA guidelines, including an addition of an Energy Section into the sample environmental checklist in Appendix G (in addition to the stand-alone Appendix F of the Guidelines), to better integrate the energy analysis with the rest of CEQA. These updated Guidelines became effective on December 28, 2018.

4.6.2.1 State Regulations and Plans

Relevant state and local energy-related regulations and plans are summarized below.

Warren-Alquist Act

The California Legislature passed the Warren-Alquist Act in 1974. The Warren-Alquist Act created the California Energy Commission (CEC). The Act also incorporated the following key provisions designed to address energy demand:

- It directed the CEC to formulate and adopt the nation's first energy conservation standards for buildings constructed and appliances sold in California;

- The act removed the responsibility of electricity demand forecasting from the utilities, which had a financial interest in high demand projects, and transferred it to the CEC; and

- The CEC was directed to embark on a research and development program, focused on fostering non-conventional energy sources.

Assembly Bill 1007 (2007)

Assembly Bill 1007, passed in 2005, required the CEC to prepare a statewide plan to increase the use of alternative fuels in California (State Alternative Fuels Plan). The CEC prepared the plan in partnership with the California ARB and in consultation with other state, federal, and local agencies. The plan assessed various alternative fuels and developed fuel portfolios to meet California's goals to reduce petroleum consumption, increase alternative fuels use, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and increase in-state production of biofuels without causing a significant degradation of public health and environmental quality.

Assembly Bill 32 (2006) and Senate Bill 32 (2016)

In 2006, the Legislature enacted Assembly Bill 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. Assembly Bill 32 requires California to reduce its GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. In 2016, the Legislature enacted Senate Bill 32, which extended the horizon year of the state's codified GHG reduction planning targets from 2020 to 2030, requiring California to reduce its GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. In accordance with Assembly Bill and Senate Bill 32, California ARB prepares scoping plans to guide the development of statewide policies and regulations for the reduction of GHG emissions. Many of the of the policy and regulatory concepts identified in the scoping plans focus on increasing energy efficiencies and the use of renewable resources, as well as reducing the consumption of petroleum-based fuels such as gasoline and diesel.

State Vehicle Standards

In response to the transportation sector accounting for more than half of California's CO_2 emissions, Assembly Bill 1493 was enacted in 2002. Assembly Bill 1493 required the California ARB to set GHG emission standards for passenger vehicles, light-duty trucks, and other vehicles whose primary use is noncommercial personal transportation in the state. The bill required that ARB set GHG emission standards for motor vehicles manufactured in 2009 and all subsequent model years. The 2009-2012 standards resulted in a reduction in approximately 22% GHG emissions compared to emissions from the 2002 fleet, and the 2013-2016 standards resulted in a reduction of approximately 30%.

In 2012, ARB approved a new emissions-control program for model years 2017 through 2025. The program combines the control of smog, soot, and global warming gases and requirements for greater numbers of zero-emission vehicles into a single package of standards called Advanced Clean Cars. By 2025, when the rules would be fully

implemented, new automobiles would emit 34% fewer global warming gases and 75% fewer smog-forming emissions (CARB 2011).

Although the focus of the state's vehicle standards is on the reduction of air pollutants and GHG emissions, one co-benefit of implementation of these standards is a reduced demand for petroleum-based fuels.

4.6.2.2 Local Regulations and Plans

In 2020, the Placer County Board of Supervisors adopted the Placer County Sustainability Plan (PCSP) (Placer County 2019), which outlines various programs and policies that will be undertaken to achieve the most significant GHG emission reductions and to help achieve multiple community-wide benefits, such as lowering energy costs, reducing air and water pollution, supporting local economic development, and improving public health, safety, and quality of life. Strategies from the PCSP related to energy use that would apply to the proposed project include the following:

- **Strategy E-1.** Facilitate a transition to electricity as the primary energy source for residential, mixed-use, commercial, and office buildings.

- **Strategy E-4.** Encourage new residential, office, and commercial development, as mitigation for discretionary projects exceeding applicable CEQA GHG thresholds, to implement CALGreen Tier 1 standards and accelerate Zero Net Energy (ZNE) in new construction.

- **Strategy E-15.** Incentivize new homes to install renewable energy generation and energy storage systems that can fully supply the home's energy needs, in cases where the required size of the renewable energy system is insufficient to fully meet on-site demand.

- **Strategy E-18.** Encourage electrical customers to participate in demand-reduction programs.

- **Strategy OR-1.** Promote use of hybrid and alternative fuel construction equipment for new developments and significant retrofits.

- **Strategy OR-2.** Encourage property owners and landscaping companies to adopt the use of hybrid and alternative-fuel landscaping equipment and promote the availability of incentive programs for new efficient landscaping equipment.

- **Strategy T-1.** Facilitate the installation of public electric vehicle charging stations at existing and new residential and non-residential uses.

- **Strategy T-3.** Encourage new development to provide a mix of land uses and to be located contiguous to existing developed areas and infrastructure to support connectivity and to reduce trip lengths.

- **Strategy T-10.** Promote infill development that combines multiple land use types.

4.6.3 Impacts Discussion

a) The Project would not result in potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during Project construction or operation.

Energy use resulting from implementation of the Project would increase slightly relative to existing conditions. Fuel consumption would increase slightly above the baseline due to the operation of gas and diesel-powered equipment. Workers would either commute to the site from nearby communities (e.g., Foresthill and Auburn), or stay on-site in a trailer, at the dormitory facility, or at nearby campgrounds during the work week.

Following completion of the Project, the worker campground would provide short-term housing for workers. This would result in an increase in consumption of energy for power supply for up to 18 recreational vehicles, primarily during the evening hours, and only for a portion of the year (it is unlikely that the worker campsites would be used during the winter, when the area is typically inaccessible due to snow). This increase in energy use would be offset by the fact that the campground would minimize the necessity for workers to commute to the site, thereby reducing energy consumption and emissions resulting from vehicle use.

The minor increase in energy use resulting from implementation of the construction activities described in this IS/MND and ongoing short-term use of the worker campsite would not be considered wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, and the impact of the Project is considered **less than significant**.

b) The Project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Construction of the 1.7-acre worker campground, installation of the water and communication system upgrades, and superficial improvements to the existing Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. State and local guidelines on renewable energy or energy efficiency do not set any specific thresholds for determining the energy efficiency of construction projects, nor do they determine specific thresholds for determining energy efficiency of campgrounds or temporary worker housing. Therefore, there would be **no impact**.

4.6.4 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts related to energy would result from implementation of the Project. Therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	☐	☐	☐	☒
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.7.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact on the environment related to geology, soils, or seismicity if the Project would:

- Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
    - 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;
    - Strong seismic ground shaking;
    - Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or

- Landslides.

- Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil;

- 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;

- 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;

- 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; or

- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

4.7.2 Setting

The Project is situated approximately 16 miles west of Lake Tahoe in eastern Placer County in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Originally beneath the ocean, the Sierra Nevada range was formed when the Pacific plate was subducted beneath the North American plate more than 200 million years ago (Mesozoic Era). This massive pressure resulted in the uplift of the range and formed large intrusions of molten granitic rock (the granitic batholith). The range was later subject to additional faulting and volcanic activity during the Tertiary Period (approximately 50 million years ago), and repeated glaciations during the Pleistocene ice ages.

Eastern Placer County is underlain by a variety of Mesozoic metamorphic and plutonic igneous rocks, overlain by Cenozoic volcanic and sedimentary rocks. The Hell Hole Dam sits atop gabbro, while most of the Hell Hole Reservoir is located in granite and granodiorite. On the ridges to the north, west, and southwest of the reservoir the granite and gabbro are overlain by rhyolite tuff and sedimentary rocks and andesite pyroclastic rocks. To the southeast, glacial deposits, alluvium, and andesite pyroclastic rocks overlay the granite and granodiorite, and graywacke and slate of the Sailor Canyon Formation (California Department of Conservation 2024a).

The Foresthill Fault runs approximately north/south near the community of Foresthill (California Department of Conservation 2024b). This fault has not shown evidence of displacement during the Quarternary Period (i.e., during the past 1.6 million years).

4.7.3 Impacts Discussion

a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse impacts, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving 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; Strong seismic ground shaking; Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or landslides.

The Foresthill Fault runs approximately north/south near the community of Foresthill. This fault shows no evidence of activity for the past 1.6 million years (California Geologic Survey 2010b). Maps developed by The Working Group on California Earthquake Probabilities (2008) show a negligible risk (approximately 1%) of a significant earthquake (i.e., magnitude 5 or greater) occurring in the Project area in the next 30 years. Risk of liquefaction or landslide resulting from seismic activity is considered low (California Geologic Survey 2010b). Finally, the Project is located in rural forested areas with few or no people. Based on the negligible risk for significant seismic shaking and the rural location of the Project site, it is unlikely to result in loss, injury or death. Therefore, this impact is considered **less than significant**.

b) The Project will not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.

The Project includes ground disturbance and excavation associated with the construction of the worker campground, as well as excavation of the ditch for the installation of the water, power, and communication lines. Excavation associated with these repairs could result in soil erosion and/or the loss of topsoil. PCWA will implement mitigation measures GEO-01 and WQ-01 to minimize the potential for erosion. These measures require development of site-specific temporary erosion control measures to prevent erosion, stream sedimentation, dust, and soil mass movement during the period of ground disturbance; confine vehicles to existing roads or specifically designated access routes, and require adherence to USDA-FS Water Quality BMPs.

In addition, as described in mitigation measure WQ-02 PCWA will file a Notice of Intent with the State Water Resources Control Board to obtain coverage under the General Construction National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. If required by State Water Resources Control Board, SWPPP will be developed and implemented as part of the Project.

Implementation of **mitigation measures GEO-01, WQ-01 and WQ-02** would **reduce any impacts to less than significant**.

c) The Project is not located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as part of the Project.

Project work and staging areas are not located on soils or geologic units that are considered unstable. It is not likely that activities associated with the Project result in soil or sediment instability. The worker campground is located on flat terrain, and the water, power, and communication lines will be located in, or along the shoulder of, existing roads.

Ditches that are excavated for the installation of these lines will be no deeper than 4 feet and will be infilled and levelled as the lines are installed. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

d) The Project is not located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), and will not create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property.

The Project would not be constructed on expansive soils as defined under the Uniform Building Code Table 18-1-B (e.g., soils with a clay component). Therefore, there would be no substantial risks to life or property as a result of expansive soils, and **no impact** would occur.

e) The Project area supports soils capable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks.

PCWA will construct a new sanitation system that includes a 2,000-gallon septic tank. The RV stalls will be connected to the sanitation system via 3- and 4-inch lateral sewer lines. The facility will also contain a 65-foot by 31-foot leach field with ten 63-inch-long sand filter bed lines. The sanitation/septic system will be constructed to meet the current Placer County Division of Environmental Health requirements for the site evaluation and design of sewage disposal systems. In addition, consistent with Placer County building codes, a second “reserve” leach field of similar size will be located in the clearing just south of the covered picnic tables. This field will not be constructed, but will remain reserved for potential future development, if necessary.

A geotechnical investigation was conducted in support of Project engineering and a Geotechnical Investigation Report was completed in February 2021 by Reno Tahoe Geo Associates, Inc. The report includes an evaluation of the subsurface conditions at the project site and provides geotechnical engineering recommendations for project design and construction. The geotechnical report indicated that the Project area supports soils capable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks. Therefore, there is **no impact** concerning soils and installation of the septic system.

f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

As part of the development of the Historic Properties Management Plan for the MFP, PCWA accessed and reviewed the paleontological database maintained by the University of California Museum of Paleontology at Berkeley to determine whether any known paleontological resources are present. Based on this review, there are no known paleontological resources located within the MFP, including the Project area assessed in this ISMND. Further, the geologic formations present in the vicinity of the MFP are comprised predominantly of: (1) granitic and metamorphic rocks, which have no potential to yield fossils, or (2) volcanic rocks, which may have low potential to yield fossils**.**

Therefore, the Project will have **no impact** on unique paleontological resources or unique geologic features.

4.7.4 Mitigation Measures

PCWA will implement the following mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to geology and soils to less-than-significant levels.

GEO-01. Erosion Control Measures

- PCWA shall develop site-specific temporary erosion control measures for each project to be approved by USDA-FS. These temporary measures will minimize the potential for erosion, dust, and soil mass movement during the period of construction-related ground disturbance.

WQ-01. Implementation of U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service Water Quality Best Management Practices

- **Appendix B** of this IS-/MND provides a list of USDA-FS Water Quality BMPs that will be implemented, as applicable, during implementation of the Project. This includes measures for erosion control, hazardous materials, and water quality protection.

- Applicable measures will be included in contractor specifications or memorialized in Project-specific plans (e.g., the Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan or the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan) and implemented as part of the Project.

WQ-02. Coverage Under National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System S Construction General Permit

- PCWA will file a Notice of Intent with the State Water Resources Control Board to obtain coverage under the General Construction NPDES Permit. If required by the State Water Resources Control Board, a SWPPP will be developed and implemented. The SWPPP would include:

    - Pollution prevention measures (erosion and sediment control measures and measures to control non-stormwater discharges and hazardous spills);

    - Demonstration of compliance with all applicable local and regional erosion and sediment control standards;

    - Identification of responsible parties; and

    - A BMP monitoring and maintenance schedule.

4.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the Project	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.8.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact on the environment related to GHG and climate change if the Project would:

- Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or
- Conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

4.8.2 Setting

Several state and local actions have been taken to limit GHG emissions implicated in global warming. Those actions are described below.

4.8.2.1 State Regulations and Plans

Executive Order S-3-05

On June 1, 2005, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger issued Executive Order S-3-05. It included the following GHG emission reduction targets: by 2010, reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels; by 2020, reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels; by 2050, reduce GHG emissions to 80% below 1990 levels. To meet the targets, the governor directed several state agencies to cooperate in the development of a climate action plan. The secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal-EPA) leads the Climate Action Team (CAT), whose goal is to implement global warming emission reduction programs identified in the climate action plan and to report on the progress made toward meeting the emission reduction targets established in the executive order.

The first report to the governor and the legislature was released in March 2006, to be issued bi-annually thereafter. The CAT report to the governor contains recommendations and strategies to help ensure the targets in Executive Order S-3-05 are met (Cal-EPA 2010).

California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32)

In 2006, the California state legislature adopted the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32). AB 32 establishes a cap on statewide GHG emissions and sets forth the regulatory framework to achieve the corresponding reduction in statewide emission levels. Under AB 32, GHGs are defined as carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride. AB 32 requires that ARB:

- Adopt early action measures to reduce GHGs;
- Establish a statewide GHG emissions cap for 2020 based on 1990 emissions;
- Adopt mandatory report rules for significant GHG sources;
- Adopt a scoping plan indicating how emission reductions will be achieved via regulations, market mechanisms, and other actions; and
- Adopt regulations needed to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective reductions in GHGs.

On April 23, 2009, the ARB adopted a low carbon fuel standard. This standard requires that all fuels sold in California must have a reduced carbon content that will lower emissions by 10% by 2020.

Senate Bill 97

Senate Bill (SB) 97, signed in August 2007, acknowledges that climate change is an important environmental issue that requires analysis under CEQA. The bill directed the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to prepare, develop, and transmit to the California Resources Agency guidelines for the feasible mitigation of GHG emissions or the effects of GHG emissions, by July 1, 2009. The California Resources Agency adopted those guidelines on December 30, 2009, and they became effective on March 18, 2010. In late 2018, the Agency finalized amendments to the CEQA Guidelines, including changes to CEQA Guidelines section 15064.4, which addresses the analysis of greenhouse gas emissions. The amendments became effective on December 28, 2018.

Senate Bill 32

SB 32 was signed on September 8, 2016 to establish a California GHG reduction target of 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. California is on track to meet or exceed this current target, as established in AB 32. This new emission reduction target will make it possible to reach the ultimate goal of reducing emissions 80% under 1990 levels by 2050.

4.8.2.2 Local Regulations and Plans

In 2020, the Placer County Board of Supervisors adopted the PCSP, which outlines various programs and policies that will be undertaken to achieve the most significant GHG emission reductions and to help achieve multiple community-wide benefits, such as

lowering energy costs, reducing air and water pollution, supporting local economic development, and improving public health, safety, and quality of life. Strategies from the PCSP related to energy use that would apply to the proposed project include the following:

- **Strategy E-1.** Facilitate a transition to electricity as the primary energy source for residential, mixed-use, commercial, and office buildings.

- **Strategy E-4.** Encourage new residential, office, and commercial development, as mitigation for discretionary projects exceeding applicable CEQA GHG thresholds, to implement CALGreen Tier 1 standards and accelerate ZNE in new construction.

- **Strategy E-15.** Incentivize new homes to install renewable energy generation and energy storage systems that can fully supply the home's energy needs, in cases where the required size of the renewable energy system is insufficient to fully meet on-site demand.

- **Strategy E-18.** Encourage electrical customers to participate in demand-reduction programs.

- **Strategy OR-1.** Promote use of hybrid and alternative fuel construction equipment for new developments and significant retrofits.

- **Strategy OR-2**. Encourage property owners and landscaping companies to adopt the use of hybrid and alternative-fuel landscaping equipment and promote the availability of incentive programs for new efficient landscaping equipment.

- **Strategy T-1.** Facilitate the installation of public electric vehicle charging stations at existing and new residential and non-residential uses.

- **Strategy T-3.** Encourage new development to provide a mix of land uses and to be located contiguous to existing developed areas and infrastructure to support connectivity and to reduce trip lengths.

- **Strategy T-10**. Promote infill development that combines multiple land use types.

4.8.3 Impacts Discussion

a) The Project would not generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment.

The Project would result in minor, localized, and short-term increases in GHGs. The Project would generate intermittent and short-term carbon dioxide (CO2) and NOx emissions associated with combustion of gasoline and diesel fuel resulting from the operation of the equipment identified in the Project Description. In addition, between 2 and 5 workers would use personal vehicles to commute to the site from nearby communities throughout each work season, if they are not able to find temporary housing

closer to the Project area. These short-term impacts would cease upon completion of the Project.

Project-related GHG emissions would be intermittent and substantially less than the lower reporting limit for major stationary sources established by the ARB. That reporting limit requires stationary sources that generate more than 25,000 metric tons per year of CO2 equivalent (CO2e) to report GHG emissions to ARB. Implementation of the Project does not include stationary emission sources; therefore there is no conflict with this requirement.

Following completion of the Project, the worker campground would provide short-term housing for workers. This would result in a minor increase in generation of GHG emissions associated with supplying electricity to 18 recreational vehicles, primarily during the evening hours, and only for a portion of the year (it is unlikely that the worker campsites would be used during the winter, when the area is typically inaccessible due to snow). This increase in emissions would be offset by the fact that the campground would minimize the necessity for workers to commute to the site, thereby reducing energy consumption and emissions resulting from vehicle use.

Thus, while the Project may result in a short-term increase in GHG emissions, in the long-term, restoration of the meadow and surrounding forests is expected to result in improved carbon sequestration. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

b) The Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

State guidelines for GHG emissions do not establish any specific thresholds for determining whether those emissions are significant. In addition, the PCSP does not include specific thresholds for determining emissions associated with campgrounds or temporary worker housing. The Project would not conflict with any existing GHG laws, plans, policies, or regulations adopted by the California legislature, the ARB, the California AG, or the California OPR. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

4.8.4 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts related to GHGs and climate change would result from implementation of the Project. Therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 one-quarter 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 two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?***	☐	☒	☐	☐

4.9.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact related to hazards and hazardous materials if the Project would:

- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials;
- 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;
- Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;

- 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, create a significant hazard to the public or the environment;

- For a Project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area;

- Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or

- Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires.

4.9.2 Setting

A “hazardous material” is a substance or combination of substances that, because of its quantity, concentration, physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may pose a potential hazard to human health or the environment when handled improperly. Within typical construction sites, materials that could be considered hazardous may include fuels, motor oil, grease, various lubricants, solvents, soldering equipment, and glues The Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List, also known as the Cortese List (Government Code Section 65962.5), is a planning document used by the State of California and its various local agencies and developers to comply with CEQA requirements in providing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. The list, or a site’s presence on the list, has bearing on the local permitting process as well as on compliance with CEQA. The Cortese List was reviewed for references to the Project sites and results are discussed below.

Placer County regulates the design and construction of waste systems, including septic systems, consistent with Waste Discharge Requirements issued by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. The Placer County regulations for septic systems are provided in Placer County Code Chapter 8, Article 8.24, and include the requirement for a site evaluation for every existing or proposed lot or parcel prior to obtaining an on-site sewage system permit or any approval for the feasibility of on-site sewage system capability.

4.9.3 Impacts Discussion

a) With implementation of mitigation, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

Project construction activities will not include the routine transportation, use, or disposal of hazardous materials that could create a significant hazard to the public. During construction activities, limited quantities of miscellaneous hazardous substances (such

as petroleum-based products/fluids and oils) would be employed in the work and staging area.

To reduce the potential for impacts associated with the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials during construction, PCWA will implement mitigation measure HAZ-01, which requires: Material Safety Data Sheets for all substances used on the job site be available as necessary; implementation of standard construction safety procedures; and implementation of traffic control measures and road closures as needed to ensure safe conditions. In addition, consistent with mitigation measure HAZ-02, PCWA will require the contractor to prepare and implement a Project-specific Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan that includes: procedures for the site handling, storage, and packaging of waste; rules requiring the refueling of construction equipment within designated construction staging areas; contingency plans in the event of a spill; and notification requirements and contact information. Finally, WQ-01 requires PCWA to implement applicable USDA-FS Water Quality BMPs, including BMPS specific to handling of hazardous materials.

PCWA does not anticipate that well drilling will require drilling mud such as bentonite and will not generate hazardous materials. As described in mitigation measure HAZ-03, the construction contract documents will require a licensed/qualified well driller (C57 Well Drilling licensed contractor) to perform the work. The drilling contractor will develop and submit well installation plan/drawings prepared and signed by geologist (or hydrogeologist) based on the test well and geotechnical analysis results, for review and approval of PCWA prior to the final well drilling, construction and development.

With **implementation of mitigation measures HAZ-01, HAZ-02, HAZ-03 and WQ-01**, impacts related to transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would be **less than significant**.

b) With implementation of mitigation, 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.

Although flammable and combustible materials such as gasoline and diesel fuel would be used during Project construction, their use is temporary and all materials would be used in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, including manufacturer's instructions. As described above in Mitigation Measure HAZ-02, the Agency and/or its contractor would prepare a Spill Prevention and Control Plan for the Project that would be implemented in the case that spills occurred during implementation of the Project.

With implementation of **mitigation measure HAZ-02**, this impact would be **less than significant**.

c) The Project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.

The Project area is not located within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. Therefore, there is **no impact.**

d) The Project is not located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites and would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

Based on a search of the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database, the Project area is not located on, or near, any federal-, state-, or local-designated hazardous wastes site (DTSC 2021). Therefore, there would be **no impact.**

e) The Project is not located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport and would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area.

The Project is not located within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport. Implementation of the Project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise. Therefore, there would be **no impact**.

f) The Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

The Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Therefore, there would be **no impact.**

g) With implementation of mitigation, the Project would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands with implementation of mitigation.

The Project is not located in an area where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas. Therefore, there would be no specific risk associated with wildland-urban interface (WUI) areas.

As described in Section 4.20 of this document, use of vehicles and equipment powered by combustion engines will be required for construction as well as long-term operation and maintenance of the new worker campground. Following completion, fire pits will be available for use in the picnic area associated with the new worker campground. Considering the proximity of relatively dry forestland surrounding the Project area, use of combustion engines and fires as part of construction and/or long-term operation of the Project would contribute to a slightly increased risk for severe or uncontrolled spread of the fire. To reduce risk of wildfire, PCWA will implement Mitigation Measures WF-01, WF-02, and WF-03. WF-01 requires PCWA to implement the Revised Fire Prevention and Suppression Plan for the MFP, as well as additional measures that state that PCWA and/or its contractor to implement standard fire prevention measures, including requiring fire prevention equipment to be available at all times, identifying construction sites as non-smoking areas, providing fire prevention training to construction personnel, and following

USDA-FS Project Activity Level (PAL) restrictions. WF-02 requires the contractor to create and implement a Project-specific Fire Prevention and Suppression Plan to address fire risks while working on site and the measures to be taken and implemented to prevent and/or minimize risk. Finally, WF-03 requires that fire pits within the campground adhere to the USDA-FS Forest Use Fire Restrictions to minimize the risk of wildfire when the campground is in use.

With implementation of **mitigation measures WF-01**, **WF-02, and WF-03 the** Project would have a **less than significant** impact related to wildfire.

4.9.4 Mitigation Measures

PCWA will implement the following mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials to less-than-significant levels.

HAZ-01. Public and Worker Safety

- Material Safety Data Sheets for all substances used on the job site will be on file at the job headquarters in the Rock Creek Yard at Auburn, as required by the Hazard Communication Law, General Industry Safety Orders, Sec 5194, and will be available as necessary.

- Standard construction safety procedures, road signage, employee training and tailboards, and good housekeeping will be implemented to ensure that no unseen safety hazards exist.

- Traffic control will consist of temporary construction signs, trucks entering roadway signs, and flaggers as needed.

- Road closures will be implemented as necessary during construction activities.

HAZ-02. Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan

- PCWA's construction specifications will require the contractor to prepare and implement a Project-specific Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan that includes:

    - Procedures for the site handling, storage, and packaging of waste;

    - Rules requiring the refueling of construction equipment within designated construction staging areas;

    - Contingency plans in the event of a spill; and

    - Notification requirements and contact information.

- The plan will be submitted to PCWA for review and approval. After the plan has been approved, it will be incorporated into Contractor's construction plans required and approved by PCWA, and implemented as part of the construction contract.

HAZ-03. Well Drilling

- Construction contract documents will require a licensed/qualified well driller (C57 Well Drilling licensed contractor) for performance of the work.

- The drilling contractor will develop and submit well installation plan/drawings prepared and signed by geologist (or hydrogeologist) based on the test well and geotechnical analysis results, for review and approval of PCWA prior to the final well drilling, construction and development.

- The Project construction sequence will include a test well, sampling and geotechnical analysis to determine the expected flow, optimum depth for flow, water quality, and to identify the strata encountered.

WQ-01. Implementation of U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service Water Quality Best Management Practices

- **Appendix B** of this IS/MND provides a list of USDA-FS Water Quality BMPs that will be implemented, as applicable, during implementation of the Project. This includes measures for erosion control, hazardous materials, and water quality protection.

- Applicable measures will be included in contractor specifications or memorialized in Project-specific plans (e.g., the Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan or the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan) and implemented as part of the Project.

WF-01. Fire Prevention and Suppression

- PCWA will comply with the Revised Fire Prevention and Suppression Plan.

- The contractor, its employees, and subcontractors and their employees, will make all reasonable efforts to prevent and suppress wild fires, and will exercise diligence in protecting from damage the land and property of the United States, and will follow USDA-FS Project Activity Level restrictions.

- No burning of any kind will occur as part of the construction activities.

- The following fire equipment will be on site at all times:

    - One shovel, one axe and one fire extinguisher UL rated at 4 BC or more on each truck, personnel vehicle, tractor, grader, and any other heavy equipment will be used.

    - One shovel and one back-pack five-gallon water filled tank with pump with each welder.

- One shovel and one chemical pressurized fire extinguisher (fully charged) located at a point no greater than a distance of 25-feet from the work site, for each gasoline powered tool, including but not limited to chain saws, rock drills, etc.

WF-02. Contractor Fire Prevention and Suppression Plan

- The contractor shall create a Project specific plan to address fire risks while working on site and the measures to be taken and implemented to prevent and/or minimize risk.

WF-03. U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service Fire Restrictions

- The usage of fire pits within the campground will adhere to the USDA-FS Forest Use Fire Restrictions to minimize the risk of wildfire when the campground is in use. Adherence to the USDA-FS restrictions will be strictly followed and enforced.

4.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	☐	☐	☐	☒
i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	☐	☐	☐	☒
iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

4.10.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact related to hydrology and water quality if the Project would:

- Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality;
- Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin;
- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

- result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site,
- substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site,
- create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff, or
- impede or redirect flood flows;
- In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation; or
- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

4.10.2 Setting

The Project is located in the Upper American River watershed. Existing water quality objectives for physical, chemical, and bacterial constituents are established in the Sacramento River Basin and San Joaquin River Basin Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) (Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, Fourth Edition revised June 2015), "Water Quality Standards: Establishment of Numeric Criteria for Priority Toxic Pollutants for the State of California" (Federal Register, 65 FR 31682, EPA 2000), and the "Water Quality Standards: Establishment of Numeric Criteria for Priority Toxic Pollutants" (Federal Register, 57 FR 60848, EPA 1992). The Basin Plan includes water quality objectives established by the State Water Resources Control Board for waters in the Upper American River Watershed. Overall, water quality in MFP reservoirs and waterways is high and meets all applicable water standards and objectives.

4.10.3 Impacts Discussion

a) With implementation of mitigation, the Project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.

Ground disturbance and use of equipment or vehicles during construction of the Hell Hole worker campground or installation of the water, power, and communication lines could potentially result in temporary impacts to water quality in streams or drainages downslope of the staging and work areas where construction will be implemented. PCWA will implement mitigation measures to minimize the potential for impacts to water quality during implementation of construction activities.

All ground disturbing work associated with the Project would occur in uplands; the Project has been designed to avoid effects to aquatic resources including the intermittent stream and emergent wetland habitat located in the vicinity of the campground. Applicable mitigation measures include **GEN-01**, which requires that ground-disturbing activities be restricted to public roads and parking areas, or to specifically designated work and staging

areas. These areas will be clearly identified, and will be staked and flagged where necessary prior to initiation of construction activities. Mitigation measures **GEO-01** requires development and implementation of site-specific temporary measures to prevent erosion, stream sedimentation, dust and soil mass movement that could contribute to degradation of water quality. Mitigation Measure **HAZ-02** requires development and implementation of a Project-specific Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures Plan. Mitigation Measure **WQ-01** requires implementation of all applicable USDA-FS Water Quality BMPs, and **WQ-02** requires PCWA to obtain coverage under the General Construction NPDES Permit, including development of a SWPPP, if required.

Considering that Project activities are restricted to upland areas and **with implementation of mitigations measures GEN-01, GEO-01, HAZ-02, WQ-01, and WQ-02**, the potential for violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements would be **less than significant**.

b) The Project would not deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge.

The Project includes digging a well to provide potable water to the Hell Hole Worker Campground, the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area, the operator cottages and shop, and the Hell Hole Dormitory. The Project would not deplete or interfere substantially with groundwater supplies for several reasons.

The Project would not conflict with the California Statewide Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), passed in 2014. The SGMA requires local agencies to form groundwater sustainability agencies for high and medium priority basins, and to develop and implement groundwater sustainability plans for these basins. The Project area is not located in a groundwater basin that is considered a priority under the SGMA; therefore, groundwater in the Project area is not managed or monitored by a groundwater sustainability agency; and there are no groundwater sustainability plans in place for the Project area (California Department of Water Resources 2020).

Based on studies conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey (2014), groundwater in the Sierra Nevada, including the Project area, is present in fractures in the rocks. Recharge to fractured-bedrock aquifers is mainly from stream-channel infiltration and direct infiltration of precipitation and snow melt (USGS 2014). While pumping of water for the new well and potable water system would remove water from the local aquifer, water usage would be low, and limited to the amount necessary to provide drinking water for small numbers of PCWA staff, temporary workers, and recreationists. Water use would occur primarily during the recreation season, with the exception of year-round usage at the two worker cottages. The small amount of water used to provide potable drinking water for domestic and recreation uses would be recharged over the course of the year by precipitation and snowmelt.

Considering that the Project is not located in a groundwater basin that is considered a priority for sustainability management under the SGMA; that water use would be seasonal and limited; and that supplies would be recharged by seasonal precipitation and

snowmelt, the Project would have a less than significant effect related to groundwater supply and recharge.

c) *The Project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the Project 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, siltation, or flooding on- or off-site; ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite; iii) create or contribute to 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.*

The Project is limited to defined work areas in upland habitats and would not alter the course of any streams or rivers. Surface water within and around the proposed worker campground will be directed into two newly constructed rock-lined ditches, one on the south side of the campground, and one on the north side of the campground, which are designed to channel surface water into the existing roadside ditch. The existing 18-inch corrugated metal culvert underlying the entrance road will be replaced in kind, and culvert outlet treatments installed (i.e., rock bowls).

Wastewater from RVs in the campground will be handled via the septic system, which includes a 2,000-gallon septic tank and appropriately sized leachfield. The RV stalls will be connected to the sanitation system via 3- and 4-inch lateral sewer lines. In addition, consistent with Placer County building codes, a second “reserve” leach field of comparable size will be located in the clearing just south of the covered picnic tables. This field will not be constructed, but will remain reserved for potential future development, if necessary.

The Project will have **no impact** related to erosion or increased flooding on- or off-site, creation of run-off water than would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage, or impediment or redirection of flood flows.

d) *The Project would not risk release of pollutants due to inundation because the Project area is not in a flood hazard, tsunami or seiche zone.*

A query of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Hazard Layer indicates that there are no flood hazards identified in the vicinity of the Project (flood map 06061C0600H) (FEMA 2018). The Project is not in a tsunami zone, and there is no history of seiches occurring in the reservoir. Therefore, the Project will have **no impact** related to release of pollutants due to inundation because the Project area is not in a flood hazard, tsunami or seiche zone.

e) *With implementation of mitigation, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable ground water management plan.*

Water quality in the American River watershed is managed by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board under the Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins (Basin Plan). As described under item a), Project will

incorporate a number of mitigation measures to ensure consistency with Basin Plan standards during implementation of the proposed restoration/enhancement activities. These include mitigation measure **GEN-01**, which restricts ground-disturbing activities to defined areas; **GEO-01**, which requires development and implementation of site-specific temporary measures to prevent erosion; **HAZ-02,** which requires development and implementation of a Project-specific Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures Plan; **WQ-01,** requires implementation of all applicable USDA-FS Water Quality BMPs; and **WQ-02** requires PCWA to obtain coverage under the General Construction NPDES Permit and to develop and implement a SWPPP, if required. **With implementation of mitigation** measures to address short-term water quality impacts, any conflict with the Basin Plan would be **less than significant**.

There are no state-level Groundwater Sustainability Plans or other local groundwater-related plans in impact within the Project area. Therefore, the Project will have **no impact** related to implementation of a sustainable ground water management plan.

4.10.4 Mitigation Measures

PCWA will implement the following mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to hydrology and water quality to less-than-significant levels.

GEN-01. General Construction Measures

- Construction vehicles and ground-disturbing activities shall be restricted to public roads and parking areas, specifically designated access roads, Project work areas, and Project staging areas. These areas will be clearly identified, and will be staked and flagged where necessary prior to initiation of construction activities.

All construction activities, including site preparation and development, will be restricted to Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Work outside of these hours would require approval from PCWA's Director of Power Generation Services.

GEO-01. Erosion Control Measures

- PCWA shall develop site-specific temporary erosion control measures for each project to be approved by USDA-FS. These temporary measures will minimize the potential for erosion, dust, and soil mass movement during the period of construction-related ground disturbance.

HAZ-02. Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan

- PCWA's construction specifications will require the contractor to prepare and implement a Project-specific Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan that includes:
    - Procedures for the site handling, storage, and packaging of waste;

  - Rules requiring the refueling of construction equipment within designated construction staging areas;
  - Contingency plans in the event of a spill; and
  - Notification requirements and contact information.

- The plan will be submitted to PCWA for review and approval. After the plan has been approved, it will be incorporated into Contractor's construction plans required and approved by PCWA, and implemented as part of the construction contract.

WQ-01. Implementation U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service Water Quality BMPs

- **Appendix B** of this IS/MND provides a list of USDA-FS Water Quality BMPs that will be implemented, as applicable, during implementation of the Project. This includes measures for erosion control, hazardous materials, and water quality protection.

- Applicable measures will be included in contractor specifications or memorialized in Project-specific plans (e.g., the Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan or the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan) and implemented as part of the Project.

WQ-02. Coverage under National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit

- PCWA will file a Notice of Intent with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) to obtain coverage under the General Construction NPDES Permit. If required by State Water Board, a SWPPP will be developed and implemented. The SWPPP would include:
  - Pollution prevention measures (erosion and sediment control measures and measures to control non-stormwater discharges and hazardous spills);
  - Demonstration of compliance with all applicable local and regional erosion and sediment control standards;
  - Identification of responsible parties; and
  - A BMP monitoring and maintenance schedule.

4.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.11.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact related to land use and planning if the Project would:

- Physically divide an established community; or
- 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.

4.11.2 Setting

The Project is located in Placer County in a remote forested region of the Sierra Nevada, on land owned and maintained by the USDA-FS. This land is subject to the policies, goals, objectives, and prescriptions contained in the Eldorado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (USDA-FS 1990) and the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendments (USDA-FS 2001 and 2004).

The Eldorado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan provides direction for long-term land management of the Eldorado National Forest and establishes management areas that stress predominant management themes, practices and prescriptions. The Project is located in the High Country Management Area (Management Area 7) which is managed for dispersed recreation, livestock forage, wildlife habitat, and snowpack retention; and the Land and Resource Management Plan recommends that design, construction, and maintenance of projects appear subdued in this landscape. Applicable standards and guidelines specify minimal road construction, restricted use of access roads to project facilities, and providing instream flows that satisfy aesthetic and recreation needs where streams border this management area. Eldorado National Forest recognizes the area's importance as a source of water for hydroelectric projects.

4.11.3 Impacts Discussion

a) The Project would not physically divide an established community.

The Project is located in an undeveloped area with no established communities. Two PCWA staff live year-round at the cottages; and work crews are lodged temporarily at the dormitory on a project-by-project basis. The closest residential communities are Foresthill and Georgetown, located approximately 20 and 22 miles, respectively, from Hell Hole Reservoir. The Project will provide additional temporary lodging for PCWA, USDA-FS, or private work crews and would benefit existing housing by improving available water supply and communications services. The Project would not physically divide an established community; therefore, there would be **no impact**.

b) The Project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

As stated previously, the Project area is managed under policies described in the Eldorado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (USDA-FS 1990) and the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendments (USDA-FS 2001 and 2004). The purpose of the Project is to improve housing for administrative and maintenance staff and to improve existing recreation opportunities. Maintenance of hydroelectric and recreation facilities is consistent with USDA-FS policies, goals, objectives, and prescriptions for Management Area 7. There is **no impact.**

4.11.4 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts related to land use or planning would result from implementation of the Project. Therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.12.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact related to land use and planning if the Project would:

- 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; or
- Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan.

4.12.2 Setting

An extensive range of extractive mineral resources are found throughout Placer County, many of which have been mined since the Gold Rush era. Gold, silver, chromium, tungsten, and aggregate are the principal mineral resources in the Project vicinity. The Project is not located near active mining facilities, nor is it delineated as a locally important mineral recovery site. Further, the Project area is not located within or near an oil or gas producing region and there are no mapped geothermal resources within or near the Project areas (California Department of Conservation 2016). According to the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act Land Classification Project, aggregate materials are known to occur throughout Placer County, but there are no permitted sites near the Project work and staging areas (CGS 2012b).

4.12.3 Impacts Discussion

a) 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.

b) The Project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan.

This response addresses items a) and b). The Project does not involve any mining activities, nor is it located near active mining facilities. Implementation of the Project would not result in the loss of any known mineral resources that are of value to the region or

residents of the state or result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan. Therefore, there would be **no impact**.

4.12.4 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts related to mineral resources would result from implementation of the Project. Therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.13 NOISE

Would the Project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.13.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact related to noise if the Project would 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;
- Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels; or
- For a Project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?

4.13.2 Setting

Noise-sensitive land uses generally include those for which exposure would result in adverse impacts (e.g., sleep disturbance, annoyance), as well those for which quiet is an essential element of their intended purpose. Residences are of primary concern because of the potential for increased and prolonged exposure of individuals to both interior and exterior noise levels. Other land uses typically considered sensitive to noise include hospitals, convalescent facilities, parks, auditoriums, amphitheaters, public meeting rooms, motels, hotels, churches, schools, libraries, and other uses where low interior noise levels are essential.

The Project is located in a remote and forested area with no established residential developments or communities. The closest sensitive receptors include Hell Hole Campground, located approximately 0.8 mile north of the new worker campground. In

addition, PCWA staff live year-round at the cottages approximately (located approximately 300 feet south of new worker campground); and work crews are lodged temporarily at PCWA's Hell Hole dormitory (located 0.1 mile east of the new worker campground) on a project-by-project basis.

The County has established policies and regulations concerning the generation and control of noise that could adversely affect its citizens and noise-sensitive land uses. The County Noise Ordinance is the primary enforcement tool for operation of locally regulated noise sources such as mechanical equipment and construction activity. The County Noise Ordinance is set forth in Article 9.36 of the County Code. Noise associated with construction activities occurring between 6:00 am and 8:00 pm Monday through Friday, and between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm Saturday and Sunday is exempted from the provisions of the County Noise Ordinance provided that all construction equipment is fitted with factory-installed muffling devices and is maintained in good working order. The Noise Ordinance does not define quantifiable noise levels for construction-related activities within the allowable time periods.

4.13.3 Impacts Discussion

a) The Project would not result in the 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.

The Project will result in a temporary increase in noise from use of motor-powered tools and vehicles during construction of the worker campground and installation of the water, power, and communication lines, and drilling a well. Construction of the Project would be temporary and short-term (approximately 4 months) and would occur outside of the noise restricted hours outlined in the Placer County Noise Ordinance. Therefore, construction-related noise impacts would be consistent with this ordinance. In addition, PCWA would implement mitigation NOI-01, which states that construction contracts shall specify that all construction equipment must be equipped with mufflers and other applicable noise attenuation devices.

While there would be no noise impacts resulting from long-term operation and maintenance of the water, power, and communication lines or the new well, there would be some increase in ambient noise resulting from the long-term operation and maintenance of the new worker campground as compared to the existing condition. Again, the Placer County Noise Ordinance is the local noise standard applicable in this case. The ordinance dictates that daytime (7 a.m. to 10 p.m.) sound levels do not exceed 55 decibels (hourly L_{eq}) or a maximum level of 70 decibels (55 decibels is similar to the sound of normal conversation or an electric fan and 70 decibels is similar to the sound of a washing machine or a dishwasher). Nighttime (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.) sound levels may not exceed 45 decibels (hourly L_{eq}) or a maximum level of 65 decibels (45 decibels is similar to the sound inside a library or a quiet conversation and 65 decibels is similar to an air conditioner).

The increase in ambient noise would not conflict with the ordinance for several reasons. Uses and associated noise levels at the worker campground would be similar to those currently generated by nearby sensitive receptors at the worker cottages and the Hell Hole dormitory. Louder sounds may also occur, but these noises would be intermittent and short term. Noise generated at the worker campground would be dampened by surrounding vegetation and would diminish over distance before reaching receptors. While some sounds may be perceptible at the cottages and dormitory, it is unlikely that receptors at nearby recreation facilities (e.g., the Hell Hole Boat Ramp and associated picnic area or the Hell Hole Campground) would be able to detect any additional noise.

Considering that noise from construction would be temporary and short-term, and that any longer-term increases in ambient noise would be consistent with the Placer County Noise Ordinance, and **with implementation of mitigation measure NOI-01**, any impacts would be **less than significant**.

b) The Project would not result in the generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.

There are no federal, state, or local regulatory standards for vibration. However, various criteria have been established to assist in the evaluation of vibration impacts. For instance, Caltrans has developed vibration criteria based on human perception and structural damage risks. Based on this analysis, vibrations of a peak particle velocity (ppv) of greater than 0.1 inch per second (in/sec) are the minimum level perceptible level for ground vibration; short periods of ground vibration in excess of 0.2 in/sec can be expected to result in increased levels of annoyance to people within buildings; and ppv levels greater than 0.4 in/sec may potentially cause structural damage (Caltrans 2002).

The Project would not involve the long-term use of any equipment or processes that would result in potentially significant levels of ground vibration. Construction activities associated with the Project, as well as maintenance activities occurring during longer-term use of the new worker campground, would require the use of several types of equipment that might result in intermittent increases in ground vibration. Ground vibration generated by construction equipment spreads through the ground and diminishes in strength with distance. As described above, while some sounds may be perceptible at PCWA's worker cottages and dormitory, it is unlikely that receptors at nearby recreation facilities (e.g., the Hell Hole Boat Ramp and associated picnic area or the Hell Hole Campground) would be able to detect any additional noise. In addition, the predicted ground vibration levels at nearby recreational facilities would not be anticipated to exceed the minimum perceptible threshold of 0.1 in/sec ppv for human annoyance. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant.**

c) The Project is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport and would not expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels.

The Project area is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip, an airport land use plan, or within 2 miles of a public airport and would not expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels. Therefore, there would be **no impact**.

4.13.4 Mitigation Measures

PCWA will implement the following mitigation measure to reduce potential impacts related to noise to less-than-significant levels.

NOI-01. Noise Attenuation

- Construction contracts shall specify that all construction equipment must be equipped with mufflers and other applicable noise attenuation devices.

4.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.14.1 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines states that a Project could have a significant impact related to population and housing if the Project would:

- Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly; or
- Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

4.14.2 Setting

The Project is located in an area that is heavily forested, rural in nature, and sparsely populated area on land designated as Timberland (Placer County 2013). There are no residential or commercial developments in the immediate vicinity of these sites. The nearest population center is Foresthill (population 1,692 in 2020) located approximately 20 miles west of the Project area.

The Project would result in the need for a work crew of approximately 10–12 people. Crews will likely work five 10-hour days per week with additional weekend hours, as needed. It is expected that less than half of the construction crew will commute to the site from Auburn, Foresthill, or other nearby areas. Other personnel may be temporarily housed at PCWA's Hell Hole Dormitory located adjacent to the Project area, or in travel trailers located in areas as approved by the USDA-FS.

4.14.3 Impacts Discussion

a) The Project would not result in substantial population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly.

The purpose of the Project is to provide temporary housing and amenities for PCWA or other work crews. It would also provide improved utility services (e.g., potable water and upgraded communications) to existing housing and recreational facilities. These actions would have **no impact** to population growth, either directly or indirectly.

b) The Project would not displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

As described above, housing in the vicinity of the Project is limited to the worker cottages, which provide year-round lodging for a small number of PCWA staff, and the Hell Hole dormitory, which provides short-term housing for work crews. Following completion of construction, the new worker campground will provide sufficient space for up to 18 RVs, which will provide additional temporary lodging for work crews. These actions would not result in the displacement of existing housing, or would it necessitate replacement housing elsewhere. There is **no impact**.

4.14.4 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts related to population and housing would result from implementation of the Project. Therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
i) Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii) Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iii) Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv) Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
v) Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.15.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact related to public services if the Project would:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:
    - fire protection,
    - police protection,
    - schools,
    - parks, or
    - other public facilities.

4.15.2 Setting

Fire protection in the vicinity of the Project is provided by the USDA-FS and/or with California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). The Placer County Sheriff Department and USDA-FS provides protection services. There are no schools in the vicinity of any of these sites. These sites are located on National Forest Lands, and while there are nearby campgrounds, day-use and picnic areas, and recreational trails, there are no local parks in the area.

4.15.3 Impacts Discussion

c) The Project would not 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 service, including…

i) fire protection

The Project will not provide new or physically altered governmental facilities or result in the need for such facilities; and would not impact the ability of USDA-FS fire crews to maintain current levels of service and response time. The Project would not change the type or intensity of land uses in the Project area; consequently, the demand for fire protection services under the Project would be the same as that currently provided. Therefore, there would be **no impact**.

ii) police protection

The Project will not provide new or physically altered governmental facilities or result in the need for such facilities; and will not impact the ability of law enforcement personnel to maintain current levels of service and response time. The Project would not change the type or intensity of land uses in the Project area; consequently, the demand for police protection services under the Project would be the same as that currently provided. Therefore, there would be **no impact**.

iii) schools

There are no schools in the Project vicinity. The Project will not provide new or physically altered governmental facilities, including schools, or result in the need for such facilities. Therefore, **no impact** would occur.

iv) parks

There are no local parks in the Project vicinity, and the Project would not result in the additional need for local parks. Therefore, **no impact** would occur.

v) other public facilities

The Project would not result in the need for other public facilities since it would not generate new populations requiring such facilities. Therefore, **no impact** would occur...

4.15.4 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts related to population and housing would result from implementation of the Project. Therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.16 RECREATION

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Does the Project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical impact on the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐

4.16.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact related to recreation if the Project would:

- Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated, or

- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse impact on the environment.

4.16.2 Setting

The Project is located in close proximity to Hell Hole Reservoir, which is situated within the Eldorado National Forest in the Sierra Nevada Mountain range. Developed recreational facilities associated with Hell Hole Reservoir include Hell Hole Campground, Big Meadows Campground, Upper Hell Hole Campground, Hell Hole Vista, and Hell Hole Boat Ramp. At Hell Hole Reservoir the steep terrain and sparse road access generally limits dispersed use to one undeveloped area sited at Upper Hell Hole (the eastern end of the reservoir), referred to as Greyhorse. The primary recreation activities in the vicinity include camping in developed sites and reservoir fishing. More than 90 percent of boating use is associated with fishing and non-motorized watercraft use (e.g., kayak, canoe); ski boats and personal watercraft use account for the remaining boating use. The reservoir is accessible by motor vehicle only at the end of the reservoir, where the paved boat launch facility is located. Visitor use estimates show that most use occurs between Memorial Day and Labor Day. The developed facilities located in the Project vicinity are briefly described below.

- **Hell Hole Campground.** Hell Hole Campground is located along Hell Hole Road approximately 0.6 miles from Hell Hole Boat Ramp. The campground features a parking area but the 10 campsites are walk-in only. The campground is generally open between May 15 and November 1, weather permitting. This campground offers vault restrooms and potable water.

- **Big Meadows Campground.** Big Meadows campground is located about one mile north of the Hell Hole Reservoir. The campground is generally open between May 15 and November 1, weather permitting. This campground has 53 drive-in campsites suitable for recreational vehicles, which makes it the most popular campground in the vicinity of Hell Hole Reservoir. This campground also offers vault and flush restrooms and potable water.

- **Upper Hell Hole Campground.** Upper Hell Hole campground can be reached by boat or a 3.5-mile hiking trail that is reached by crossing the crest of Hell Hole Dam and hiking on a trail that flanks the lake but is several hundred feet above the water. Upper Hell Hole Campground has 15 campsites, but does not have trash service or other amenities. The campground is generally open, weather permitting.

- **Hell Hole Vista.** This vista point offers views of Hell Hole Reservoir and dam, a parking area, one picnic site, and a vault restroom. The vista has surface level changes with masonry stairs and steel safety rails.

- **Hell Hole Boat Ramp.** Hell Hole Boat Ramp, located on the southwest end of the reservoir, provides the only boating access to Hell Hole reservoir. It is about 25 feet wide, about 1,000 feet long, extending from an elevation of 4,638 to 4,530 feet. The concrete ramp is U-shaped with a widened turnaround area at the bend that may be used as water levels recede. The area around the boat ramp offers parking areas, three picnic sites, and a vault restroom.

4.16.3 Impacts Discussion

a) 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.

b) The Project does not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical impact on the environment.

This response addresses items a) and b). The Project does not include new permanent housing or business structures. The new worker campground will provide temporary housing (e.g., RV parking and utility hook-ups) for construction and maintenance crews, and would reduce or eliminate the need for the crews to use public USDA-FS campgrounds. Provision of temporary housing intended specifically to support the maintenance of existing infrastructure would not result in an increase in the use of or deterioration of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities.

The Project does not include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. The new water supply system will improve conditions for recreationists using the existing Hell Hole Boat Launch and associated picnic area by providing potable water. Provision of potable water to an existing recreation facility would not result in adverse impacts to the environment.

During construction, the Hell Hole Boat Ramp and associated general parking and picnic area and a portion of Forest Road (FR) 2 may be closed to the public for short periods of time to allow for installation of the water, power, and communication lines and/or improvements to the parking area. Temporary closure of the boat ramp and roads may impede access to the reservoir. Mitigation Measure REC-01 states that PCWA will coordinate with the USDA-FS to inform the public of road closures and/or closure of the Hell Hole Boat Ramp, including notification on the USDA-FS website. In addition, PCWA will also include notification on the PCWA website and post signs at the construction site. This would minimize confusion or inconvenience to recreationists.

With **implementation of mitigation measure REC-01**, impacts associated with recreation would be **less than significant**.

4.16.4 Mitigation Measures

PCWA will implement the following mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to recreation to less-than-significant levels.

REC-01. Coordination with the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service

Upon Project approval, PCWA will coordinate with the USDA-FS to inform the public of road closures and/or closure of the Hell Hole Boat Ramp, including notification on the USDA-FS website. In addition, PCWA will also include notification on the PCWA website and post signs at the construction site.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

4.17 TRANSPORTATION

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

4.17.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact related to transportation or traffic if the Project would:

- Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities;
- Conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b);
- Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses; or
- Result in inadequate emergency access.

4.17.2 Setting

Access to the Project requires use of the following USDA-FS transportation system roads:

- Mosquito Ridge Road (FR 96); and
- Eleven Pines Road/Hell Hole Road (FR 2).

The potable water and communication lines will be installed along Forest Road (FR 2). The section of the road subject to the Project is maintained by PCWA as described in the MFP Transportation System Management Plan. Implementation of this plan is required under the FERC License Order for the MFP.

The Project area is not served by a public/commercial airport. The closest airports to Foresthill are the Georgetown Airport and Auburn Municipal Airport.

4.17.3 Impacts Discussion

a) The Project will not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

There are no Placer County programs, plans, ordinances or policies that pertain to the USDA-FS or MFP access roads considered in this analysis.

MFP roads are managed consistent with the Transportation System Management Plan (TSMP), which is part of the FERC License for the MFP. Use of MFP roads for the purpose of infrastructure and recreation improvement projects, including this Project, is consistent with the TSMP; therefore, there is no conflict.

PCWA uses USDA-FS roads to access the MFP for ongoing operations and maintenance of the MFP. Consistent with mitigation measure TRANS-01, prior to implementation of the Project, PCWA will consult with the USDA-FS to obtain authorization for implementation of the Project, including a Project-specific Road Use Permit.

Considering that the use of MFP roads is consistent with the TSMP, and **with implementation of mitigation measure TRANS-01**, impacts related to conflicts with existing programs, plans, ordinances, or policies regarding access roads would be **less than significant.**

b) The Project will not conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).

According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b), transportation projects that reduce, or have no impact on, vehicle miles traveled should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact. The proposed Project is not a transportation project. In addition, any increase in vehicle miles travelled would be minor and short-term, lasting only for the duration of construction. Long-term use of the new worker campground and improvements to existing facilities resulting from installation of water, power, and communication lines will not have an impact on vehicle miles travelled. Therefore, the Project would have no **impact** in the long-term with regard to conflicts with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).

c) With implementation of mitigation, the Project will not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses.

The term “geometric design” refers to the layout and features of a road with consideration to site-specific characteristics such as gradient, sight distance, traffic volume and traffic speed.

The Project is located in a recreational area where traffic is heaviest during the peak recreation season (typically Memorial Day through Labor Day), which coincides with the proposed work season for the Project (June to November). Therefore, hauling of large, heavy equipment to and from the Project area could potentially temporarily increase hazards along Mosquito Ridge Road (FR 96) and Eleven Pines Road/Hell Hole Road (FR 2) during

the peak use season. For example, large trucks pulling out from the new worker campground work and staging areas during construction could pose a potential hazard for other cars along FR 2. Excavation and installation of the water, power, and communication lines along FR 2 could also result in a temporary increase in hazards.

To minimize any potential hazards, PCWA would implement mitigation measure TRANS-02, which will minimize construction-related impacts on public traffic and reduce the potential for accidents involving the public; provide notification to administrators of police and fire stations, ambulance service providers, and recreational facility managers of the timing, location, and duration of construction activities and the locations of detours and lane closures, where applicable; develop and implement a plan for notifications and a process for communication with affected users before the start of construction; and enhance on-site personnel and vehicle safety. The Project Contractor will develop a construction traffic control plan prior to Project initiation. The plan will be submitted to PCWA for review and approval. After the plan has been approved, it will be incorporated into Contractor's construction plans required and approved by PCWA, and implemented as part of the construction contract.

With **implementation of mitigation measure TRANS-02**, the Project would have a **less than significant** impact related to geometric design features or incompatible uses.

d) The Project will not result in inadequate emergency access.

The Project would require the movement of trucks and other construction equipment on USDA-FS roads. Trips associated with Project construction could cause delays in emergency response times. This impact would be considered significant. To reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level, PCWA will implement mitigation measure TRANS-02 which requires development of a traffic control plan (refer to item c), above, for a complete description of the plan). **With implementation of mitigation measures TRANS-02, this impact would be less than significant.**

4.17.4 Mitigation Measures

PCWA will implement the following mitigation measure to reduce potential impacts related to traffic and transportation to less-than-significant levels.

TRANS-01. Consultation with U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service

- Prior to implementation of the Project, PCWA will consult with the USDA-FS to obtain authorization for implementation of the Project.

- PCWA will obtain authorization from the USDA-FS to construct this Project, including obtaining a Project-specific Road Use Permit.

TRANS-02. Traffic Control Plan

- PCWA's contractor will prepare a construction traffic control plan. The purpose of the plan will be to:

- Minimize construction-related impacts on public traffic and reduce the potential for accidents involving the public;
- Provide notification to administrators of police and fire stations, ambulance service providers, and recreational facility managers of the timing, location, and duration of construction activities and the locations of detours and lane closures, where applicable;
- Develop and implement a plan for notifications and a process for communication with affected users before the start of construction; and
- Enhance on-site personnel and vehicle safety.

The plan will be submitted to PCWA for review and approval. After the plan has been approved, it will be incorporated into Contractor's construction plans required and approved by PCWA, and implemented as part of the construction contract.

4.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

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

4.18.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact related to tribal cultural resources if the Project would:

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

- Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or

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

4.18.2 Setting

Assembly Bill 52 (AB-52) created a new category of environmental resources that must be considered under CEQA: "tribal cultural resources." Tribal cultural resources are defined as either: (1) "sites, features, places cultural landscapes, sacred places and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe" that are included in the state register of historical resources or a local register of historical resources, or that are determined to be eligible for inclusion in the state register; or (2) resources determined by the lead agency, in its discretion, to be significant based on the criteria for listing in the state register.

Recognizing that tribes may 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, and 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. Consultation may include discussing the type of environmental review necessary, the significance of Tribal cultural resources, the significance of the project's impacts on the tribal cultural resources, and alternatives and mitigation measures recommended by the tribe. The parties must consult in good faith, and consultation is deemed concluded when either the parties agree to measures to mitigate or avoid a significant impact on a Tribal cultural resource (if such a significant impact exists) or when a party concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached.

4.18.3 Impacts Discussion

a) and b) The Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, including a) any listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or b) any 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

As described in Section 3.5, Cultural Resources, there are no cultural or historic resources in the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the Project.

In accordance with the consultation requirements of AB-52, PCWA initiated the consultation process with appropriate Native American groups with a possible interest in the Project. On October 9, 2024, PCWA sent an e-mail to each of the individuals identified by the NAHC through a Sacred Lands File & Native American Contacts List Request to solicit information regarding Tribal cultural resources in and near the Project area, and to determine whether their respective Tribal organizations had an interest in or concerns with the Project. No responses were received. Refer to **Appendix F** for documentation of PCWA's AB-52 tribal consultation process.

During construction, it is possible that previously unknown cultural or historic resources could be discovered during ground-disturbing or other construction activities. In the unlikely event that such resources are discovered during construction activities, PCWA will implement **Mitigation Measure CUL-01**, which states that PCWA will implement all applicable measures for the protection of cultural resources, consistent with the HPMP for the MFP. In addition, as described in **Mitigation Measure CUL-02** if a previously unknown cultural resource is uncovered during ground disturbing activities, PCWA will immediately cease work in the area and will notify the USDA-FS. Ground disturbing activities will not be resumed until appropriate protection and avoidance measures are identified in consultation with the USDA-FS, SHPO, and the local Native American Tribal representatives. Finally, PCWA will implement **Mitigation Measure CUL-03**, which states that PCWA will conduct cultural resources awareness training in the field with PCWA staff and subcontractors prior to any construction or ground-disturbing activities. The training will include protocols for inadvertent discoveries of resources.

Considering that PCWA received no responses from Native American groups regarding potential Tribal resources in the Project area; that there are no cultural resources within the Project APE; and **with implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-01, CUL-02, and CUL-03** to minimize the potential for impacts to previously undiscovered resources, impacts would be **less than significant**.

4.18.4 Mitigation Measures

PCWA will implement the following mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to tribal resources to less-than-significant levels.

CUL-01. Historic Properties Management Plan

The Licensee will implement measures for the protection of cultural resources consistent with the MFP HPMP.

CUL-02. Cultural and Tribal Resource Awareness Training

- PCWA will conduct cultural resource awareness training in the field with PCWA staff and contractors prior to any construction or ground-disturbing activities.

- The HPMP coordinator (or designee) will be responsible for reviewing all construction plans to determine whether there are cultural resources present in the vicinity of the construction activities, and for organizing the cultural resource awareness training.

- During the training, the HPMP coordinator or their representative will discuss the types of cultural resources potentially present in the area, and procedures for avoiding these resources. The HPMP coordinator will also review the protocols for inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources.

CUL-03. Cultural or Tribal Resource Discovery

- Contact the Resource Development Department immediately if any of the following are discovered:
    - Previously Unknown Cultural or Tribal Resource
    - Human Remains
    - Paleontological Resource
    - National Register of Historic Places Eligible Site Damage
- If a previously unknown cultural resource is uncovered during ground disturbing activities, PCWA will immediately cease work in the area and will notify the USDA-FS. Ground disturbing activities will not be resumed until appropriate protection and avoidance measures are identified in consultation with the USDA-FS, SHPO, and the local Native American Tribal representatives.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

4.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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 inadequate capacity to serve the Project's Projected demand in addition to the providers existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.19.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact related to utilities or service systems if the Project would:

- Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment facilities or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities , the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects;
- Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years;
- Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the Project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the Project's Projected demand in addition to the providers existing commitments;
- 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; or
- Fail to comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

4.19.2 Setting

There are no wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage facilities in the vicinity of the Project. Solid waste generated by work crews at field locations is packed out to trash collection bins located at PCWA facilities for collection by a local disposal service (Recology Auburn Placer).

4.19.3 Impacts Discussion

a) Installation of utilities associated with the Project (i.e., the new potable water supply system, as well as electrical power lines and communication lines) will not cause significant environmental effects.

The Project includes installation of a potable water supply system as well as improvements to the existing communication lines. In addition, new electric powerlines will be connected to existing lines to provide power for the new worker campground and the water supply system. The purpose of this IS/MND is to analyze the environmental effects of the Project, including these utility systems. **With implementation of applicable mitigation measures** set forth in Table 1, installation and use of the new water, power, and communication lines will **not result in significant environmental effects**.

b) With implementation of mitigation, PCWA will ensure that there are sufficient water supplies available to serve the new worker campground, the Hell Hole worker cottages and dormitory, and the Hell Hole Boat Ramp and associated picnic area for the reasonably foreseeable future during normal, dry and multiple dry years.

Water is proposed to be supplied by a vertical water supply well, and submersible centrifugal well pump. The well will be a filter pack well or naturally developed well, activated in the water-bearing stratum, based on site conditions and test well data.

As described in mitigation measure HAZ-03, the construction contract documents will require a licensed/qualified well driller (C57 Well Drilling licensed contractor) for performance of the work. The project construction sequence will include a test well, sampling and geotechnical analysis to determine the expected flow, optimum depth for flow, water quality, and to identify the strata encountered. Contractor will develop and submit well installation plan/drawings prepared and signed by geologist (or hydrogeologist) based on the test well and geotechnical analysis results, for review and approval of PCWA prior to the final well drilling, construction and development. **With implementation of mitigation measure HAZ-03, this effect is less than significant.**

c) The Project will have no effect on the capacity of a wastewater treatment utility.

There are no existing wastewater treatment facilities that serve the Project area.

The new worker campground will include a self-contained sanitation system with sufficient capacity for sewage and wastewater generated by work crews using the facility. The RV stalls will be connected via 3- and 4-inch lateral sewer lines to a 2,000-gallon septic tank. The facility will also contain a 65-foot by 31-foot leach field with ten 63-inch-long sand

filter bed lines. The sanitation/septic system will be constructed to meet the current Placer County Division of Environmental Health requirements for the site evaluation and design of sewage disposal systems. In addition, consistent with Placer County building codes, a second "reserve" leach field of comparable size will be located in the clearing just south of the covered picnic tables. This field will not be constructed, but will remain reserved for potential future development, if necessary.

Therefore, the Project will have **no impact** on any existing wastewater facilities.

d) The Project will not 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 debris and excess material associated with construction of the worker campground, installation of the water, power, and communication lines, and improvements to the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area would be hauled off-site to a suitable facility.

The new worker campground is intended to provide an alternate location to accommodate work crews, but would not result in an increase in the number of work crews in the area. In addition, the superficial improvements to the boat ramp parking area would not increase public use of the boat ramp. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not result in generation of additional solid waste as compared to existing conditions. Therefore, the Project will not general solid waste in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. There is **no impact.**

e) The Project will comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

PCWA will comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, **no impact** would occur.

4.19.4 Mitigation Measures

PCWA will implement the mitigation measures included in the Project MMRP to reduce potential impacts to utilities and service systems to less-than-significant levels. This includes, but is not limited to, implementation of the following measure cited in this section:

HAZ-03. Well Drilling

- Construction contract documents will require a licensed/qualified well driller (C57 Well Drilling licensed contractor) for performance of the work.
- The drilling contractor will develop and submit well installation plan/drawings prepared and signed by geologist (or hydrogeologist) based on the test well and

geotechnical analysis results, for review and approval of PCWA prior to the final well drilling, construction and development.

- The project construction sequence will include a test well, sampling and geotechnical analysis to determine the expected flow, optimum depth for flow, water quality, and to identify the strata encountered.
- .

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

4.20 WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project…	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.20.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project could have a significant impact if located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones if the Project would:

- Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan;
- Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire;
- Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment; or
- Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

4.20.2 Setting

California's increasing population and expansion of development into previously undeveloped areas is creating more WUI issues with a corresponding increased risk of loss to human life, natural resources, and economic assets associated with wildland fires.

Rising temperatures and increasing temporal variability of water availability is substantially increasing wildfire risk in many areas.

The analysis in this section pertains specifically to: (1) State Responsibility Areas (SRAs), which are non-federal lands outside of city boundaries within which California assumes financial responsibility for preventing and suppressing fires; and (2) other non-federal areas that have been designated by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) as "very high" fire hazard severity areas. The boundaries of SRAs, which are reviewed and amended every 5 years, are further categorized by CAL FIRE into Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZs) with associated hazard levels classified as "moderate", "high", or "very high." These ratings are based on predictions of fire behavior in response to local weather patterns, fuel availability, and surrounding terrain (CAL FIRE 2012). While the FHSZ designations are applicable primarily in SRAs, some local responsibility areas have been designated as very high FHSZs. Local governments assume responsibility for fire prevention and suppression in these very high FHSZs.

Based on a review of the State Responsibility Area Viewer (CAL FIRE 2020), the Project is not located on lands that are classified by the State Board of Forestry as SRAs. Rather, they are mapped as lying within a Federal Responsibility Area (FRA) under the jurisdiction of the Eldorado National Forest.

4.20.3 Impacts Discussion

a) The Project will not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

The Project is located on federal lands managed by the USDA-FS. There are no specific emergency response or evacuation plans in place for this area. Therefore, there is **no impact**.

b) With implementation of mitigation, the Project will not exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors.

Use of vehicles and equipment powered by combustion engines will be required for construction as well as long-term operation and maintenance of the new worker campground and well. Following completion, fire pits will be available for use in the picnic area associated with the new worker campground. Considering the proximity of relatively dry forestland surrounding the Project area, use of combustion engines as part of construction and/or long-term operation of the Project would contribute to an increased risk for severe or uncontrolled spread of the fire. Similarly, the use of fire pits within the worker campground would potentially increase the risk of wildfire. To reduce risk of wildfire, PCWA will implement Mitigation Measures WF-01, WF-02, and WF-03. WF-01 requires PCWA to implement the Revised Fire Prevention and Suppression Plan for the MFP, as well as additional measures that state that PCWA and/or its contractor to implement standard fire prevention measures, including requiring fire prevention equipment to be available at all times, identifying construction sites as non-smoking

areas, providing fire prevention training to construction personnel, and following USDA-FS Project Activity Level (PAL) restrictions. WF-02 requires the contractor to create and implement a Project-specific Fire Prevention and Suppression Plan to address fire risks while working on site and the measures to be taken and implemented to prevent and/or minimize risk. Finally, WF-03 requires that fire pits within the campground adhere to the USDA-FS Forest Use Fire Restrictions to minimize the risk of wildfire when the campground is in use.

With implementation of **mitigation measures WF-01**, **WF-02, and WF-03the** Project would have a **less than significant** impact related to wildfire.

c) The Project does not include installation of infrastructure that would exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.

The Project includes installation of utilities including potable water lines, power lines, and communication lines. However, all utility lines will be buried and thus will not exacerbate fire risk. The Project, therefore, would have **no impact** related to increased risk due to installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure.

d) The Project will not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

The Project is limited to the installation of a worker campground, provision of buried water and communication lines, and superficial improvements to an existing parking lot. While set in a mountainous landscape, the Project will be constructed on relatively flat land, and in a rural area with no nearby downslope or downstream population centers. In the case of wildfire in the vicinity, the Project would not contribute and would have **no impact** related to any increased risk of downstream flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

4.20.4 Mitigation Measures

PCWA will implement the following mitigation measures to reduce potential wildfire-related impacts to less-than-significant levels.

WF-01. Fire Prevention and Suppression

PCWA will comply with the Revised Fire Prevention and Suppression Plan. (Fire Prevention and Suppression Plan) which states that:

- The contractor, its employees, and subcontractors and their employees, will make all reasonable efforts to prevent and suppress wildfires, and will exercise diligence in protecting from damage the land and property of the United States, and will follow USDA-FS Project Activity Level restrictions.

- No burning of any kind will occur as part of the construction activities.

- The following fire equipment will be on site at all times:
    - One shovel, one axe and one fire extinguisher UL rated at 4 BC or more on each truck, personnel vehicle, tractor, grader, and any other heavy equipment will be used.
    - One shovel and one back-pack five-gallon water filled tank with pump with each welder.
    - One shovel and one chemical pressurized fire extinguisher (fully charged) located at a point no greater than a distance of 25-feet from the work site, for each gasoline powered tool, including but not limited to chain saws, rock drills, etc.

WF-02. Contractor Fire Prevention and Suppression Plan

The contractor shall create a Project-specific plan to address fire risks while working on site and the measures to be taken and implemented to prevent and/or minimize risk.

WF-03. U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service Fire Restrictions

The usage of fire pits within the campground will adhere to the USDA-FS Forest Use Fire Restrictions to minimize the risk of wildfire when the campground is in use. Adherence to the USDA-FS restrictions will be strictly followed and enforced.

5.0 AGENCIES AND PERSONS CONSULTED

ELDORADO NATIONAL FOREST

Joseph Garrotto .....District Ranger

Charis Parker .....Forest Lands Program Manager

Kayla Nimmo .....District Recreation Management Specialist

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

6.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

JANELLE NOLAN AND ASSOCIATES ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING, INC.

Janelle Nolan ..... Director

Sara Reece ..... Senior Consultant

Robyn Smith ..... Biologist

Nicole Clement..... Biologist

STANTEC CONSULTING SERVICES INC.

Meghan Cronin ..... Engineer

Steve Peck ..... Engineer

Sandra Walter-Perry ..... Cultural Resources Specialist

PLACER COUNTY WATER AGENCY

Ben Ransom. ..... Environmental Services Manager

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

7.0 REFERENCES

California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2011. Facts about the Advanced Clean Cars Program. Sacramento, CA.

California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). 2020. https://bof.fire.ca.gov/projects-and-programs/state-responsibility-area-viewer/. Viewed on August 23, 2024.

_____. 2012. Fire Hazard Severity Zones Maps. Online Database, Accessed September 2024. https://calfire-forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=988d431a42b242b29d89597ab693d008 .

California Department of Conservation. Division of Oil, Gas & Geothermal Resources (DOGGR). 2016. Located at: http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dog/geothermal/maps/Pages/Index.aspx

_____. 2010. Fault Activity Map of California (Geologic Data Map No. 6). Available at: https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/Pages/program-rglm/2010_faultmap.aspx

_____. California Geological Survey. 2006. Special Report 190. Relative Likelihood for the Presence of Naturally Occurring Asbestos in Placer County, California. Prepared by Chris T. Higgins and John P. Clinkenbeard.

California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). 2021. Accessed January 2021. http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/ .

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2002. Transportation Related Earthborne Vibrations. Technical Advisory, Vibration. TAV-02-01-R9601. February 20, 2002.

California Department of Water Resources. 2020. Statewide Map of Current SGMA Basin Prioritization. Available at https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Basin-Prioritization.

California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal-EPA). 2010. California Climate Action Team (CAT). Climate Action Team Report to Governor Schwarzenegger and the California Legislature. December 2010.

_____. Cortese List: Section 65962.5(a). Available at: https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/

California Geological Survey (CGS). 2012. Aggregate Sustainability in California. Updated 2012.

California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). 2024. Rare Find 5.0. California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Habitat Planning and Conservation Branch. Accessed August 2024. Electronic Database.

California Native Plant Society (CNPS). 2024. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (online edition). California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, CA. Accessed August 2024 from http://www.rareplants.cnps.org

d'Azevedo, Warren L. 1986. Washoe. In d'Azevedo, Warren L. (ed.), Great Basin Handbook of North American Indians, 466-498

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). 2000. Establishment of Numeric Criteria for Priority Toxic Pollutants for the State of California, Final Rule. Federal Register, Vol. 65, No. 97, Pages 31682 – 31719, May 18, 2000.

_____. 1992. Establishment of Numeric Criteria for Priority Toxic Pollutants; States' Compliance; Final Rule. Federal Register, Vol. 55, No. 103, Pages 60848 – 60923, December 22, 1992.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). 2018. National Flood Hazard Layer. Accessed August 27, 2024 at https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps/national-flood-hazard-layer.

Lehman, R. N., D. E. Craigie, P. L. Collins, and R. S. Griffen. 1980. An analysis of habitat requirements and site selection criteria for nesting bald eagles in California. Wilderness Res. Inst. Report to U.S. Forest Service, San Francisco, CA.

Placer County. 2020. Placer County Conservation Program. February 2020.

_____. 2019. Placer County Sustainability Plan; A Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Plan and Adaptation Strategy.

_____. 2017. Placer County Air Pollution Control District. CEQA Air Quality Handbook. Adopted November 21, 2017. Accessed August 2018 from http://www.placerair.org/landuseandceqa/ceqaairqualityhandbook

_____. 2013. Placer County General Plan Update. Adopted August 16, 1994; Updated May 21, 2013. Auburn, California

_____. 2007. Our Changing Air: An Overview of the Risks to Placer County Residents.

Placer County Water Agency (PCWA). 2022. Special-Status Plant and Non-Native Invasive Plant Inventory Survey Report – 2021; May 2022.

_____. 2021a. Middle Fork American River Project (FERC Project No. 2079); Botanical Surveys Performed in Support of the Vegetation and Invasive Weed Management Plan. December 2021.

_____. 2021b. Middle Fork American River Project (FERC Project No. 2079). 2021 Bald Eagle Annual Active Nest Monitoring Survey Report; November 2021.

_____. 2011a. Middle Fork American River Project (FERC Project No. 2079), Application for New License. Filed with FERC on February 23, 2011.

_____. 2011b. CUL-1 – Cultural Resources Technical Study Report (2007). Available in PCWA's Application for New License filed with FERC on February 23, 2011.

_____. 2011c. CUL-1 – Cultural Resources Technical Study Report (2008). Available in PCWA's Application for New License filed with FERC on February 23, 2011.

____. 2011d. TERR 1 – Vegetation Communities and Wildlife Habitat Technical Study Report. Available in PCWA's Application for New License filed with FERC on February 23, 2011.

____. 2011e. TERR 2 – Special-Status Plant Populations Technical Study Report. Available in PCWA's Application for New License filed with FERC on February 23, 2011.

____. 2011f. TERR 4 – Special-Status Wildlife Technical Study Report. Available in PCWA's Application for New License filed with FERC on February 23, 2011.

____. 2011g. TERR 6 – Special-Status Bats Technical Study Report. Available in PCWA's Application for New License filed with FERC on February 23, 2011.

____. 2011h. Draft Biological Assessment/Biological Evaluation. Available in PCWA's Application for New License filed with FERC on February 23, 2011.

_____. 2007. Pre-Application Document (PAD). Filed with FERC December 13, 2007.

Reno Tahoe Geo Associates, Inc. 2021. Geotechnical Investigation Report for the Placer County Water Agency Hell Hole Worker Camp Project .February 2021.

Scenic America. 2024. Scenic byway maps, by state. Accessed September 2024 at https://www.scenic.org/state/california/.

Smith, Robyn. 2022. Project Biologist, Janelle Nolan and Associates Environmental Consulting. Personal communication with Sara Reece regarding a golden eagle observed on the Rubicon River between the Ellicott Bridge and Hell Hole Dam in 2022.

U.S. Department of Agriculture-Forest Service (USDA-FS). 2022. Invasive Plant List for the Eldorado National Forest. February 2, 2022.

———. 2021. Eldorado National Forest Watch List Species. August 4, 2021.

———. 2019a. Eldorado National Forest Sensitive Plant List. August 1, 2019.

____. 2019b. Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Plants Known to Occur or with Suitable Habitats on the Eldorado National Forest, August 2019.

____. 2019c. Conservation Strategy for the California Spotted Owl in the Sierra Nevada, Version 1.0.; April 2019.

____. 2016. Eldorado National Forest, Georgetown Ranger District – Hell Hole Reservoir Low Water Survey Cultural Resource Report R2016-0503-30018.

____. 2013. Pacific Southwest Region Regional Forester's Sensitive Plant and Animal Species Lists. Updated September 9, 2013.

____. 2004. Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendments: Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment, Final Supplemental EIS, and Record of Decision.

_____. 2001. 2001 Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendments: Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment 2001, Final EIS, and Record of Decision.

_____. 1990. Eldorado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2024. Species List, Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC). Accessed September 2024.

_____. 2021. Birds of Conservation Concern 2021. United States Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Birds, Falls Church, Virginia.

_____. 2020. Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for Southern Sierra Nevada Distinct Population Segment of Fisher. Final Rule. Federal Register, Vol. 85, No. 95, Friday, May 2020. Pages 29532–29589.

_____. 2007. National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines. May 2007.

U.S. Geological Survey. 2021. Working Group on California Earthquake Probabilities Uniform California Earthquake Rupture Forecast (Version 3). Accessed September 2024 at https://wgcep.org/UCERF3.

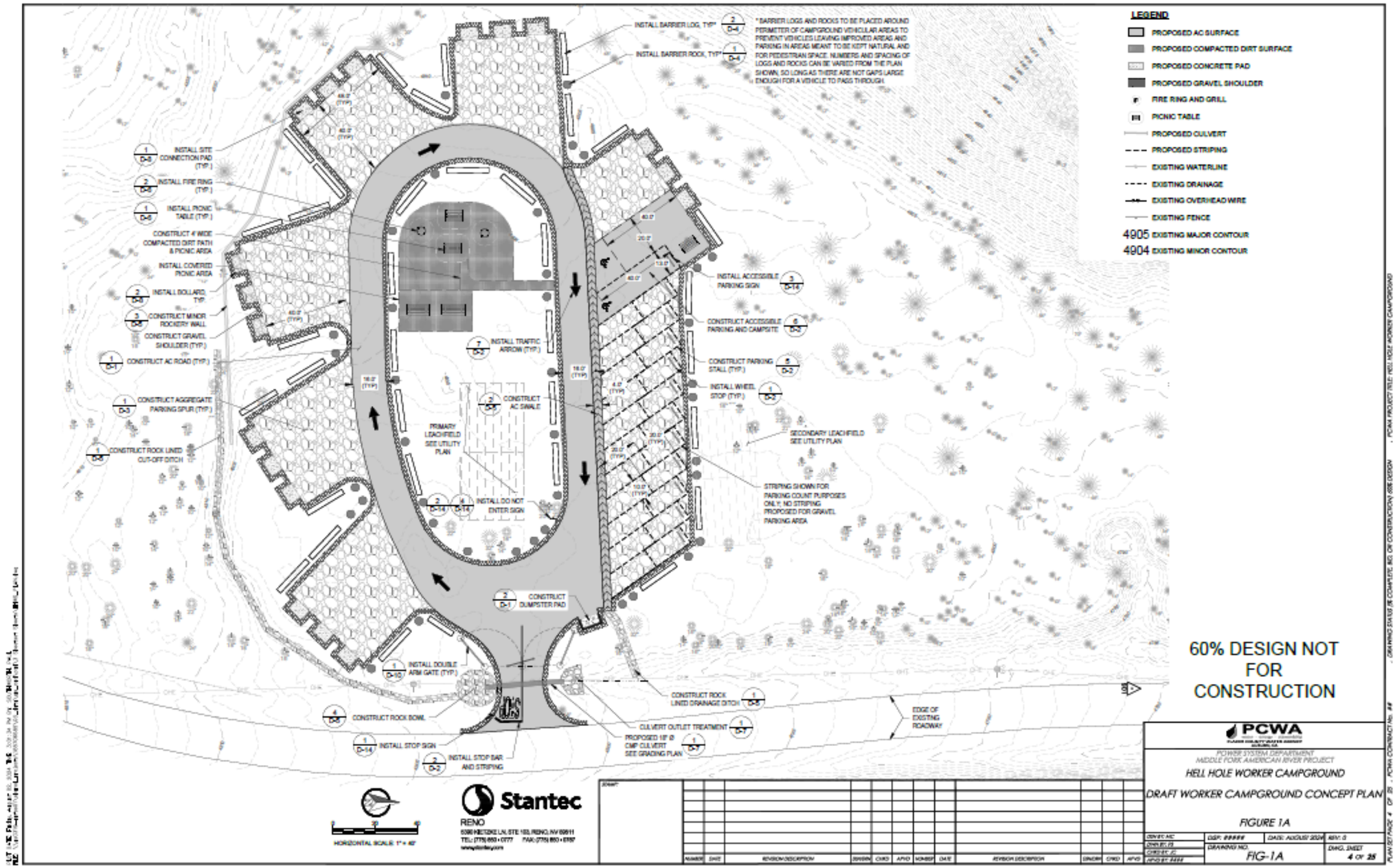
_____. 2014. Groundwater Quality in the Sierra Nevada, California. Fact Sheet 2014-036. https://doi.org/10.3133/fs20143096

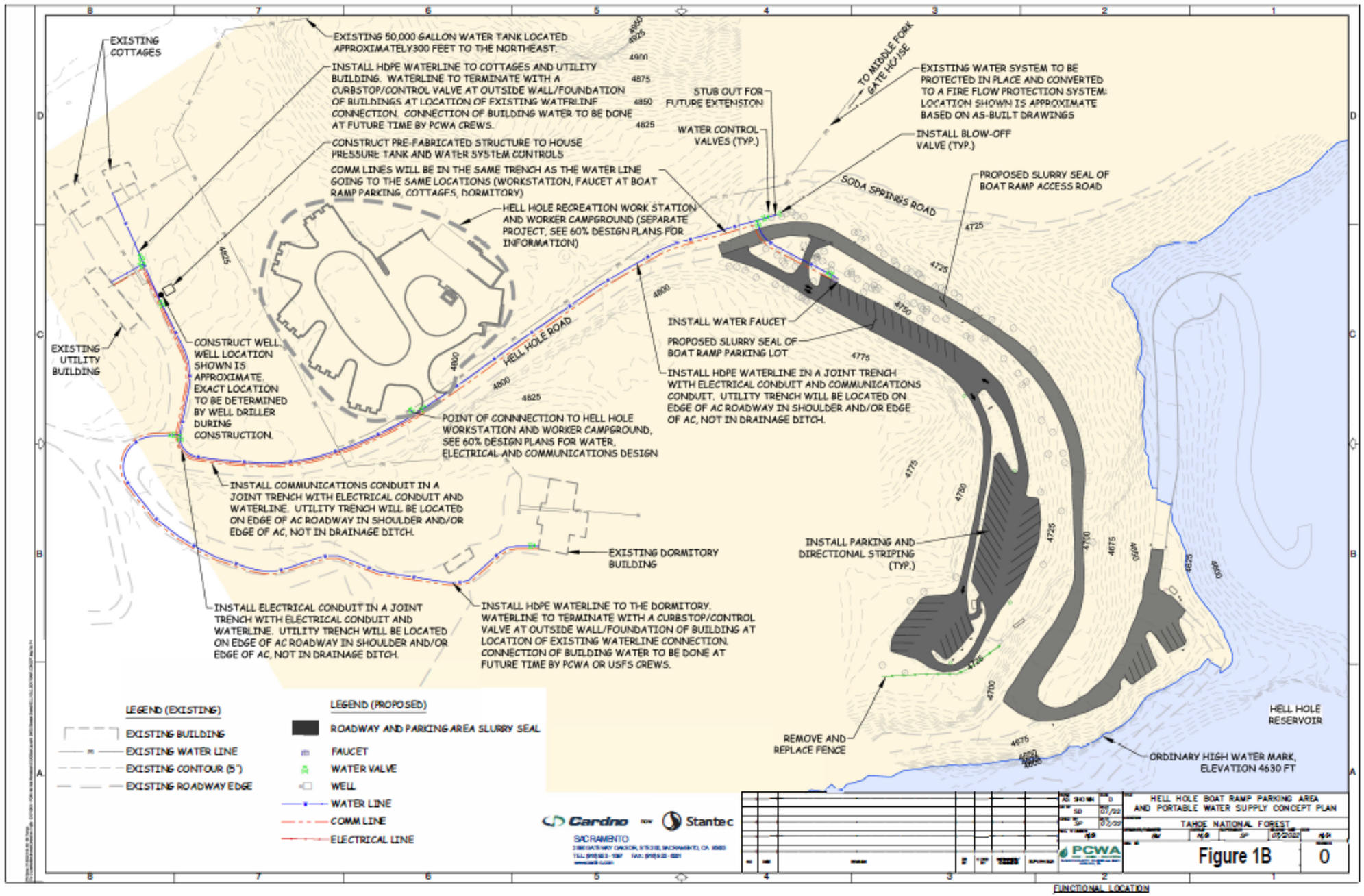
Wilson, N.L., A.H. Towne. 1978. Nisenan. In Robert F. Heizer (ed.), California, 387-397. Smithsonian Institution, Washington: Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution.

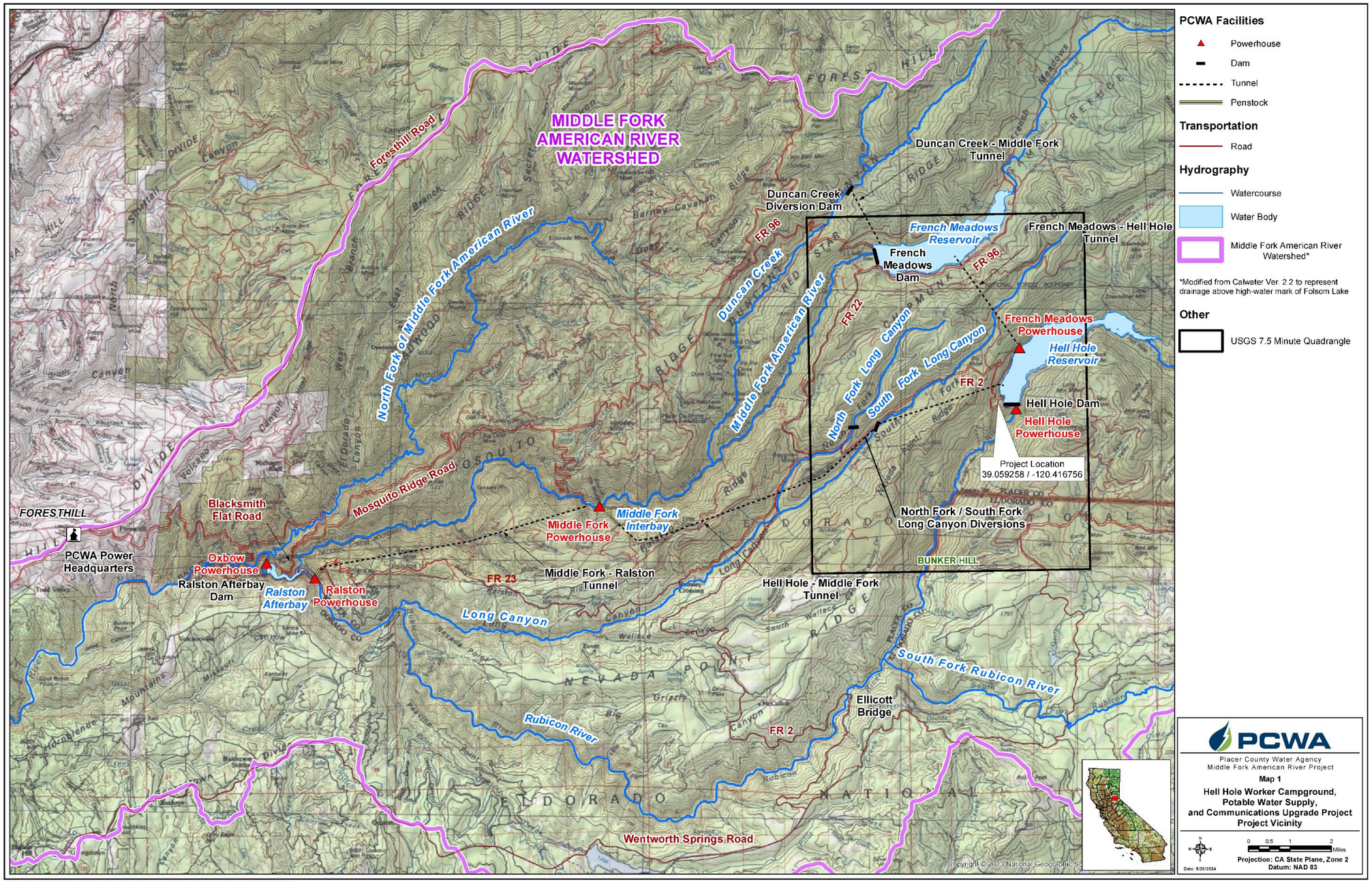
This Page Intentionally Left Blank

FIGURES AND MAPS

This Page Intentionally Left Blank


LEGEND
PROPOSED AC SURFACE
PROPOSED COMPACTED DIRT SURFACE
PROPOSED CONCRETE PAD
PROPOSED GRAVEL SHOULDER
FIRE RING AND GRILL
PICNIC TABLE
PROPOSED CULVERT
PROPOSED STRIPING
EXISTING WATERLINE
EXISTING DRAINAGE
EXISTING OVERHEAD WIRE
EXISTING FENCE
4905 EXISTING MAJOR CONTOUR
4904 EXISTING MINOR CONTOUR
* BARRIER LOGS AND ROCKS TO BE PLACED AROUND PERIMETER OF CAMPGROUND VEHICULAR AREAS TO PREVENT VEHICLES LEAVING IMPROVED AREAS AND PARKING IN AREAS MEANT TO BE KEPT NATURAL AND FOR PEDESTRIAN SPACE. NUMBERS AND SPACING OF LOGS AND ROCKS CAN BE VARIED FROM THE PLAN SHOWN, SO LONG AS THERE ARE NOT GAPS LARGE ENOUGH FOR A VEHICLE TO PASS THROUGH.
INSTALL BARRIER LOG, TYP*
INSTALL BARRIER ROCK, TYP*
INSTALL SITE CONNECTION PAD (TYP.)
INSTALL FIRE RING (TYP.)
INSTALL PICNIC TABLE (TYP.)
CONSTRUCT 4' WIDE COMPACTED DIRT PATH & PICNIC AREA
INSTALL COVERED PICNIC AREA
INSTALL BOLLARD, TYP.
CONSTRUCT MINOR ROCKERY WALL
CONSTRUCT GRAVEL SHOULDER (TYP.)
CONSTRUCT AC ROAD (TYP.)
CONSTRUCT AGGREGATE PARKING SPUR (TYP.)
CONSTRUCT ROCK LINED CUT-OFF DITCH
INSTALL TRAFFIC ARROW (TYP.)
CONSTRUCT AC SWALE
PRIMARY LEACHFIELD SEE UTILITY PLAN
INSTALL DO NOT ENTER SIGN
CONSTRUCT DUMPSTER PAD
INSTALL DOUBLE ARM GATE (TYP.)
CONSTRUCT ROCK BOWL
INSTALL STOP SIGN
INSTALL STOP BAR AND STRIPING
INSTALL ACCESSIBLE PARKING SIGN
CONSTRUCT ACCESSIBLE PARKING AND CAMPSITE
CONSTRUCT PARKING STALL (TYP.)
INSTALL WHEEL STOP (TYP.)
SECONDARY LEACHFIELD SEE UTILITY PLAN
STRIPING SHOWN FOR PARKING COUNT PURPOSES ONLY, NO STRIPING PROPOSED FOR GRAVEL PARKING AREA
CONSTRUCT ROCK LINED DRAINAGE DITCH
CULVERT OUTLET TREATMENT
PROPOSED 18" Ø CMP CULVERT SEE GRADING PLAN
EDGE OF EXISTING ROADWAY
HORIZONTAL SCALE: 1" = 40'
Stantec
RENO
5390 KIETZKE LN, STE 103, RENO, NV 89511
TEL: (775) 850 - 0777 FAX: (775) 850 - 0787
60% DESIGN NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION
PCWA
POWER SYSTEM DEPARTMENT
MIDDLE FORK AMERICAN RIVER PROJECT
HELL HOLE WORKER CAMPGROUND
DRAFT WORKER CAMPGROUND CONCEPT PLAN
FIGURE 1A
DRAWING NO.
FIG-1A
DWG. SHEET
4 OF 35

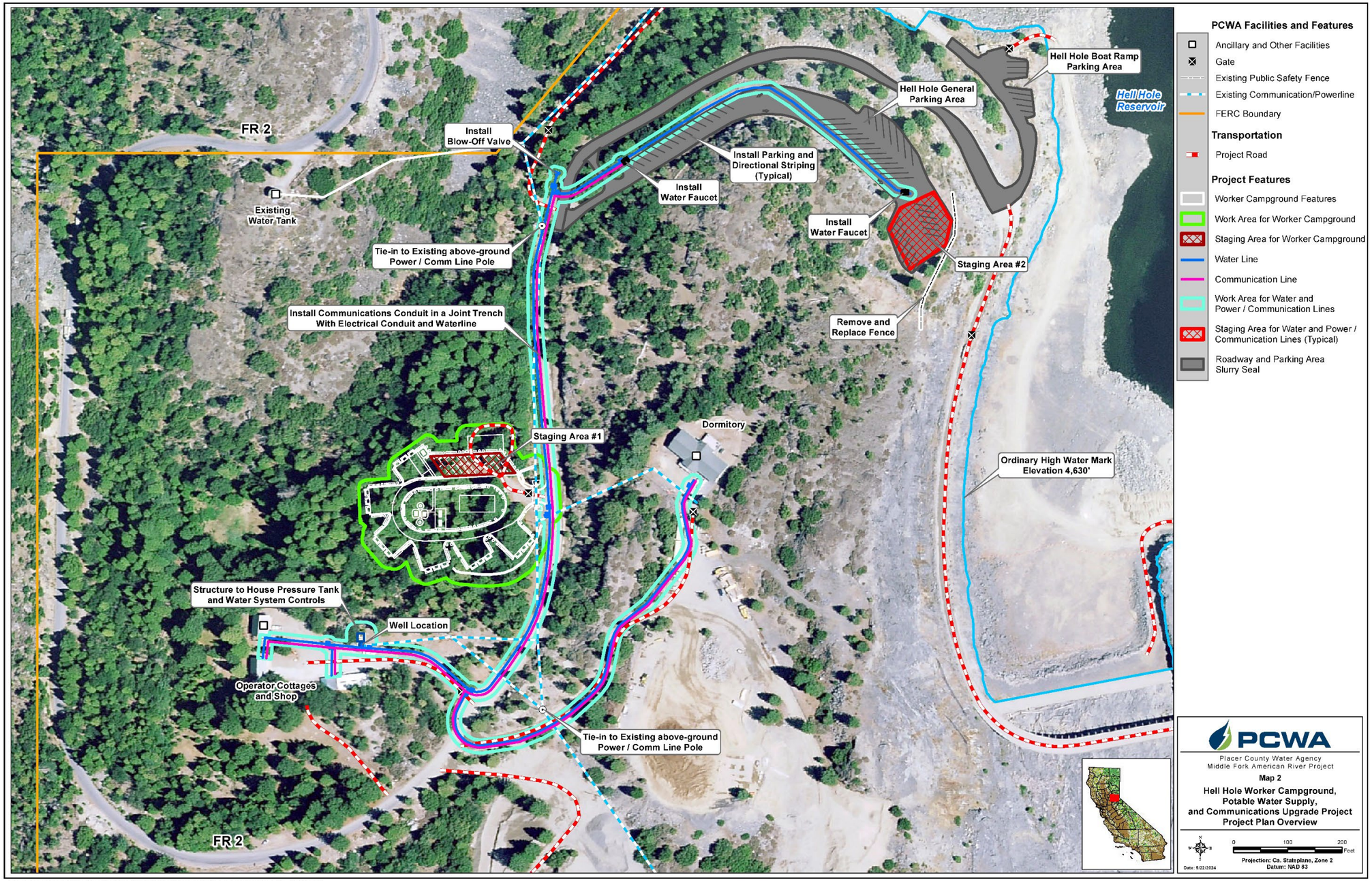

EXISTING COTTAGES
EXISTING 50,000 GALLON WATER TANK LOCATED APPROXIMATELY300 FEET TO THE NORTHEAST.
INSTALL HDPE WATERLINE TO COTTAGES AND UTILITY BUILDING. WATERLINE TO TERMINATE WITH A CURBSTOP/CONTROL VALVE AT OUTSIDE WALL/FOUNDATION OF BUILDINGS AT LOCATION OF FXISTING WATFRLINF CONNECTION. CONNECTION OF BUILDING WATER TO BE DONE AT FUTURE TIME BY PCWA CREWS.
CONSTRUCT PRE-FABRICATED STRUCTURE TO HOUSE PRESSURE TANK AND WATER SYSTEM CONTROLS
COMM LINES WILL BE IN THE SAME TRENCH AS THE WATER LINE GOING TO THE SAME LOCATIONS (WORKSTATION, FAUCET AT BOAT RAMP PARKING, COTTAGES, DORMITORY)
HELL HOLE RECREATION WORK STATION AND WORKER CAMPGROUND (SEPARATE PROJECT, SEE 60% DESIGN PLANS FOR INFORMATION)
EXISTING UTILITY BUILDING
CONSTRUCT WELL. WELL LOCATION SHOWN IS APPROXIMATE. EXACT LOCATION TO BE DETERMINED BY WELL DRILLER DURING CONSTRUCTION.
HELL HOLE ROAD
POINT OF CONNNECTION TO HELL HOLE WORKSTATION AND WORKER CAMPGROUND, SEE 60% DESIGN PLANS FOR WATER, ELECTRICAL AND COMMUNICATIONS DESIGN
INSTALL COMMUNICATIONS CONDUIT IN A JOINT TRENCH WITH ELECTRICAL CONDUIT AND WATERLINE. UTILITY TRENCH WILL BE LOCATED ON EDGE OF AC ROADWAY IN SHOULDER AND/OR EDGE OF AC, NOT IN DRAINAGE DITCH.
EXISTING DORMITORY BUILDING
INSTALL ELECTRICAL CONDUIT IN A JOINT TRENCH WITH ELECTRICAL CONDUIT AND WATERLINE. UTILITY TRENCH WILL BE LOCATED ON EDGE OF AC ROADWAY IN SHOULDER AND/OR EDGE OF AC, NOT IN DRAINAGE DITCH.
INSTALL HDPE WATERLINE TO THE DORMITORY. WATERLINE TO TERMINATE WITH A CURBSTOP/CONTROL VALVE AT OUTSIDE WALL/FOUNDATION OF BUILDING AT LOCATION OF EXISTING WATERLINE CONNECTION. CONNECTION OF BUILDING WATER TO BE DONE AT FUTURE TIME BY PCWA OR USFS CREWS.
TO MIDDLE FORK GATE HOUSE
EXISTING WATER SYSTEM TO BE PROTECTED IN PLACE AND CONVERTED TO A FIRE FLOW PROTECTION SYSTEM. LOCATION SHOWN IS APPROXIMATE BASED ON AS-BUILT DRAWINGS
STUB OUT FOR FUTURE EXTENSION
WATER CONTROL VALVES (TYP.)
INSTALL BLOW-OFF VALVE (TYP.)
SODA SPRINGS ROAD
PROPOSED SLURRY SEAL OF BOAT RAMP ACCESS ROAD
INSTALL WATER FAUCET
PROPOSED SLURRY SEAL OF BOAT RAMP PARKING LOT
INSTALL HDPE WATERLINE IN A JOINT TRENCH WITH ELECTRICAL CONDUIT AND COMMUNICATIONS CONDUIT. UTILITY TRENCH WILL BE LOCATED ON EDGE OF AC ROADWAY IN SHOULDER AND/OR EDGE OF AC, NOT IN DRAINAGE DITCH.
INSTALL PARKING AND DIRECTIONAL STRIPING (TYP.)
REMOVE AND REPLACE FENCE
HELL HOLE RESERVOIR
ORDINARY HIGH WATER MARK, ELEVATION 4630 FT
LEGEND (EXISTING)
EXISTING BUILDING
EXISTING WATER LINE
EXISTING CONTOUR (5')
EXISTING ROADWAY EDGE
LEGEND (PROPOSED)
ROADWAY AND PARKING AREA SLURRY SEAL
FAUCET
WATER VALVE
WELL
WATER LINE
COMM LINE
ELECTRICAL LINE
Cardno now Stantec
SACRAMENTO
HELL HOLE BOAT RAMP PARKING AREA AND PORTABLE WATER SUPPLY CONCEPT PLAN
TAHOE NATIONAL FOREST
PCWA
Figure 1B
0
FUNCTIONAL LOCATION



C:\GIS\237800824\map\FacilitiesMaps\ConstructionMaps\HHWorkerCG\PCWA_HHWCG_17i11i_10_Vicinity.mxd

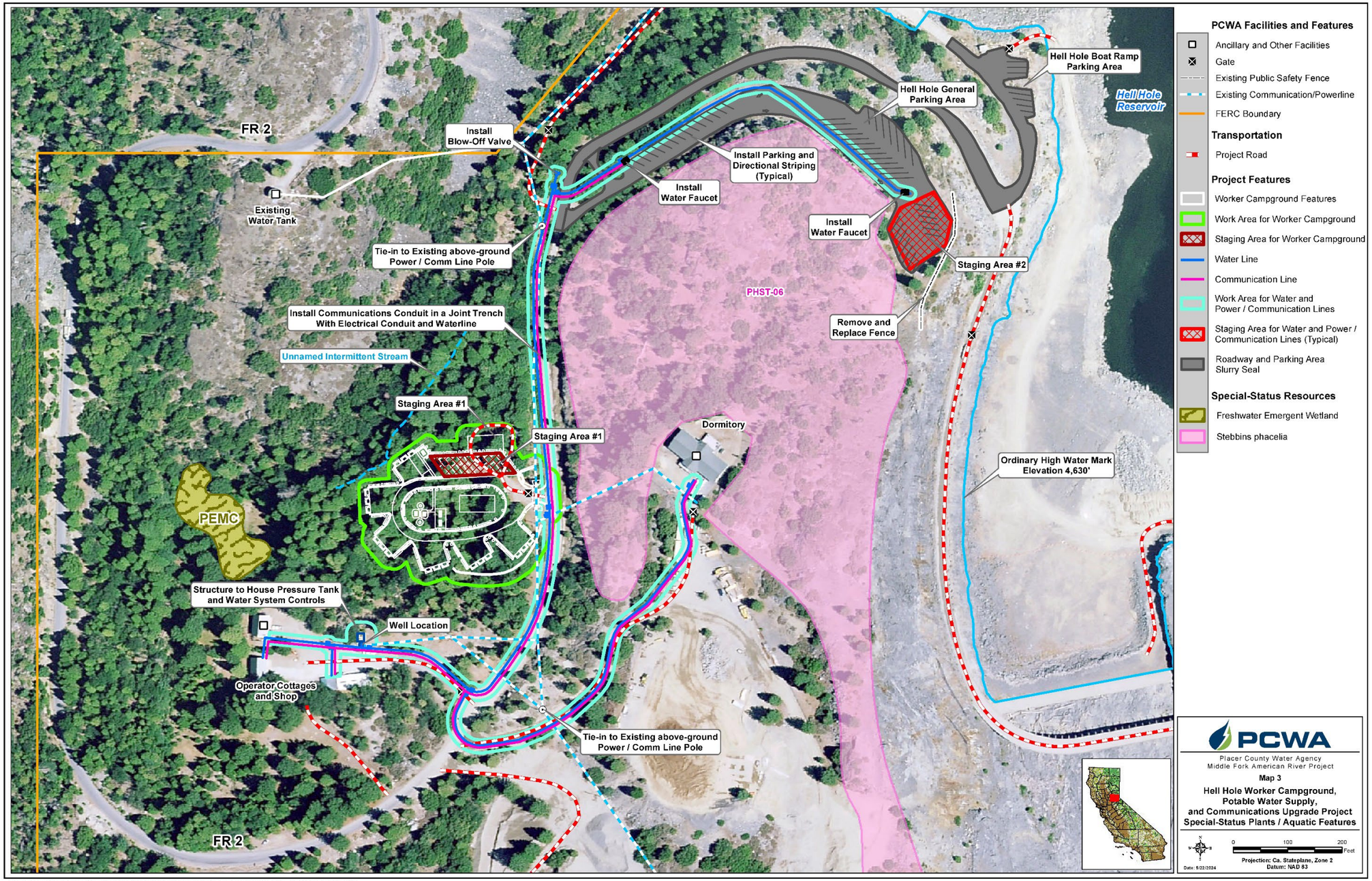
Map 1. Project Vicinity Map

This Page Intentionally Left Blank



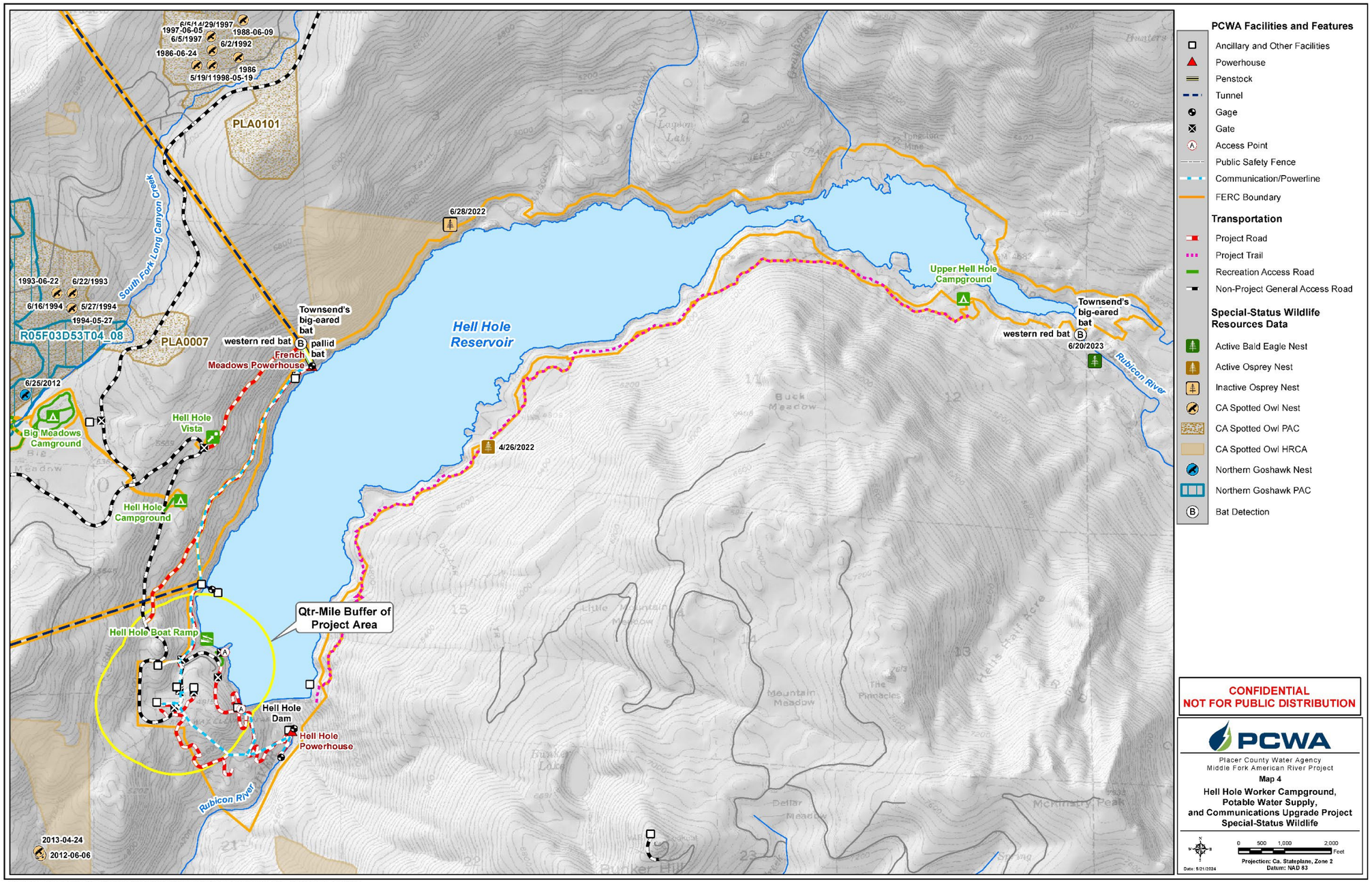
Map 2. Project Plan Overview Map

This Page Intentionally Left Blank



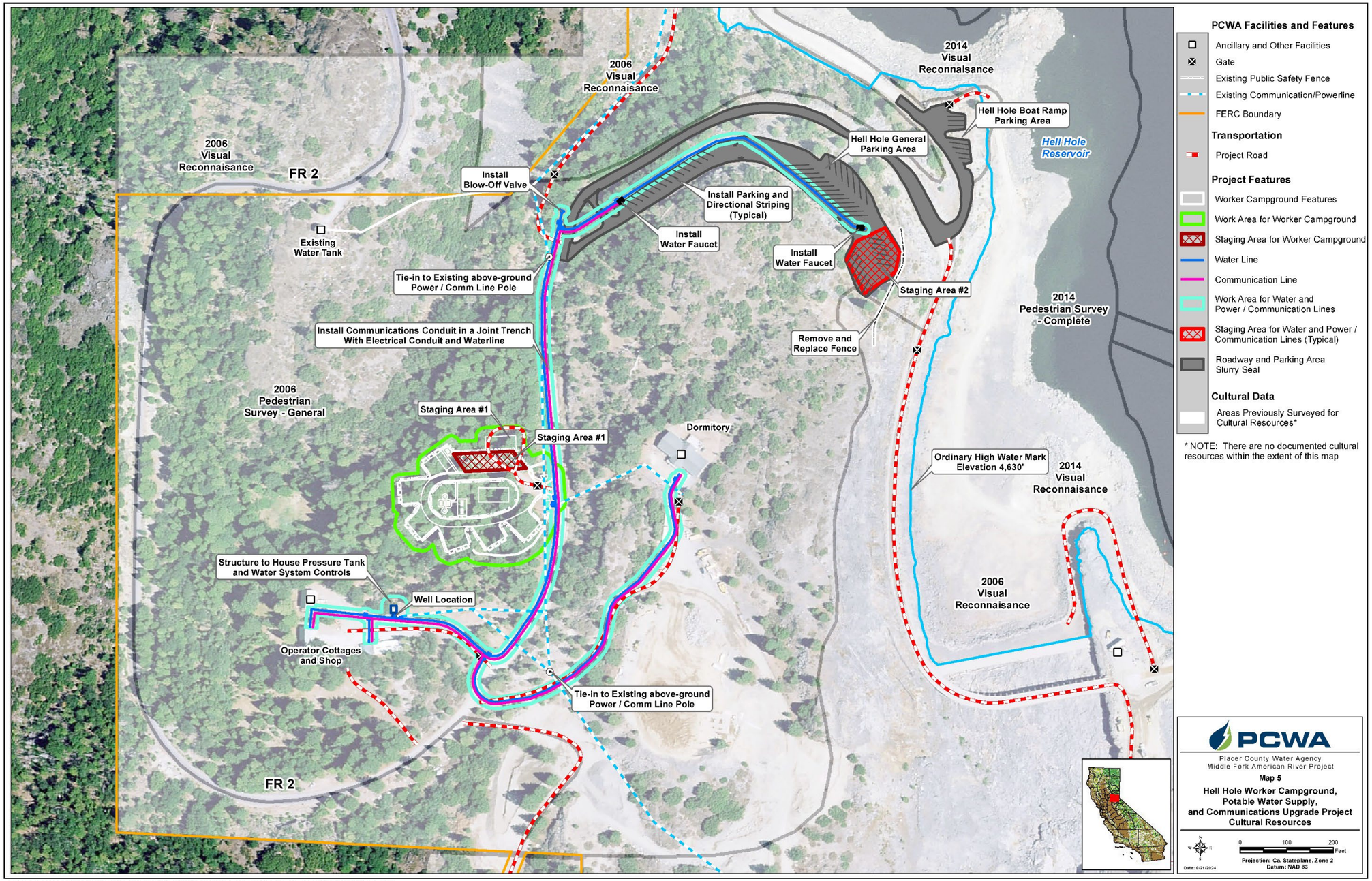
Map 3. Special-Status Plants and Aquatic Features

This Page Intentionally Left Blank



Map 4. Special-Status Wildlife

This Page Intentionally Left Blank



Map 5. Cultural Resources

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

APPENDIX A

Placer County Air Pollution Control District Fugitive Dust Best Management Practices (Rule 228)

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

RULE 228 FUGITIVE DUST

Adopted 06-19-79
(Amended 10-19-93, 04-10-03)

100 GENERAL

101 PURPOSE
102 APPLICABILITY
103 EXEMPTIONS
104 PARTIAL EXEMPTIONS

200 DEFINITIONS

201 ACTIVE OPERATIONS
202 AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY
203 ASBESTOS
204 ASBESTOS AIRBORNE TOXIC CONTROL MEASURE FOR CONSTRUCTION, GRADING, QUARRYING, AND SURFACE MINING OPERATIONS
205 BOUNDARY LINE
206 BULK MATERIAL
207 CHEMICAL STABILIZERS
208 CONSTRUCTION/DEMOLITION ACTIVITIES
209 CONTRACTOR
210 DISTURBED SURFACE AREA
211 DUST SUPPRESSANTS
212 EARTH-MOVING ACTIVITIES
213 FUGITIVE DUST
214 GEOGRAPHIC ULTRAMAFIC ROCK UNIT
215 INACTIVE DISTURBED SURFACE AREA
216 NATURALLY-OCCURRING ASBESTOS
217 NON-ROUTINE
218 OPEN STORAGE PILE
219 PARTICULATE MATTER
220 PAVED ROAD
221 PM10
222 ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE
223 SERPENTINE
224 SILT
225 SIMULTANEOUS SAMPLING
226 STABILIZED SURFACE
227 TRACK-OUT/CARRY-OUT
228 ULTRAMAFIC ROCK
229 UNPAVED ROADS
230 VISIBLE EMISSIONS
231 VISIBLE ROADWAY DUST
232 WIND-DRIVEN FUGITIVE DUST

300 STANDARDS

301 VISIBLE EMISSIONS NOT ALLOWED BEYOND BOUNDARY LINE
302 VISIBLE EMISSIONS FROM ACTIVE OPERATIONS
303 CONCENTRATION LIMIT
304 TRACK-OUT ON TO PAVED PUBLIC ROADWAYS

400 ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

401 MINIMUM DUST CONTROL REQUIREMENTS
402 WIND-DRIVEN FUGITIVE DUST CONTROL
403 REQUIREMENTS FOR NATURALLY OCCURRING ASBESTOS AREAS
404 COMPLIANCE WITH STANDARDS
405 REASONABLE PRECAUTIONS

500 MONITORING AND RECORDKEEPING

501 MONITORING
502 TEST METHODS
503 RECORDKEEPING

100 GENERAL

101 PURPOSE: To reduce the amount of particulate matter entrained in the ambient air, or discharged into the ambient air, as a result of anthropogenic (man-made) fugitive dust sources by requiring actions to prevent, reduce, or mitigate fugitive dust emissions.

102 APPLICABILITY: The provisions of this rule shall apply to any activity or man-made condition capable of generating fugitive dust. The provisions of this rule apply to all of Placer County.

103 EXEMPTIONS: The provisions of this rule shall not apply to:

103.1 Agricultural activities conducted and maintained for commercial agricultural purposes. If there is a question regarding whether an activity is an agricultural activity or a commercial agricultural activity, the APCO shall consult with the Agricultural Commissioner.

103.2 Active operations conducted during emergency life-threatening situations, or in conjunction with any officially declared disaster or state of emergency, or to attend to uncontrolled fires.

103.3 Active operations conducted by essential service utilities to provide electricity, natural gas, telephone, water and sewer during periods of service outages and emergency disruptions.

103.4 Active operations conducted at solid waste landfills.

103.5 Active operations within State or Federal lands.

103.6 Active operations complying with California Forest Practice Rules.

103.7 Any contractor subsequent to the time the contract ends, provided that such contractor implemented the required control measures during the contractual period.

103.8 Weed abatement operations, fire hazard abatement, or vegetation clearing for fire defense purposes ordered or conducted by a county agricultural commissioner, or any state, county, or municipal fire department, or that is required by a local ordinance. The provisions of this clause do not exempt the owner of any property from controlling fugitive dust emissions emanating from disturbed surface areas and inactive disturbed surface areas created as a result of the exempt activity.

103.9 Public unpaved roads that have the sole purpose of providing access to fire breaks or defensible spaces.

103.10 Unpaved roads, unless such roads:

103.10.1 Are within and part of a property undergoing development or construction; or

103.10.2 Are public unpaved roads being constructed or undergoing a maintenance activity.

103.11 To any active operation, open storage pile, or disturbed surface area for which necessary fugitive dust preventive or mitigating actions are in conflict with the California or federal Endangered Species Acts.

April 10, 2003

Placer County APCD 228 - 3 *Rules and Regulations*

103.12 Non-routine or emergency maintenance of flood control or irrigation channels, canals, and water spreading basins.

103.13 To blasting operations that have been permitted by the California Division of Industrial Safety.

103.14 Quarrying and surface mining operations, or to sand and gravel mining, rock crushing, and aggregate and sand processing operations, provided that a permit has been issued by the District in accordance with Rule 501, General Permit Requirements, for such operations.

104 PARTIAL EXEMPTIONS:

104.1 Earth Covering of Paved Roadways: The provisions of Section 304 shall not apply to earth coverings of public paved roadways where such coverings are approved by a government agency for the protection of the roadway, and where such coverings are used as roadway crossings for haul vehicles.

104.2 Permitted Facilities: The provisions of Section 400, with the exception of Section 405, Reasonable Precautions, shall not apply to any facility permitted by the District in accordance with Rule 501, General Permit Requirements.

104.3 Permitted Facilities With Non-Fugitive Emissions: The provisions of Section 303 shall not apply to any facility having non-fugitive particulate matter emissions that are permitted by the District in accordance with Rule 501, General Permit Requirements.

200 DEFINITIONS: Except as defined below for the purposes of this Rule the terms used are as defined in Rule 102, Definitions.

201 ACTIVE OPERATIONS: Any activity capable of generating fugitive dust, including, but not limited to, earth-moving activities, construction/demolition activities, or heavy- and light-duty vehicular movement on disturbed surface areas, including inactive disturbed surface areas, and unpaved roads within a construction or a development project.

202 AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY: Any activity, operation, facility, or appurtenances thereof, including, but not limited to, the cultivation and tillage of the soil, dairying, the production, cultivation, growing, and harvesting of any agricultural commodity including timber, viticulture, apiculture, or horticultural, the raising of livestock, fur bearing animals, fish, or poultry, and game birds, and any practices performed by a farmer or on a farm incident to or in conjunction with those farming operations, including preparation for market, delivery to storage or to market, or delivery to carriers for transportation to market.

203 ASBESTOS: Asbestiforms of the following minerals: chrysotile (fibrous serpentine), crocidolite (fibrous riebeckite), amosite (fibrous ummingtonite--grunerite), fibrous tremolite, fibrous actinolite, and fibrous anthophyllite.

204 ASBESTOS AIRBORNE TOXIC CONTROL MEASURE FOR CONSTRUCTION, GRADING, QUARRYING, AND SURFACE MINING OPERATIONS: A regulation adopted as Section 93105, Title 17, California Code of Regulations (CCR) by the California Air Resources Board per Health and Safety Code Section 39666 which requires the adoption of regulations to reduce emissions of identified airborne toxics to the lowest level achievable.

205 BOUNDARY LINE: The boundaries of an area in which either a person causing the emission or a person allowing the emission has the legal use or possession. This may include all or portions of a legal parcel or parcels as defined by the Placer County Assessor.

206 BULK MATERIAL: Any material which can emit dust when stored, disturbed, or handled, and is generally un-packaged, including sand, gravel, soil, aggregate material

less than two inches in length or diameter, and other organic or inorganic particulate matter.

207 **CHEMICAL STABILIZERS:** A non-toxic chemical dust suppressant which must not be used if prohibited for use by the Regional Water Quality Control Boards, the California Air Resources Board, the Environmental Protection Agency, or any applicable law, rule or regulation; and should meet any specifications, criteria, or tests required by any federal, state, or local water agency. Unless otherwise indicated, the use of a non-toxic chemical stabilizer shall be of sufficient concentration and application frequency to maintain a stabilized surface.

208 **CONSTRUCTION/DEMOLITION ACTIVITIES:** Any on-site mechanical activities preparatory to or related to the building, alteration, rehabilitation, demolition or improvement of property, including, but not limited to the following activities; grading, excavation, loading, crushing, cutting, planing, shaping or ground breaking.

209 **CONTRACTOR:** Any person or licensed contractor, who has a contractual arrangement to conduct an active operation subject to this Rule for another person.

210 **DISTURBED SURFACE AREA:** A portion of the earth's surface that has been physically moved, uncovered, destabilized, or otherwise modified from its undisturbed natural soil condition, thereby increasing the potential for emissions of fugitive dust. This definition excludes those areas that have:

210.1 Been restored to a natural state, such that the vegetative ground cover and soil characteristics are similar to adjacent or nearby natural conditions;

210.2 Been paved or otherwise covered by a permanent structure; or

210.3 Sustained a vegetative ground cover over at least 95 percent of an area for a period of at least 6 months.

211 **DUST SUPPRESSANTS:** Water, hygroscopic materials, or non-toxic chemical stabilizers used as a treatment material to reduce fugitive dust emissions.

212 **EARTH-MOVING ACTIVITIES:** Include, but are not limited to, grading, earth cutting and filling operations, loading or unloading of dirt or bulk materials, adding to or removing from open storage piles of bulk materials, or soil mulching.

213 **FUGITIVE DUST:** Any solid particulate matter that becomes airborne, without first passing through a stack or duct, directly or indirectly as a result of the activities of man (i.e. anthropogenic), including the raising and/or keeping of animals.

214 **GEOGRAPHIC ULTRAMAFIC ROCK UNIT:** A geographic area that is designated as an ultramafic rock unit or ultrabasic rock unit on maps identified in the California Air Resources Board's Asbestos Airborne Toxic Control Measure or Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations.

215 **INACTIVE DISTURBED SURFACE AREA:** Any disturbed surface area upon which active operations have not occurred or are not expected to occur for a period of seven (7) consecutive days.

216 **NATURALLY-OCCURRING ASBESTOS:** Asbestos that has not been processed in an asbestos mill.

217 **NON-ROUTINE:** Any non-periodic active operation that occurs no more than three (3) times per year, lasts less than 30 cumulative days per year, and is scheduled less than 30 days in advance.

218 **OPEN STORAGE PILE:** Any accumulation of bulk material with five (5) percent or greater silt content which is not fully enclosed, covered or chemically stabilized, and which attains a height of three (3) feet or more and a total surface area of 150 or more square feet. Silt content level is assumed to be five (5) percent or greater unless a person can show, by sampling and analysis in accordance with ASTM Method C-136 or other equivalent method approved in writing by the Executive Officer of the California Air Resources Board, that the silt content is less than five (5) percent.

219 **PARTICULATE MATTER:** Any material, except uncombined water, which exists in a finely divided form as a liquid or solid at standard conditions.

220 **PAVED ROAD:** An improved street, highway, alley, public way, or easement that is covered by typical roadway materials excluding access roadways that connect a facility with a public paved roadway and are not open to through traffic. Public paved roads are those open to public access and that are under the jurisdiction of any federal, state, county, municipal or any other governmental or quasi-governmental agencies. Private paved roads are any paved roads not defined as public.

221 **PM10:** Is particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter smaller than or equal to a nominal 10 microns as measured by an applicable reference test method or methods found in Article 2, Subchapter 6, Title 17, California Code of Regulations (commencing with Section 94100).

222 **ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE:** Activities undertaken to build roads, highways, railroads, bridges, culverts, drains and other works incidental to road or highway construction, and maintenance activities that involve grading or excavation.

223 **SERPENTINE:** Any form of the following hydrous magnesium silicate minerals: antigorite, lizardite, and chrysotile.

224 **SILT:** Any aggregate material with a particle size less than 74 micrometers in diameter that passes through a No. 200 Sieve.

225 **SIMULTANEOUS SAMPLING:** The operation of two PM10 samplers in such a manner that one sampler is started within five (5) minutes of the other, and each sampler is operated for a consecutive period which must be not less than 290 minutes and not more than 310 minutes.

226 **STABILIZED SURFACE** means:

226.1 Any disturbed surface area or open storage pile that is treated so it will be resistant to wind-driven fugitive dust;

226.2 Any unpaved road surface in which any fugitive dust plume emanating from vehicular traffic does not exceed 20 percent opacity.

227 **TRACK-OUT/CARRY-OUT:** Any and all bulk materials that adhere to and agglomerate on the exterior surfaces of motor vehicles and/or equipment (including tires) that may then fall onto a paved road.

228 **ULTRAMAFIC ROCK:** An igneous rock composed of 90 percent or greater of one or a combination of the following iron/magnesium-rich, dark-colored silicate minerals: olivine, pyroxene, or more rarely amphibole. For the purposes of this section, "ultramafic rock" includes the following rock types: dunite, pyroxenite, and peridotite; and their metamorphic derivatives.

229 **UNPAVED ROADS:** Any unsealed or unpaved roads, equipment paths, or travel ways that are not covered by one of the following: concrete, asphaltic concrete, recycled asphalt, or asphalt. Public unpaved roads are any unpaved roadway under the jurisdiction of any federal, state, county, municipal or other governmental or quasi-

governmental agencies. Private unpaved roads are all other unpaved roadways not defined as public.

230 VISIBLE EMISSIONS: Visible emissions means any particulate matter that is visually detectable without the aid of instruments other than corrective lenses.

231 VISIBLE ROADWAY DUST: Any sand, soil, dirt, or other solid particulate matter which is visible upon paved road surfaces and which can be removed by a vacuum sweeper, or a wet sweeper under normal operating conditions.

232 WIND-DRIVEN FUGITIVE DUST: Visible emissions from any surface area that is generated by wind action alone.

300 STANDARDS

301 VISIBLE EMISSIONS NOT ALLOWED BEYOND BOUNDARY LINE: A person shall not cause or allow the emissions of fugitive dust from any active operation, open storage pile, or disturbed surface area (including disturbance as a result of the raising and/or keeping of animals or by vehicle use), such that the presence of such dust remains visible in the atmosphere beyond the boundary line of the emission source.

302 VISIBLE EMISSIONS FROM ACTIVE OPERATIONS: In addition to the requirements of Rule 202, Visible Emissions, a person shall not cause or allow fugitive dust generated by active operations, an open storage pile, or a disturbed surface area, such that the fugitive dust is of such opacity as to obscure an observer's view to a degree equal to or greater than does smoke as dark or darker in shade as that designated as No. 2 on the Ringelmann Chart (i.e. 40% opacity), as published by the United States Bureau of Mines.

303 CONCENTRATION LIMIT: A person shall not cause or allow PM10 levels to exceed 50 micrograms per cubic meter, 24 hour average, when determined, by simultaneous sampling, as the difference between upwind and downwind samples collected on high-volume particulate matter samplers or other EPA-approved equivalent method for PM10 monitoring. Sampling shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures specified in Section 500.

304 TRACK-OUT ON TO PAVED PUBLIC ROADWAYS: Visible roadway dust as a result of active operations, spillage from transport trucks, and the track-out of bulk material onto public paved roadways shall be minimized and removed.

304.1 The track-out of bulk material onto public paved roadways as a result of operations, or erosion, shall be minimized by the use of track-out and erosion control, minimization, and preventative measures, and removed within one hour from adjacent streets such material anytime track-out extends for a cumulative distance of greater than 50 feet onto any paved public road during active operations.

304.2 All visible roadway dust tracked-out upon public paved roadways as a result of active operations shall be removed at the conclusion of each work day when active operations cease, or every twenty-four (24) hours for continuous operations. Wet sweeping or a HEPA filter equipped vacuum device shall be used for roadway dust removal.

304.3 Any material tracked-out, or carried by erosion, and clean-up water, shall be prevented from entering waterways or storm water inlets as required to comply water quality control requirements.

304.4 Track-out control in geographic ultramafic rock units or in identified naturally-occurring asbestos, serpentine, or ultramafic rock areas, shall comply with the requirements of the California Air Resources Board's Asbestos Airborne Toxic

Control Measure or Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations.

400 ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

401 MINIMUM DUST CONTROL REQUIREMENTS: The following dust mitigation measures are to be initiated at the start and maintained throughout the duration of the construction or grading activity, including any construction or grading for road construction or maintenance.

401.1 Unpaved areas subject to vehicle traffic must be stabilized by being kept wet, treated with a chemical dust suppressant, or covered. In geographic ultramafic rock units, or when naturally-occurring asbestos, ultramafic rock, or serpentine is to be disturbed, the cover material shall contain less than 0.25 percent asbestos as determined using the bulk sampling method for asbestos in Section 502.

401.2 The speed of any vehicles and equipment traveling across unpaved areas must be no more than 15 miles per hour unless the road surface and surrounding area is sufficiently stabilized to prevent vehicles and equipment traveling more than 15 miles per hour from emitting dust exceeding Ringelmann 2 or visible emissions from crossing the project boundary line.

401.3 Storage piles and disturbed areas not subject to vehicular traffic must be stabilized by being kept wet, treated with a chemical dust suppressant, or covered when material is not being added to or removed from the pile.

401.4 Prior to any ground disturbance, including grading, excavating, and land clearing, sufficient water must be applied to the area to be disturbed to prevent emitting dust exceeding Ringelmann 2 and to minimize visible emissions from crossing the boundary line.

401.5 Construction vehicles leaving the site shall be cleaned to prevent dust, silt, mud, and dirt, from being released or tracked offsite.

401.6 When wind speeds are high enough to result in dust emissions crossing the boundary line, despite the application of dust mitigation measures, grading and earthmoving operations shall be suspended.

401.7 No trucks are allowed to transport excavated material off-site unless the trucks are maintained such that no spillage can occur from holes or other openings in cargo compartments, and loads are either:

401.7.1 Covered with tarps; or

401.7.2 Wetted and loaded such that the material does not touch the front, back, or sides of the cargo compartment at any point less than six inches from the top and that no point of the load extends above the top of the cargo compartment.

401.8 In geographic ultramafic rock units, or when naturally-occurring asbestos, ultramafic rock, or serpentine is disturbed, all equipment must be washed down before moving from the property onto a paved public road.

401.9 In geographic ultramafic rock units, or when naturally-occurring asbestos, ultramafic rock, or serpentine is disturbed, upon completion of the project disturbed surfaces shall be stabilized using one or more of the following methods:

401.9.1 Establishment of a vegetative cover;

401.9.2 Placement of at least one (1.0) foot of non-asbestos-containing material;

401.9.3 Paving;

401.9.4 Any other measure deemed sufficient to prevent wind speeds of ten (10) miles per hour or greater from causing visible dust emissions.

402 WIND-DRIVEN FUGITIVE DUST CONTROL: A person shall take action(s), such as surface stabilization, establishment of a vegetative cover, or paving, to minimize wind-driven dust from inactive disturbed surface areas.

403 REQUIREMENTS FOR NATURALLY OCCURRING ASBESTOS AREAS: No person shall engage in any road construction or maintenance operations or construction or grading operations where the area to be disturbed is greater than one (1.0) acre without complying with the requirements of the State's Asbestos Airborne Toxic Control Measure for Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations where:

403.1 Any portion of the area to be disturbed is located in a geographic ultramafic rock unit; or

403.2 Any portion of the area to be disturbed has naturally-occurring asbestos, serpentine, or ultramafic rock as determined by the person, owner/operator, or the Air Pollution Control Officer (APCO); or

403.3 Naturally-occurring asbestos, serpentine, or ultramafic rock is discovered by the owner/operator, a registered geologist, or the APCO, in the area to be disturbed after the start of any construction or grading operation.

404 COMPLIANCE WITH STANDARDS: Any person conducting active operations, or who is responsible for the man-made condition of open storage piles, disturbed surface areas (including disturbance as result of the raising and/or keeping of animals or by vehicle use), and inactive disturbed surface areas, shall take the measures necessary to comply with Section 300. The property owner, contractors, and any person, that conducts active operations that result in conditions generating fugitive dust is responsible for complying with the provisions of this rule.

405 REASONABLE PRECAUTIONS: The APCO in determining compliance with Section 300 will take into consideration causative factors, the fugitive dust control measures taken to comply with Section 300, the extent that all reasonable fugitive dust control measures are implemented prior to a violation, and the timeliness and extent of corrective actions taken. If both preventative and corrective measures were taken and were reasonable under the circumstances, as determined by the APCO, the APCO may find that enforcement action is not warranted.

500 MONITORING AND RECORDKEEPING

501 MONITORING:

501.1 Sampling to determine compliance with the particulate matter concentration limit of Section 303 is only required when deemed necessary by the APCO.

501.2 The conduct of sampling to demonstrate compliance with Section 303 may be required, with reasonable notice, of the person discharging emissions, or sampling may be conducted by the District with the costs of sampling, not to exceed actual costs, borne by the person discharging emissions.

501.3 Samplers shall be operated, maintained, and calibrated in accordance with 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 50, Appendix J, or appropriate EPA-published documents for EPA-approved equivalent method(s) for PM10.

501.4 Samplers shall be placed upwind and downwind of key activity areas and as close to the boundary line as feasible, such that other sources of fugitive dust between the sampler and the boundary line are minimized.

501.5 Procedures for the conduct of simultaneous sampling to determine compliance with Section 303, and the reporting of results, shall be approved by the APCO.

502 TEST METHODS

502.1 Ultramafic Rock: The ultramafic rock composition of any material shall be determined using standard analysis techniques including, but not limited to, color index assessment, microscopic examination, petrographic analysis or rock thin sections, or chemical analysis techniques, such as X-ray fluorescence spectrometry or inductively coupled plasma analysis.

502.2 Bulk Sampling Methods: ARB Test Method 435, or an alternative asbestos bulk test method approved in writing by the Executive Officer of the California Air Resources Board, shall be used to determine the asbestos content of a bulk sample. For the purposes of determining compliance with this section, references in ARB Test Method 435 to "serpentine aggregate" shall mean "gravel" or other "bulk materials" to be tested for asbestos content.

503 RECORDKEEPING

503.1 Record of Control Implementation: Any contractor engaged in any active operation subject to this rule shall maintain records of actions to stabilize surface areas sufficient to establish location, type and date of treatment. Records shall be maintained and be readily accessible for two (2) years after the date of each entry and shall be provided to the District upon request and shall be open for inspection during unscheduled audits during normal business hours.

503.2 Sampling Recordkeeping Requirements: Any person subject to this rule shall maintain for at least two (2) years all of the following records and such additional records required by the State's Asbestos Airborne Toxic Control Measure or Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations when this regulation applies. Results of any air sampling or air monitoring conducted at the request of the APCO.

503.3 The results of any asbestos bulk sampling that meets any of the following conditions:

503.3.1 The asbestos bulk sampling was conducted by the owner/operator to document that cover material in geographic ultramafic rock units, or when naturally-occurring asbestos, ultramafic rock, or serpentine is to disturbed, contains less than 0.25 percent asbestos.

503.3.2 The asbestos bulk sampling was done at the request of the APCO.

APPENDIX B

U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service Water Quality Best Management Practices

USDA-FS Best Management Practices	

Erosion Control	• Operations in Aquatic Ecosystems (AqEco-2)
	  ○ Conduct operations during dry periods.
	  ▪ The Licensee will conduct construction activities within the minimal runoff periods (i.e., during the dry season or when rain and runoff are unlikely, typically during the summer or fall).
	  ○ Avoid scheduling instream work during periods that could be interrupted by high flows.
	  ▪ Construction activities will be scheduled to minimize erosion and sedimentation.
	  ○ Stage construction operations as needed to limit the extent of disturbed areas without installed stabilization measures.
	  ▪ The amount of area being graded at any one time will be limited and the amount of time that the area is bare will be limited.
	  ○ Use suitable drainage measures to improve the workability of wet sites.
	  ▪ Construction of drainage facilities or other work to control erosion or sedimentation will be required in conjunction with earthwork.
	• Facility Construction and Stormwater Control (Fac-2)
	  ○ Develop and implement an erosion control and sediment plan that covers all disturbed areas, including borrow, stockpile, fueling, and staging areas used during construction activities.
	  ▪ Limits and mitigates erosion and sedimentation through effective planning prior to initiation of construction activities and through effective contract administration during construction.
	• Road Location and Design (Road-2)
	  ○ Design the road surface drainage system to intercept, collect, and remove water from the road surface and surrounding slopes in a manner that minimizes concentrated flow in ditches, culverts, and over fill slopes and road surfaces.
	  ▪ Minimizes the possibilities of cut or fill slope failure and the subsequent production of sediment.
	• Road Operations and Maintenance (Road-4)
	  ○ Maintain road surface treatments to stabilize the roadbed, reduce dust, and control erosion consistent with anticipated traffic use.
	  ▪ Minimizes the erosion of road surface materials and consequently reduce the likelihood of sediment production from those areas.
	  ○ Designate season of use to avoid or restrict road use during periods when use would likely damage the roadway surface or road drainage features.
	  ▪ Reduces road surface disturbance and rutting of roads, and minimize sediment washing from disturbed road surfaces.
	• Erosion Prevention and Control (Veg-2)
	  ○ Implement mechanical treatments on the contour of sloping ground to avoid or minimize water concentration and subsequent accelerated erosion.
	  ▪ To reduce gully and sheet erosion and associated sedimentation mechanical equipment will be restricted to slopes generally less than 35 percent. Within Riparian Conservation

USDA-FS Best Management Practices	
	Areas, mechanical treatments would be minimized on moderate slopes (15-30%) and restricted to slopes less than 30% ▪ Reduces gully and sheet erosion and associated sediment production by limiting tractor use. o Use suitable species and establishment techniques to cover or revegetate disturbed areas in compliance with local direction and requirements per FSM 2070 and FSM 2080 for vegetation ecology and prevention and control of invasive species. ▪ Requires minimization of soil erosion through establishment and vegetation foliage and root networks. o Operate equipment when soil compaction, displacement, erosion, and sediment runoff would be minimized. Avoid ground equipment operations on unstable, wet, or easily compacted soils and on steep slopes unless operation can be conducted without causing excessive rutting, soil puddling, or runoff of sediments directly into waterbodies. Evaluate site conditions frequently to assess changing conditions. Adjust equipment operations as necessary to protect the site while maintaining efficient project operations. ▪ Prevents compaction, rutting, and gullying, with resultant sediment production and turbidity.
Hazardous Materials	• Hazardous Materials (Fac-6) o Prepare a certified Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan for each facility as required by 40 CFR 112. Install or construct the containment features or countermeasures called for in the SPCC Plan to ensure that spilled hazardous materials are contained and do not reach groundwater or surface water. Ensure that cleanup of spills and leaking tanks is completed in compliance with Federal, State, and local regulations and requirements. ▪ Prevents contamination of waters from accidental spills.
Water Quality Protection	• Temporary Roads (Road-5) o Routinely inspect temporary roads to verify that erosion and stormwater controls are implemented, functioning, and appropriately maintained. ▪ The Licensee will apply protective measures to all areas of disturbed, erosion-prone, unprotected ground that is not to be further disturbed in the present year. • Road Storage and Decommissioning (Road-6) o Use suitable measures to ensure that the road surface drainage system will intercept, collect, and remove water from the road surface and surrounding slopes in a manner that reduces concentrated flow in ditches, culverts, and over fill slopes and road surfaces without frequent maintenance. ▪ Other prevention measures include the installation of structures such as temporary culverts, flumes, cross drains, diversion ditches, energy dissipaters, dips, sediment basins, berms, debris racks, or other facilities to prevent erosion. • Equipment Refueling and Servicing (Road-10) o Plan for suitable equipment refueling and servicing sites during project design.

USDA-FS Best Management Practices	
	▪ A designated fueling site, if necessary, will be established outside of the reservoir or diversion. Absorbent spill clean-up materials and spill kits will be available to absorb small spills. All used absorbent materials will be properly disposed. o Use suitable measures around vehicle service, storage and refueling areas, chemical storage and use areas, and waste dumps to fully contain spills and avoid or minimize soil contamination and seepage to groundwater. ▪ Temporary fuel tanks will have adequate local containment consisting of berms and plastic sheeting to protect against accidental spills or leaks. o Report spills and initiate suitable cleanup action in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws, rules, and regulations. ▪ If any accidental releases of sediment, fuels, or oil occur, immediate containment and cleanup will be implemented, and resource agencies notified in accordance with project permits. o Remove contaminated soil and other material from NFS lands and dispose of this material in a manner consistent with controlling regulations. ▪ If fuel spills on the soil of the reservoir bed, the soil will be removed from the reservoir and properly disposed. o Use suitable measures to avoid spilling fuels, lubricants, cleaners, and other chemicals during handling and transporting. ▪ Hazardous waste products such as grease cartridges and oil absorbents will be placed in proper containers and transported form the job site to an authorized Hazardous Waste Collections Site. • Hazardous Materials (Fac-6) o Ensure that hazardous spill kits are adequately stocked with necessary supplies and are maintained in accessible locations. ▪ A spill response kit will be maintained at each site. • Vehicle and Equipment Wash Water (Fac-7) o Use commercial washing facilities that have proper wastewater treatment systems whenever possible. ▪ All equipment will be thoroughly cleaned of dirt, grease, etc., prior to entering the National Forest, and will be inspected to ensure that is in proper functioning condition. All suspect hoses and hydraulic lines will be replaced prior to entering the National Forest. • Operations in Aquatic Ecosystems (AqEco-2) o Use applicable practices of BMP Plan-2 (Project Planning and Analysis) and BMP Plan-3 (Aquatic Management Zone [AMZ] Planning) when planning operations in aquatic ecosystems. Use suitable

USDA-FS Best Management Practices	
	measures to avoid or minimize impacts to the waterbody when implementing construction and maintenance activities. ▪ The Licensee will keep construction and maintenance fills, sidecast, and end haul materials will be kept out on the Stream Management Zones [SMZs] except at designated sites to minimize impacts to the aquatic environment. • Facility Construction and Stormwater Control (Fac-2) o Refer to State or local construction and stormwater BMP manuals, guidebooks, and trade publications for effective techniques to: apply soil protective cover on disturbed areas where natural revegetation is inadequate to prevent accelerated erosion during construction or before the next growing season; maintain the natural drainage pattern of the area wherever practicable; control, collect, detain, treat, and disperse stormwater runoff from the site; divert surface runoff around bare areas with appropriate energy dissipation and sediment filters; stabilize steep excavated slopes. ▪ Erosion control methods will be implemented to keep soil in place including applying grass seed, erosion blankets, tackifiers, hydro-mulch, paving or rocking of roads, water bars, cross drains, or retaining walls. ▪ Natural drainage patterns will not be changed. Sediment basins and sediment filters will be established to filter surface runoff and division ditches and berms could be built to divert surface runoff around bare areas. • Portable Water Supply Systems (Fac-3) o Operate, monitor, and manage Forest Service-owned (public and nonpublic) drinking water systems in accordance with direction if FSM 7420: design, construct, operate and maintain water systems in a manner that provides for physical protection of the water source and system; treat water as necessary to achieve desired water quality; conduct sanitary and condition surveys per required schedules; implement follow-up actions identified in the sanitary and condition surveys; minimize possible contaminating activities within Wellhead Protection Areas and Source Water Assessment Areas to protect drinking water sources; conduct required system monitoring and follow-up actions as needed. ▪ Preventive measures (location, construction, operation, and maintenance) will be taken to minimize the possibilities of contamination of the water supply system. • Sanitation Systems (Fac-4) o Design and operate waste collection, treatment, and disposal systems appropriate for the type and volume of waste generated at the site consistent with direction in FSH 7409.11, chapter 50. Prepare and maintain an operation and maintenance plan for all waste treatment or disposal facilities (FSM 7410). ▪ Sanitation facilities will be planned, located, designed, constructed, operated, inspected, and maintained to minimize the possibility of contamination of water.

USDA-FS Best Management Practices	

	• Developed Recreation Sites (Rec-2)
	  ○ Use suitable public relations, information, and enforcement tools to encourage the public to conduct their activities in a manner that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects to soil, water quality, and riparian resources.
	  ▪ The licensee will prohibit the placement of substances that may degrade water quality in or near a stream, lake, or other water body. Prohibited items include human and animal waste, petroleum products, other hazardous substances and sediment eroded from the site.
	• Chemical Handling and Disposal (Chem-5)
	  ○ Implement the chemical spill contingency plan elements within the project safety plan if a spill occurs (FS 2109.14, chapter 60)
	  ▪ The Licensee will update the existing contingency plan to include actions to be taken to prevent contamination of water resulting from accidental spills of pesticides, fuels, or other toxic materials. The plan will include notification lists, persons responsible for cleanup, requirements for notification, and guidelines for spill containments. A copy will be retained onsite. It will be reviewed by all personnel and contractors involved in the project. Any herbicide application contract will contain clauses that will minimize the chances of herbicide spills (such as designating routes of travel and mixing sites, minimizing herbicide mix in tanks while traveling between units, requiring a separate water truck from the batch truck) and, if a spill occurs, outlining responses required by the contractor. Spill kits will be required in all PCWA and contractor vehicles on site and at locations where pesticides are stored. These actions would reduce the risk of contamination of water by accidental spills. To prevent pollutants from being discharged into stream courses, all mechanized equipment will be refueled outside of Riparian Conservation Areas, if possible.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

APPENDIX C

U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Information for Planning and Consultation Report

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Sacramento Fish And Wildlife Office
Federal Building
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605
Sacramento, CA 95825-1846
Phone: (916) 414-6600 Fax: (916) 414-6713

In Reply Refer To: 02/10/2025 21:42:19 UTC
Project Code: 2024-0149394
Project Name: Hell Hole Worker Campground and Hell Hole Seasonal Storage Increase Projects

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

To Whom It May Concern:

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

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

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

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

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

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

https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/endangered-species-consultation-handbook.pdf

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

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

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

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

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

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

This species list is provided by:

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

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2024-0149394

Project Name: Hell Hole Worker Campground and Hell Hole Seasonal Storage Increase Projects

Project Type: New Constr - Above Ground

Project Description: The Placer County Water Agency is implementing several recreation and infrastructure improvement projects in the vicinity of Hell Hole Reservoir in compliance with their FERC LIcense and with Forest Service requirements.

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: https://www.google.com/maps/@39.0586665,-120.4118410485016,14z

Counties: Placer County, California

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 7 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species. Note that 1 of these species should be considered only under certain conditions.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries[1], as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

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

---

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

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Gray Wolf *Canis lupus* Population: U.S.A.: All of AL, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, IA, IN, IL, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MO, MS, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NV, NY, OH, OK, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, VA, VT, WI, and WV; and portions of AZ, NM, OR, UT, and WA. Mexico. There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4488	Endangered
North American Wolverine *Gulo gulo luscus* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. This species only needs to be considered under the following conditions: ▪ Species may be present based on transient occurrence as it moves through or too suitable habitat. Effects should be considered to species and projects should consult with the Service, however, depending on the project, consultation may not be necessary. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5123	Threatened

BIRDS

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

REPTILES

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

AMPHIBIANS

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

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus*	Proposed Threatened

NAME STATUS

There is **proposed** critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat.
Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743

CRITICAL HABITATS

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

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

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Private Entity
Name: Sara Reece
Address: 881 Cumorah Court
City: Placerville
State: CA
Zip: 95667
Email sara@jna-consulting.com
Phone: 5308023391

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Forest Service

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

APPENDIX D

Special-Status Plants Known to Occur or Potentially Occurring in the Project Area

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	Forest Service Status	CNPS Rare Plant Rank	Blooming Period/Fertile	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Known to Occur							
Phacelia stebbinsii	Stebbins' phacelia	—	FSS	1B.2	May – July	Grows on dry, open, rocky sites (bedrock outcrops, rubble, or talus) on ledges or moderate to steep slopes from 2,000 to 6,800 feet in elevation.	One population of Stebbins' phacelia is recorded within the Project Area during botanical surveys conducted in 2021 (PCWA 2022). This population is approximately 10.91 acres in size and contains approximately 50,000 individuals. This population is found in the rocky open habitats around the Hell Hole dormitory.
Suitable Habitat Present, Not Observed During Botanical Surveys in 2021							
Allium sanbornii var. *sanbornii*	Sanborn's onion	—	WL	4.2	May – September	Grows on serpentinite, gravelly soils in lower montane coniferous forest, chaparral, and cismontane woodland from 850 to 5,020 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Bolandra californica	Sierra bolandra	—	WL	4.3	June – July	Grows on mesic, rocky soils, often in rock crevices or wet cliffs in lower and upper montane coniferous forests. Found between 3,200 to 8,050 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Botrychium ascendens	upswept moonwort	—	FSS	2B.3	July – September	Grows in lower montane coniferous forest, meadows, and seeps from 4,900 to 7,500 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Botrychium crenulatum	scalloped moonwort	—	FSS	2B.2	July – September	Grows in fens, lower montane coniferous forest, meadows, seeps, and freshwater marshes from 4,900 to 10,500 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Botrychium minganense	Mingan moonwort	—	FSS	4.2	July – October	Grows in fens, lower and upper montane coniferous forest, meadows, and seeps from 4,900 to 6,750 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Botrychium montanum	mountain moonwort (western goblin)	—	FSS	2B.1	July – September	Grows in lower and upper montane coniferous forest, meadows, and seeps from 4,900 to 7,000 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Botrychium paradoxum	paradox moonwort	—	FSS	2B.1	July – September	Grows in lower and upper montane coniferous forest, meadows, and seeps from 4,900 to 7,000 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Botrychium pendunculosum	stalked moonwort	—	FSS	2B.1	July – September	Grows in lower and upper montane coniferous forest, meadows, and seeps from 4,900 to 7,000 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Calochortus clavatus var. *avius*	Pleasant Valley mariposa lily	—	FSS	1B.2	March – October	Grows in openings in mixed conifer and ponderosa pine forest, usually on ridgetops and south-facing slopes from 2,500 to 5,600 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Carex davyi	Davy's sedge	—	WL	1B.3	May – August	Grows in dry, often sparse meadows and slopes in upper montane coniferous forest and subalpine coniferous forest from 4,600 to 10,830 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	Forest Service Status	CNPS Rare Plant Rank	Blooming Period/Fertile	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Ceanothus fresnensis	Fresno ceanothus	—	WL	4.3	(April) May – July	Grows in openings in cismontane woodland and lower montane coniferous forest from 3,680 to 6,830 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Corallorhiza trifida	northern coralroot	—	WL	2B.1	June – July	Grows on mesic soils in wet, open to shaded areas in lower montane coniferous forest and edges of meadows or seeps from 4,600 to 5,600 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Cypripedium montanum	mountain lady's-slipper	—	FSS	4.2	March – October	Grows in moist areas and upland sites with northerly aspects, loamy soils and shade, from 3,500 to 5,700 feet (but generally less than 5,000 feet).	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Drosera rotundifolia	roundleaf sundew	—	WL	—	June – September	Found in swamps, wet meadows, and wet areas in montane coniferous forests from 230 to 8,860 feet in elevation. Often found in association with *Sphagnum* mosses.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Lewisia kelloggii ssp. *hutchisonii*	Hutchison's lewisia	—	FSS	3.2	April – June	Grows in openings in upper montane coniferous forest, often on slate soils and on soils that are sandy granitic to erosive volcanic from 4,800 to 7,000 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Lewisia serrata	saw-toothed lewisia	—	FSS	1B.1	Year-round	Restricted to steep, nearly vertical cliffs in inner gorges of perennial streams and rarely near seeps and intermittent streams. Grows between 2,800 and 4,800 feet in the American River watershed.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Myrica hartwegii	Sierra sweet bay	—	WL	4.3	May – June	Grows in cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest, and riparian woodland from 500 to 5,900 feet in elevation. Most commonly found on stream banks or moist areas.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Navarretia prolifera ssp. *lutea*	yellow bur navarretia	—	FSS	4.3	May – June	Grows in openings in or adjacent to mixed conifer forest or cismontane woodland on rocky ridgelines, saddles, or eroding ephemeral drainages from 2,300 to 5,000 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Ophioglossum pusillum	adder's tongue (northern adder's tongue)	—	FSS	2B.2	July – September	Grows in moist habitat including wet meadows and roadside ditches from 3,300 to 6,600 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Piperia colemanii	Coleman's rein orchid	—	WL	4.3	June – August	Found in open conifer forest and scrub on sandy soils in chaparral and lower montane coniferous forest from 3,950 to 7,550 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	Forest Service Status	CNPS Rare Plant Rank	Blooming Period/Fertile	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Piperia leptopetala	narrow-petaled rein orchid	—	WL	4.3	May – July	Found in generally dry sites in cismontane woodland and lower and upper montane coniferous forest from 1,100 to 7,200 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Pseudostellaria sierrae	Sierra starwort	—	WL	4.2	May – August	Found in meadows, and the dry understory of chaparral, cismontane woodland, and lower and upper montane coniferous forest from 4,020 to 7,200 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Rhynchospora capitellata	brownish beaked-rush	—	WL	2B.2	July – August	Grows in mesic areas in lower and upper montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps, and marshes and swamps from 150 to 6,600 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Taxus brevifolia	California yew (Pacific yew)	—	WL	—	June – July	Grows in lower montane coniferous forest, including Douglas-fir, yellow pine, and red fir from 160 to 9,220 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Torreya californica	California nutmeg (California torreya)	—	WL	—	Year-round	Grows in lower montane coniferous forest, including Douglas-fir and yellow pine from 50 to 6,860 feet in elevation.	Project Area contains suitable habitat and is within the elevation range. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Unlikely to Occur							
Allium sanbornii var. *congdonii*	Congdon's onion	—	WL	4.3	April – July	Grows on serpentine outcrops in the Sierra Nevada foothills in chaparral and cismontane woodland from 980 to 3,950 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Allium tribracteatum	three-bracted onion	—	FSS	1B.2	March – May	Grows on open ridges with gravelly lahar soils (lava cap communities) in chaparral and lower and upper montane coniferous forests from 3,300 to 10,000 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area does not contain suitable habitat for this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Arctostaphylos nissenana	El Dorado manzanita	—	FSS	1B.2	Year-round	Grows on highly acidic slate and shale soils and is often associated with closed-cone conifer forest from about 1,400 to 3,600 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Astragalus austiniae	Austin's milk vetch (Austin's astragalus)	—	WL	1B.3	July – September	Grows on rocky soils in alpine boulder and rock fields and subalpine coniferous forest from 7,600 to 8,830 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Astragalus whitneyi var. *lenophyllus*	woolly-leaved milk-vetch	—	WL	4.3	July – August	Grows in open, rocky areas in subalpine coniferous forest and alpine boulder and rock fields from 4,920 to 10,000 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Balsamorhiza macrolepis var. *macrolepis*	big-scale balsamroot	—	FSS	1B.2	April – June	Grows in chaparral, vernally moist meadows and grasslands, grasslands within oak woodland, and ponderosa pine forest below 4,600 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Botrychium lunaria	common moonwort	—	FSS	2B.3	July – September	Grows in meadows, seeps, subalpine and upper montane coniferous forest from 7,450 feet to over 11,000 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	Forest Service Status	CNPS Rare Plant Rank	Blooming Period/Fertile	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Botrychium simplex	little grapefern (Yosemite moonwort)	—	WL	—	July – September	Found in open habitats such as pastures, meadows, orchards, prairies, wetlands, fens, and sand dunes in lake and stream edges from 5,120 to 11,780 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Bruchia bolanderi	Bolander's bruchia	—	FSS	4.2	July – October	Grows in meadows and fens in montane and subalpine communities from about 5,500 to 9,000 feet in elevation. Grows in ephemeral habitats such as erosional ditches or small streamlets through wet meadows.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Calystegia vanzuukiae	Van Zuuk's morning-glory	—	WL	1B.3	May – August	Found on gabbroic and serpentinite soils in chaparral and cismontane woodland between 1,640 and 3,870 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Carex cyrtostachya	arching sedge (Sierra arching sedge)	—	WL	1B.2	May – August	Found within a narrow elevation band on the western slope of the northern Sierra Nevada. Found on mesic soils in lower montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps, marshes and swamps, and margins of riparian forest from 2,000 to 4,500 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Chaenactis douglasii var. *alpina*	alpine dusty maidens	—	WL	2B.3	July – September	Found on rocky or gravelly granitic ridges, talus, fell-fields, and crevices in alpine boulder and rock fields from 9,850 to 11,200 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Chlorogalum grandiflorum	Red Hills soaproot	—	WL	1B.2	May – June	Found on serpentine outcrops in open or shrubby wooded hills in chaparral, foothill woodland, and yellow pine forest from 820 to 5,550 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area does not contain suitable habitat for this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Clarkia biloba ssp. *brandegeeae*	Brandegee's clarkia	—	WL	4.2	May – July	Found in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and lower montane coniferous forest in the northern Sierra Nevada from 250 to 3,000 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Claytonia megarhiza	fell-fields claytonia	—	WL	2B.3	July – September	Found in crevices in rocks in alpine boulder and rock fields and rocky or gravelly sites in subalpine coniferous forest from 8,530 to 11,600 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Draba asterophora var. *asterophora*	Tahoe draba	—	FSS	1B.2	July – October	Restricted to rocky ledges and talus slopes in subalpine and alpine habitats above 8,200 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Draba asterophora var. *macrocarpa*	Cup Lake draba	—	FSS	1B.1	July – October	Restricted to sandy slopes, rocky ledges, and talus slopes in subalpine and alpine habitats above 8,200 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Drosera anglica	English sundew	—	WL	2B.3	June – September	Grows in bogs and fens, mesic meadows and seeps, swamps, and peatlands from 4,270 to 6,600 feet in elevation. Often found in association with *Sphagnum* mosses.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area does not contain suitable habitat for this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	Forest Service Status	CNPS Rare Plant Rank	Blooming Period/Fertile	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Dryopteris filix-mas	male fern	—	WL	2B.3	July – September	Found on granitic, rocky soils in upper montane coniferous forest and granitic cliffs from 7,880 to 10,170 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Eriogonum tripodum	tripod buckwheat	—	FSS	4.2	Year-round	Grows on serpentine soils in foothill and cismontane woodlands below 5,300 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area does not contain suitable habitat for this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Helodium (=Elodium) blandowii	Blandow's bog moss	—	FSS	2B.3	July – October	Grows in wet meadows, fens, and seeps in subalpine coniferous forest and alpine lakes from 6,100 to 9,000 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Horkelia parryi	Parry's horkelia	—	FSS	1B.2	January – July	Grows on stony, disturbed, slightly acidic soils in open chaparral and cismontane woodland below 3,400 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Lewisia kelloggii ssp. *kelloggii*	Kellogg's lewisia	—	FSS	3.2	April – June	Grows on granitic and volcanic balds from about 5,000 to 8,000 feet in elevation, often on ridgetops.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Lewisia longipetala	long-petaled lewisia	—	FSS	1B.3	July – September	Restricted to subalpine and alpine slopes or basins with dep snow accumulations, above 8,200 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Meesia uliginosa	broad-nerved hump moss	—	FSS	2B.2	June – October	Grows in permanently wet, primarily spring-fed meadows and fens in montane to subalpine coniferous forest from 4,200 to 9,200 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area does not contain suitable habitat for this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Packera layneae	Layne's ragwort	FT	FSS	CR, 1B.2	Year-round	Grows on rocky, gabbroic or sepentinitic soils in chaparral and cismontane woodland below 3,000 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Peltigera gowardii	veined water lichen (western waterfan lichen)	—	FSS	4.2	May – October	Grows on rocks in cold, unpolluted spring-fed streams without marked seasonal fluctuation. Submerged most of the year. Peak flows must not scour the rocks and gravels where this species attaches. Grows between 3,500 and 8,600 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area does not contain suitable habitat for this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Perideridia bacigalupii	Bacigalupi's yampah	—	WL	4.2	June – August	Found on serpentinite soils in chaparral and lower montane coniferous forest from 1,480 to 3,400 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Pinus albicaulis	whitebark pine	FPT	FSS	—	Year-round	Grows in cold and windy high elevation sites in subalpine coniferous forest in western North America. Most commonly found between 7,000 and 12,000 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Poa sierrae	Sierra blue grass	—	FSS	1B.3	April – July	Grows in lower montane coniferous forest on steep, shady, moist slopes from 1,200 to 3,800 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	Forest Service Status	CNPS Rare Plant Rank	Blooming Period/Fertile	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Rhynchospora alba	white beaked-rush	—	WL	2B.2	June – August	Grows in open sites in bogs and fens, meadows and seeps, and freshwater marshes and swamps from 200 to 6,700 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area does not contain suitable habitat for this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Sambucus nigra ssp. *caerulea*	blue elderberry	—	WL	—	March – July	Grows in riparian areas. It is of concern as a host plant for the threatened valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus dimorphus californicus*) below 3,000 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area does not contain suitable habitat for this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Viburnum ellipticum	oval-leaved viburnum	—	WL	2B.3	May – June	Grows in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and lower montane coniferous forest from 700 to 4,600 feet in elevation, generally on north-facing slopes.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.
Wyethia reticulata	El Dorado County mule ears	—	WL	1B.2	April – August	Grows on clay or gabbroic soils in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and lower montane coniferous forest from 490 to 2,070 feet in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species. Not observed during botanical surveys conducted in 2021.

LEGEND:

Forest Service Status

FSS = Forest Service Sensitive

WL = A watchlist of plants that do not meet all the criteria to be included on the Regional Forester's Sensitive List, but are of sufficient concern that they need to be considered in the planning process.

Other Federal Status

FPT = Federal Proposed Threatened

FT = Federal Threatened

State Status

CR = California Rare

CNPS Rare Plant Rank (CNPS RPR)

1B = Rare, threatened or endangered in California and elsewhere.

2B = Rare in California but more common elsewhere.

4 = Plants of limited distribution – a watchlist.

_.1 = Seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened/high degree and immediacy of threat)

_.2 = Moderately threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened)

_.3 = Not very threatened in California (<20% of occurrences threatened or no current threats known)

References

1. Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) 2021. Botanical Surveys Performed in support of the Vegetation and Invasive Weed Management Plan. December 2021.
2. California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). 2024. Rare Find 5.0. California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Habitat Planning and Conservation Branch. Accessed January 2024. Electronic Database.
3. U.S. Department of Agriculture – Forest Service (USDA-FS). 2013. Regional Forester's List of Sensitive Plant and Animal Species for Region 5.
4. USDA-FS. 2019. Threatened, endangered, and sensitive plants known to occur or with suitable habitat on the Eldorado National Forest. August 2019.
5. USDA-FS. 2020. Eldorado National Forest Watch List Species, April 27, 2020.
6. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2024. Species List, Information for Planning and Conservation (IPaC). Electronic Database. Accessed September 2024.

APPENDIX E

Special-Status Wildlife Known to Occur or Potentially Occurring in the Project Area

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

Scientific/Common Name	Federal Status	Forest Service Status	State Status	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
ESA-Listed and Proposed Species (Section 6.0)					
Danaus plexippus plexippus Monarch butterfly	FC	—	—	A widespread species that can breed year-round in temperate climates. Monarchs lay their eggs on obligate milkweed host plants (*Asclepias* spp.). Adults can feed on many floral nectar sources. Multiple generations of monarchs are produced during the breeding season, with the last generation overwintering in established overwintering sites. California monarchs are known to overwinter at sites along the Pacific coast from Sonoma to San Diego counties.	Unlikely to occur. Milkweed host plants were not observed during protocol-level botanical surveys conducted in the Project area in 2021, so breeding is unlikely to occur (PCWA 2022). Project work and staging areas do not contain suitable foraging habitat (flowering species) for this species.
Amphibians					
Rana draytonii California red-legged frog	FT	—	CSC	Suitable breeding habitat includes ponds and perennial and intermittent riverine habitats with gradients of 2 percent or less and below 4,000 feet msl. Potential aquatic non-breeding and upland habitat is defined to include all aquatic features within 1 mile of aquatic breeding habitat, plus a 300-foot buffer. Dispersal habitat is defined to include all areas within a 1-mile buffer around aquatic breeding habitat.	Unlikely to occur. The Project area is outside of the occupied range of CRLF. The nearest known populations are located at the Big Gun Mitigation Site in Michigan Bluff, approximately 17 miles west of the project area.
Anaxyrus canorus Yosemite toad	FT	FSS	CSC	Montane meadows and forest borders; breeds in shallow pools, at lake margins, or in pools of quiet streams at elevations ranging from 6,400 to 11,300 feet	Unlikely to occur. The Project area is not within the geographic and/or elevation range of this species.
Rana sierrae Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog	FE	FSS	CT	Streams, lakes, and ponds in montane riparian, lodgepole pine, subalpine conifer, and wet meadow habitats. Breeds in shallow water in low gradient perennial streams and lakes. Elevations ranging from 4,500 to 12,000 feet.	Unlikely to occur. While the Project area is within the range of SNYLF, USFWS has determined that the site is unutilized by the species. Furthermore, considering that large fish-bearing reservoirs such Hell Hole Reservoir do not provide suitable breeding habitat, and that the Project work and staging areas are located in upland habitats, the Project will have no effect on SNYLF or its habitat.
Reptiles					
Actinemys marmorata Northwestern pond turtle	FPT	—	CSC	Aquatic habitat is defined to include all perennial and intermittent streams below 4,500 feet msl. Breeding habitat and overwintering is conservatively estimated to include all areas within approximately 500 meters (approximately 1,640 feet) of aquatic habitat.	Unlikely to occur. The Project area is above the elevation range of this species, and there are no recorded occurrences in the vicinity of Hell Hole Reservoir. The nearest known occurrences are in the MFAR below Ralston Afterbay (16 miles west).
Birds					
Strix occidentalis occidentalis California spotted owl – Sierra Nevada DPS	FPT	FSS	CSC	Nests in old-growth, dense, coniferous forests. Forages in multi-layered mixed conifer, redwood, Douglas fir, and oak woodland habitats, from sea level to elevations of approximately 7,600 feet.	May potentially occur. There are no Protected Activity Centers (PACs) in the Project area. The nearest known PACs are located more than 1 mile away. While Project work and staging areas do not provide suitable habitat for this species, California spotted owls may potentially forage in surrounding forest habitat in the Project area.
Mammals					
Pekania pennanti Fisher	FE	FSS	CT	Large areas of mature and dense forest red fir, lodgepole pine, ponderosa pine, mixed conifer, and Jeffery pine forests with snags and greater than 40 percent canopy closure. Known from elevations of 4,000 to 8,000 feet	Unlikely to occur. The most current information on fisher distribution in California indicates that fisher have been extirpated from the Sierra Nevada north of the Merced River drainage (USFWS 2020).

Scientific/Common Name	Federal Status	Forest Service Status	State Status	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Gulo gulo California wolverine	FT	FSS	CT, CFP	Mixed conifer, red fir, and lodgepole habitats, and probably sub-alpine conifer, alpine dwarf shrub, wet meadow, and montane riparian habitats. Occurs in the Sierra Nevada from 4,300 to 10,800 feet Majority of recorded sightings are found above 8,000 feet elevation. Denning habitat consists of caves, cliffs, hollow logs, and other cavities located in rocky areas free of human disturbance.	Unlikely to occur. This species typically occurs above 8,000 feet in elevation, which is outside the elevation range of the Project Area. Additionally, this species typically avoids areas with extensive human activity and would not likely occur within a highly trafficked recreation area.
Other Special-Status Species (Section 7.0)					
Invertebrates					
Bombus occidentalis Western bumble bee	—	FSS	CSC	The historical range of the western bumble bee includes most of western North America. This species is dependent on continuous access to meadows with floral resources from spring through late summer within 0.3 to 0.5 mile of burrowing nests.	Unlikely to occur. Project work and staging areas do not contain suitable foraging habitat (flowering species) for this species.
Fishes					
Entosphenus tridentatus Pacific lamprey	—	FSS	CSC	Typical rearing habitat is free-flowing streams along the coast of California that drain into Pacific Ocean. Historically found in Sierra Nevada streams including areas above waterfalls.	Unlikely to occur. Hell Hole Dam represents an impassable barrier for this species.
Mylopharodon conocephalus Hardhead	—	FSS	CSC	Rearing habitat is found in the estuarine waters of the lower Delta and Suisun Bay. Typically occupy open shallow waters but also occur in the main channel in the region where fresh water and brackish water mix.	Unlikely to occur. Hardhead are only known to occur in the Rubicon River immediately upstream of Ralston Afterbay and do not occur in Hell Hole Reservoir or tributary streams.
Amphibians					
Ambystoma macrodactylum sigillatum southern long-toed salamander	—	—	CSC	High elevation meadows and lakes in the Sierra Nevada, Cascade, and Klamath mountains. Aquatic larvae occur in ponds and lakes. Outside of breeding season adults are terrestrial and associated with underground burrows of mammals and moist areas under logs and rocks. Can be found between 6,530 and 8,085 feet.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area is not within the elevation range of this species.
Rana boylii foothill yellow-legged frog North Sierra DPS (USFWS) North Sierra Distinct Population Segment [DPS] (CDFW)	—	FSS	CT, CSC	Perennial rocky (pebble or cobble) streams with cool, clear water in a variety of habitats from valley and foothill oak woodland, riparian forest, ponderosa pine, mixed conifer, coastal scrub, and mixed chaparral at elevations ranging from 0 to 6,370 feet. The North Sierra DPS is primarily located in Yuba, Sierra, Nevada, and Placer Counties, California. It includes the North Fork and Middle Fork American River subbasins.	Unlikely to occur. This species is known to occur only in the Middle Fork American River upstream and downstream of Ralston Afterbay and in the Rubicon River upstream of Ralston Afterbay. This is approximately 16 miles west of the Project Area.
Birds					
Accipiter atricapillus American goshawk	—	FSS	CSC (nesting)	Nests and forages in middle to high elevation, mature, dense conifer forests. Winters in foothills, northern deserts in pinyon-juniper woodland, and low elevation riparian habitats. Typically found at elevations of 1,000 to 10,800 feet	May potentially occur. There are no American goshawk PACs within 0.25 mile of the Project area. The nearest PAC is located approximately 1.3 miles to the northwest (in the vicinity of Big Meadows Campground). Forested habitats in the Project area may provide suitable foraging habitat for American goshawks.
Aquila chrysaetos Golden eagle	Eagle Act	—	CFP, W	Forages in grasslands and early successional stages of forest and shrub habitats for foraging at elevations up to 11,500 feet Nests on secluded cliffs with overhanging ledges or large trees in open areas with unobstructed view.	May potentially occur. There are suitable open foraging habitats in the Project Area. Unlikely to nest because the Project Area is within bald eagle territory and there is extensive human activity on Hell Hole Reservoir. A golden eagle was observed on the Rubicon River between the Ellicott Bridge and Hell Hole Dam in 2022 (R. Smith, pers. comm 2022).

Scientific/Common Name	Federal Status	Forest Service Status	State Status	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Contopus cooperi Olive-sided flycatcher	BCC	—	—	Uncommon to common, summer resident in a wide variety of forest and woodland habitats below 9,000 feet throughout California exclusive of the deserts, the Central Valley, and other lowland valleys and basins. Nesting habitats include mixed conifer, montane hardwood-conifer, Douglas-fir, redwood, red fir, and lodgepole pine forests.	Known to Occur. The species has been seen within the project area during previous site visits and surveys.
Haliaeetus leucocephalus Bald eagle	FD, Eagle Act, BCC	FSS	CE, CFP	Year-round resident in ice-free regions of California. Foraging areas include regulated and unregulated rivers, reservoirs, lakes, estuaries, and coastal marine ecosystems. Majority of bald eagles in California breed near reservoirs and nests are usually located within 1 mile of foraging habitat.	Known to Occur. An occupied bald eagle territory is known on Hell Hole Reservoir, the nest is located approximately 4 miles northeast of the Project Area at the eastern end of Hell Hole Reservoir (PCWA 2021b). Eagles may potentially roost or forage in the Project Area.
Pandion haliaetus Osprey	—	—	WL	Ocean shore, bays, freshwater lakes, and larger streams. Large nests built in tree-tops within 15 miles of a good fish-producing body of water.	May potentially occur. Osprey are known to utilize Hell Hole Reservoir as a breeding and hunting area. There are active nests along Hell Hole to the east of Project work areas.
Setophaga nigrescens Black-throated gray warbler	BCC	—	—	The species breeds in pine forests, pine-oak woodlands, and pinyon-juniper forests that have a brush understory present. During the winter and migration they use the aforementioned habitat in addition to woodlands, scrub, and thickets.	Known to Occur. The species has been seen within the project area during previous site visits and surveys.
Setophaga occidentalis Hermit warbler	BCC	—	—	Coniferous forests in mountainous areas, sugar, lodgepole, Jeffrey, western white, and ponderosa pines, subalpine, red, and noble firs, incense-cedar, Douglas-fir, coast redwood, and giant sequoia. Migrating birds may also include pine-oak and oak woodlands, lowland riparian woodlands, parks, orchards, and desert.	Known to Occur. The species has been seen within the project area during previous site visits and surveys.
Strix nebulosa Great gray owl	—	FSS	CE (nesting)	Nests in old-growth coniferous forests and forages in montane meadows. Distribution includes high elevations of the Sierra Nevada and Cascade ranges, from 4,500 to 7,500 ft in elevation.	Unlikely to occur. There are no montane meadows within 0.25 mile of the Project Area and there is extensive human activity in the vicinity of the Project Area. There are no CNDDB records within 5 miles of the Project Area.
Empidonax traillii Willow flycatcher	—	FSS	CE (nesting)	Nests in wet meadow and montane riparian habitats at elevations ranging from 2,000 to 8,000 feet Most often occurs in broad, open river valleys or large mountain meadows with lush growth of shrubby willows.	Unlikely to occur. The Project Area does not contain wet meadow or montane riparian habitats for this species. There are no CNDDB records within 5 miles of the Project Area.
Mammals					
Antrozous pallidus Pallid bat	—	FSS	CSC	Inhabits variety of habitats, including coniferous forests. Rock outcroppings, caves, buildings, bridges, and sometimes hollow trees are used for roost sites. Pallid bats are year-round residents that hibernate during the winter months.	May potentially forage or roost in the Project Area. Pallid bats were detected near the French Meadows Powerhouse Butterfly Valve House during relicensing studies conducted in 2007 (PCWA 2011d).
Corynorhinus townsendii Townsend's big-eared bat	—	FSS	CSC	Found in all but alpine and subalpine habitats; most abundant in mesic habitats. Year-round residents that hibernate from October through April. Requires caves, mines, or man-made structures for roosting. This species is extremely sensitive to disturbance and may abandon a roost if disturbed.	May potentially forage in the Project Area. Townsend's big-eared bats were detected near the French Meadows Powerhouse Butterfly Valve House during relicensing studies conducted in 2007 (PCWA 2011d).
Myotis thysanodes Fringed myotis	—	FSS	—	Optimal habitats are pinyon-juniper, valley foothill hardwood and hardwood-conifer, generally at 4,000 to 7,000 feet in elevation. Roosts in caves, mines, buildings, crevices, and under tree bark. Separate day and night roosts may be used. Uses open habitats, early successional stages, streams, lakes, and ponds as foraging areas. This species is migratory, making relatively short, local movements to suitable hibernacula.	May potentially forage or roost in the Project Area. Fringed myotis were detected near the French Meadows Powerhouse Butterfly Valve House during relicensing studies conducted in 2007 (PCWA 2011d).

Scientific/Common Name	Federal Status	Forest Service Status	State Status	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Martes caurina (=sierrae) Pacific marten	—	FSS	—	Optimal habitats are various mixed evergreen forests with more than 40 percent crown closure and large trees and snags for den sites. Most commonly found in red fir and lodgepole pine forests from elevations of 4,000 to 10,600 feet	Unlikely to occur. Project Area does not contain preferred red fir and lodgepole pine forest and is not connected to such forests through closed-canopy areas. The Project Area and vicinity experiences heavy human recreational activity and PCWA traffic during the denning season.

APPENDIX F

Documentation of Tribal Consultation

From: NAHC@NAHC
To: Ben Ransom
Cc: Sara Reece; Torres-Fuentes, Pricilla@NAHC
Subject: RE: Sacred Lands File & Native American Contacts List Request
Date: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 4:02:01 PM
Attachments: Sacred-Lands-File-NA-Contact-Form2.pdf

Hello,

Thank you for your message. We're in receipt of your project. Our turn-around time is approximately 4 weeks, and we don't anticipate responding sooner than that timeframe. Our response will be delivered by email. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Kind Regards,

Native American Heritage Commission
1550 Harbor Blvd Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95691
Phone: 916-373-3710

From: Ben Ransom <bransom@pcwa.net>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 3:58 PM
To: NAHC@NAHC <NAHC@nahc.ca.gov>
Cc: Sara Reece <Sara@JNA-Consulting.com>
Subject: Sacred Lands File & Native American Contacts List Request

Dear Native American Heritage Commission:

Attached please find a Sacred Lands File & Native American Contacts List Request for the Placer County Water Agency's Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply, and Communications Upgrade Project.

Regards,

Ben

Ben Ransom
Environmental Services Manager
Placer County Water Agency

From:	Ben Ransom
To:	Patrick Burtt THPO; ctvctpreservation@gmail.com; cprout@colfaxrancheria.com; Pamela Cubbler; shelly@nevadacityrancheria.org; dovee@sir-nsn.gov; Siakumne@gmail.com; wemoons@yahoo.com; brftcrtn@sti.net; THPO@auburnrancheria.com; TribalChairman@auburnrancheria.com; cpd@wiltonrancheria-nsn.gov; hgriffin@wiltonrancheria-nsn.gov
Cc:	Sara Reece
Subject:	PCWA Tribal Notification a proposed project near Hell Hole Reservoir
Date:	Wednesday, October 9, 2024 2:58:55 PM
Attachments:	PCWA HHWC Mapset.pdf PCWA Tribal Notification Letter Re Hell Hole.pdf

---

Dear Tribal Representative:

Attached please find notification pursuant to AB 52 of a proposed project near Hell Hole Reservoir. We'd appreciate any information or comments you may have by November 8, 2024.

Regards,

~Ben

Ben Ransom
Environmental Services Manager
Placer County Water Agency
530.308.4554

Subject: Placer County Water Agency's Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply System, and Communications Upgrade Project

Dear Tribal Representative,

The purpose of this letter is to provide notification that the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) proposes to implement the Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply System, and Communication Upgrade Project (Project) located in Placer County near the Hell Hole Reservoir. An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration will be Prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., and State CEQA Guidelines, Title 14 California Code of Regulations 15000 et. Seq. Under CEQA and Assembly Bill (AB) 52, PCWA is required to consult with the Native American Tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Project area. Your Tribe was identified on the Native American Heritage Commission list. As part of the AB 52 consultation process, PCWA would like to solicit any information you may have regarding Native American cultural resources within and near the Project area and invites you to identify any concerns your tribe may have regarding the Project.

The Project is located on Eldorado National Forest (ENF) lands approximately 22 miles northeast of Foresthill, Placer County, California in Township 14N, Range 14E, Sections 9 and 16 on the U.S. Geological Survey Bunker Hill 7.5-minute quad, Mount Diablo Meridian (refer to **Maps 1 and 2**, attached).

The Project includes the following components that are either identified by U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service) and/or PCWA to meet current need, are required by U.S. Forest Service 4(e) Conditions for the Middle Fork American River Project (MFP) (FERC Project No. 2079), or were determined necessary to upgrade existing facilities:

- Construction of a **new worker campground**, which includes 18 recreational vehicle [RV] camping stalls and utility hook-ups, for use by PCWA and U.S. Forest Service (USDA-FS or Forest Service) staff, or for other work crews conducting maintenance in the vicinity. The worker campground is located on lands currently owned by the Forest Service but that are currently part of a land exchange process. At some point in the coming years, ownership of the campground (if already constructed) and underlying lands will be transferred to PCWA. The worker campground will be a private facility and will not be available for use by the general public.
- Installation of a **new potable water system**, including a new groundwater well. This system would also serve the worker campground, Hell Hole Dormitory, operator cottages, and shop, and the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area.
- Installation of a new underground **telecommunications system** to provide data and internet services to the worker campground, Hell Hole Dormitory, operator cottages, and shop. Telecommunications cable will also be extended to the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area for potential future use (to avoid the need for re-trenching at a future date).
- Improvements to the **Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area,** including chipsealing, painting, replacing fencing.

Refer to **Table 1** for a summary of cultural resources studies Based on the records searches and the results of these surveys, no cultural resources are present on, or in the vicinity of, the Proposed Project. Refer to **Map 3 (attached)** for a depiction of survey coverage for the Project.

Table 1. Summary of Cultural Resources Studies Implemented in the Vicinity of the Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply System, and Communications Upgrade Project.

Data Review/Records Searches	Information available from the following agencies, tribes, and organizations was collected, compiled, and reviewed in support of PCWA's relicensing studies and all subsequent studies. • Eldorado National Forest (ENF) • Tahoe National Forest (TNF) • California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) • United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC) • Shingle Springs Rancheria • Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada • Todd Valley Miwok-Maidu Cultural Foundation • Colfax-Todd Valley Consolidated Tribe • Miwok Tribe of the Eldorado Rancheria. • Placer County Historical Society • California State Library • Bancroft Library at the University of California – Berkeley The results of records searches and all associated agency and tribal consultation are provided in the reports identified below.
Field Surveys	As shown on **Map 3**, and summarized below, the entire Project area has been surveyed for cultural resources. 2006/2008 All area within the FERC Project boundary, and within 200 feet of any feature, facility or Project road not located within the FERC Project boundary, was surveyed for cultural resources as part of PCWA's relicensing studies. 2011 The entire length of the Hell Hole Reservoir Trail from Hell Hole Dam to Upper Hell Hole Campground was surveyed. 2014 The Hell Hole Boat Ramp area was surveyed for cultural resources during low water conditions in support of the Hell Hole Boat Ramp Extension Project. 2015.

	All previously unsurveyed areas within the boundaries of Hell Hole Reservoir between 4,544 and 4.445 feet MSL were surveyed when water surface elevation was unusually low.
National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Study	PCWA evaluated the MFP facilities, including Hell Hole Dam and related features, for NRHP eligibility. The MFP was determined not eligible for the NRHP. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with this finding by letter dated June 22, 2010 (FERC1000603A).
Reports	The above-referenced records searches, consultation efforts, surveys and studies are documented in the following reports: • 2005 Cultural Resources Inventory Study Report, which is available in PCWA's Pre-Application Document (PAD) (PCWA 2007); • 2006 Cultural Resources Inventory Study Report, which is available in PCWA's PAD (PCWA 2007); • CUL 1 – Cultural Resources Technical Study Report (TSR) – 2007, which is available in PCWA's License Application (PCWA 2011a); • CUL 1 – Cultural Resources TSR – 2008, which is available in PCWA's License Application (PCWA 2011a). • CUL 1 – Cultural Resources National Register of Historic Places Eligibility Study Report (PCWA 2010), which is available in PCWA's License Application (PCWA 2011a); • Cultural Resources Supplemental TSR, which is available in PCWA's Supplemental Filing (PCWA 2011b). • Eldorado National Forest (ENF), Georgetown Ranger District – Hell Hole Boat Ramp Extension Project Cultural Resource Report – R201X05XX00XXX (complete number to be assigned by ENF) • Eldorado National Forest, Georgetown Ranger District - Hell Hole Reservoir Low Water Survey Cultural Resource Report R2016-0503-30018.
Cultural Resource Sites	There are no documented cultural resources or historic properties located within the survey area shown on **Map 3**.

Measures for the protection of cultural resources that will be implemented as part of the Project include the following:

CUL-01. Historic Properties Management Plan

The Licensee will implement measures for the protection of cultural resources consistent with the Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP), including the following requirement:

- If PCWA proposes to implement any new Project or activity that has not been analyzed as part of the relicensing studies and is not analyzed in the FERC's NEPA document for the MFP, PCWA will initiate cultural resources investigations (e.g., archival research and survey), as appropriate, in consultation with the Eldorado National Forest (ENF) and/or Tahoe National Forest (TNF) and local Native American Tribal representatives, to identify cultural resources and to determine if the proposed activity could affect any cultural resources. If the proposed activity could affect cultural resources, PCWA in consultation with the ENF and/or TNF will develop a strategy to avoid, minimize, or negate any potential adverse effects to cultural resources on a project-specific basis. Measures that could be used to minimize or negate adverse effects include, but are not limited to avoidance, preservation in place, and data recovery and curation. (HPMP, Page 32, Para 2)

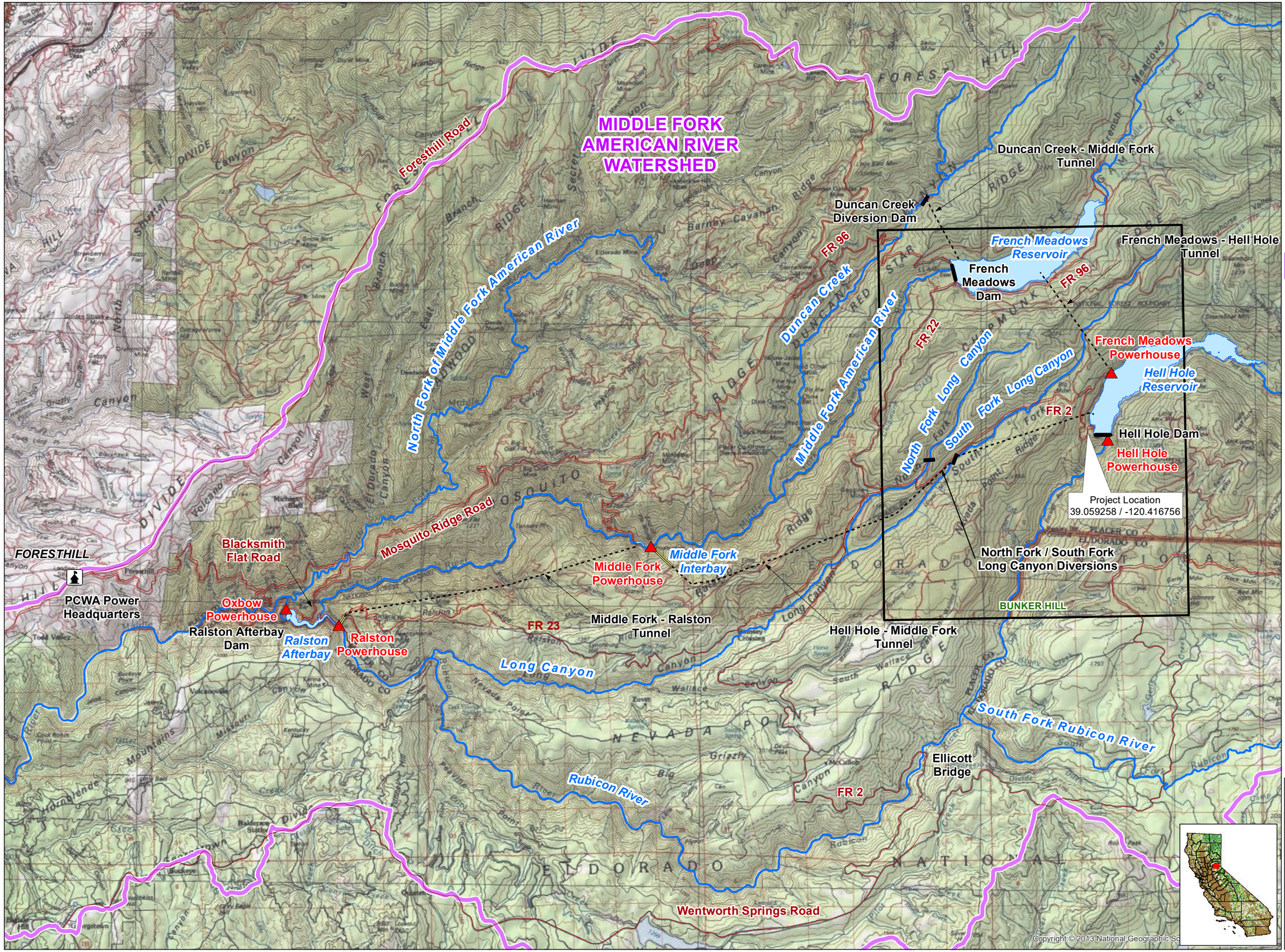
CUL-02. Cultural Resource Sensitivity Meetings

- PCWA will conduct cultural resources sensitivity meetings in the field with PCWA staff and subcontractors prior to any construction or ground-disturbing activities in vicinity of a known cultural resource.
- The HPMP coordinator (or designee) will be responsible for reviewing all construction plans to determine whether there are cultural resources present in the vicinity of the construction activities, and for organizing a field meeting, if necessary.
- During the field meeting, the HPMP coordinator or their representative will discuss the types of cultural resources present in the area, and procedures for avoiding these resources. The HPMP coordinator will also review the protocols for inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources.

CUL-03. Cultural or Tribal Resource Discovery

- Contact the Resource Development Department immediately if any of the following are discovered:
    - Previously Unknown Cultural or Tribal Resource
    - Human Remains
    - Paleontological Resource
    - National Register of Historic Places Eligible Site Damage
- If a previously unknown cultural resource is uncovered during ground disturbing activities, PCWA will immediately cease work in the area and will notify the USDA-FS. Ground disturbing activities will not be resumed until appropriate protection and avoidance measures are identified in consultation with the USDA-FS, SHPO, and the local Native American Tribal representatives.

Please notify me within 30 days of receipt of this notice if you have information on cultural or tribal resources in the Project area; comments on proposed measures to protect cultural resources, or if you have any questions or comments regarding the proposed Project.



PCWA Facilities

- Powerhouse
- Dam
- Tunnel
- Penstock

Transportation

- Road

Hydrography

- Watercourse
- Water Body
- Middle Fork American River Watershed*

*Modified from Calwater Ver. 2.2 to represent drainage above high-water mark of Folsom Lake

Other

- USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle

PCWA

Placer County Water Agency
Middle Fork American River Project

Map 1

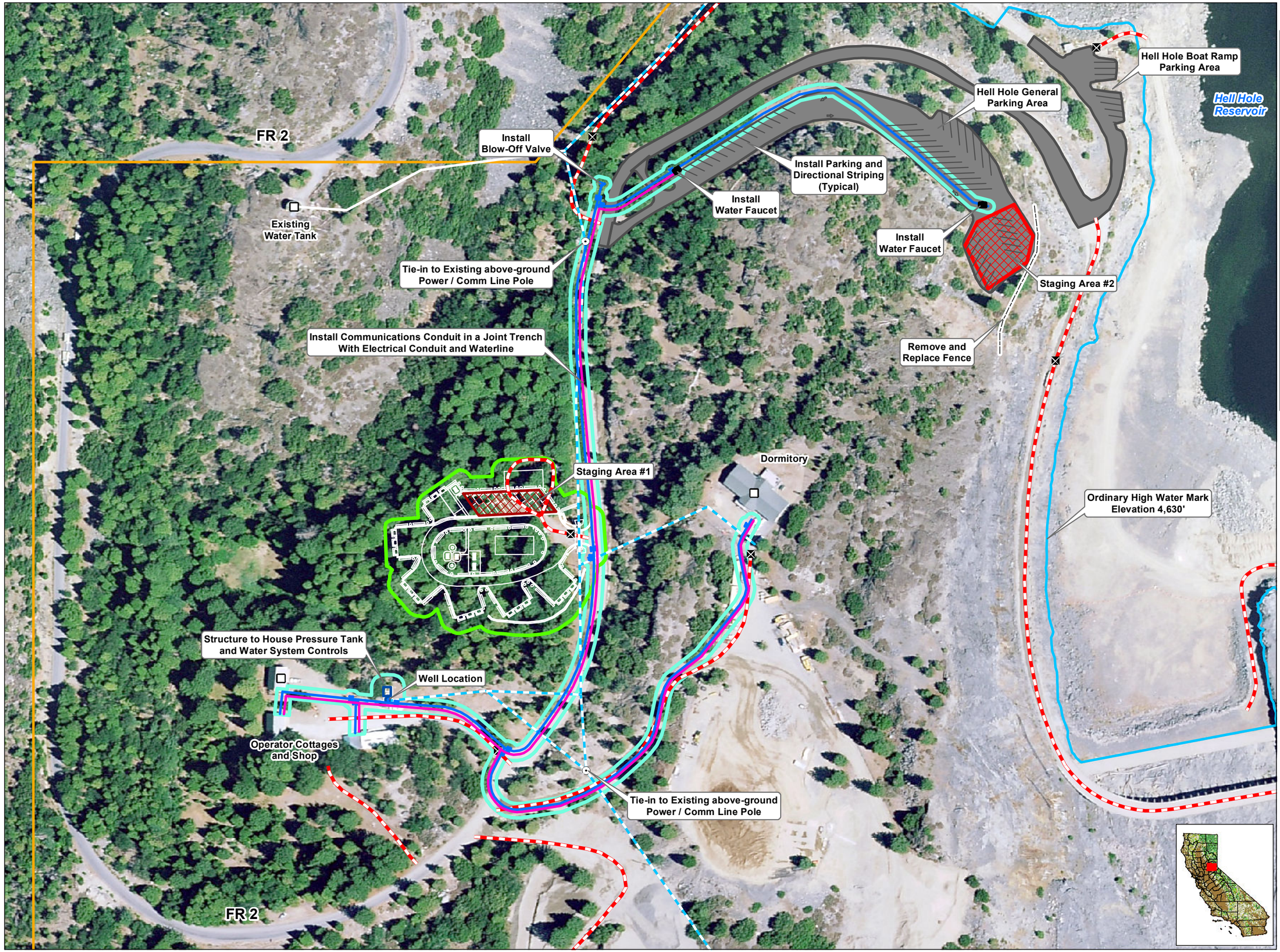
Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply, and Communications Upgrade Project
Project Vicinity

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Projection: CA State Plane, Zone 2
Datum: NAD 83

Date: 5/20/2024

C:\GIS\237800624\map\FacilitiesMaps\ConstructionMaps\HHWorkerCG\PCWA_HHWCG_17i11i_10_Vicinity.mxd



PCWA Facilities and Features

- Ancillary and Other Facilities
- Gate
- Existing Public Safety Fence
- Existing Communication/Powerline
- FERC Boundary

Transportation

- Project Road

Project Features

- Worker Campground Features
- Work Area for Worker Campground
- Staging Area for Worker Campground
- Water Line
- Communication Line
- Work Area for Water and Power / Communication Lines
- Staging Area for Water and Power / Communication Lines (Typical)
- Roadway and Parking Area Slurry Seal

PCWA

Placer County Water Agency
Middle Fork American River Project

Map 2

Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply, and Communications Upgrade Project Project Plan Overview

0 100 200 Feet

Projection: Ca. Stateplane, Zone 2
Datum: NAD 83

Date: 5/22/2024

C:\GIS\237800624\map\FacilitiesMaps\ConstructionMaps\HHWorkerCG\PCWA_HHWCG_17i11i_10.mxd

2006 Visual Reconnaisance

2006 Visual Reconnaisance

2014 Visual Reconnaisance

FR 2

Install Blow-Off Valve

Hell Hole Boat Ramp Parking Area

Hell Hole General Parking Area

Hell Hole Reservoir

Install Parking and Directional Striping (Typical)

Existing Water Tank

Install Water Faucet

Install Water Faucet

Tie-in to Existing above-ground Power / Comm Line Pole

Staging Area #2

2014 Pedestrian Survey - Complete

Install Communications Conduit in a Joint Trench With Electrical Conduit and Waterline

Remove and Replace Fence

2006 Pedestrian Survey - General

Staging Area #1

Staging Area #1

Dormitory

Ordinary High Water Mark Elevation 4,630'

2014 Visual Reconnaisance

Structure to House Pressure Tank and Water System Controls

Well Location

2006 Visual Reconnaisance

Operator Cottages and Shop

Tie-in to Existing above-ground Power / Comm Line Pole

FR 2

PCWA Facilities and Features

- Ancillary and Other Facilities
- Gate
- Existing Public Safety Fence
- Existing Communication/Powerline
- FERC Boundary

Transportation

- Project Road

Project Features

- Worker Campground Features
- Work Area for Worker Campground
- Staging Area for Worker Campground
- Water Line
- Communication Line
- Work Area for Water and Power / Communication Lines
- Staging Area for Water and Power / Communication Lines (Typical)
- Roadway and Parking Area Slurry Seal

Cultural Data

- Areas Previously Surveyed for Cultural Resources*

* NOTE: There are no documented cultural resources within the extent of this map

PCWA

Placer County Water Agency
Middle Fork American River Project

Map 3

Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply, and Communications Upgrade Project Cultural Resources

0 100 200 Feet

Projection: Ca. Stateplane, Zone 2
Datum: NAD 83

Date: 8/21/2024

C:\GIS\237800624\map\CulturalMaps\FacilitiesMaps\ConstructionMaps\PCWA_HHWCG_17i11i_10_SurveyedAreas_CULT.mxd