

# Route 246 CAPM and Robinson Bridge

State Route 246 in Santa Barbara County from post miles 9.55 to R20.90

05-SB-246-9.55-R20.90

Project ID Number 0519000122

## **Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and Section 4(f) *de minimis* Determination**

**Volume 1 of 2**



Prepared by the  
State of California Department of Transportation

**May 2025**



## General Information About This Document

### ***What's in this document:***

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has prepared this Initial Study, which examines the potential environmental impacts of alternatives being considered for the proposed project in Santa Barbara County in California. The document explains why the project is being proposed, the alternatives being considered for the project, the existing environment that could be affected by the project, potential impacts of each of the alternatives, and proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

### ***What you should do:***

- Please read the document. Additional copies of the document and the related technical studies are available for review at the Caltrans District 5 Office at 50 Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, California 93401, during business hours. This document may be downloaded from the following website: <https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-5/district-5-current-projects/05-1m360>
- Attend the virtual and in-person public information meeting on Thursday, May 29, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at Lompoc City Hall (100 Civic Center Plaza, Lompoc, California 93436-6916).
- Tell us what you think. If you have any comments regarding the proposed project, please attend the virtual and in-person public information meeting and/or send your written comments to Caltrans by the deadline. Submit comments via U.S. mail to: Lucas Marsalek, District 5 Environmental Division, California Department of Transportation, 50 Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, California 93401. Submit comments via email to [lucas.marsalek@dot.ca.gov](mailto:lucas.marsalek@dot.ca.gov).
- Submit comments by the deadline: Friday, June 20, 2025.

### ***What happens next:***

After comments are received from the public and the reviewing agencies, Caltrans may 1) give environmental approval to the proposed project, 2) do additional environmental studies, or 3) abandon the project. If the project is given environmental approval and funding is appropriated, Caltrans could design and construct all or part of the project.

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This project involves a bridge replacement, pavement preservation, and culvert rehabilitation on State Route 246 from post miles 9.55 to 20.90R in Santa Barbara County

**INITIAL STUDY  
with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and Section 4(f)  
*de minimis* Determination**

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
Department of Transportation  
and  
Local Agency

Trustee Agency: Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, Santa Barbara County, city of Lompoc

Responsible Agency: California Transportation Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

*Scott Smith*

Scott Smith (May 8, 2025 15:30 PDT)

Scott Smith  
Office Chief for Environmental Analysis  
California Department of Transportation, District 5  
CEQA Lead Agency

**05/08/2025**

Date

The following individual can be contacted for more information about this document:

Lucas Marsalek, District 5 Environmental Division, 50 Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, California 93401; 805-458-5408; lucas.marsalek@dot.ca.gov





**DRAFT**

## **Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration**

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

**State Clearinghouse Number:** pending

**District-County-Route-Post Mile:** 05-SB-246-9.55-R20.90

**EA/Project Number:** EA 05-1M360 and Project ID Number 0519000122

### **Project Description**

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to replace the Santa Ynez River Bridge, known locally as Robinson Bridge (Bridge Number 51-0128), at post mile 9.82. This project will also preserve 21.7 lane miles of flexible Class 2 pavement using Capital Preventive Maintenance strategies, place 0.20 feet of Rubberized Hot Mix Asphalt overlay, rehabilitate culverts, upgrade sign panels, upgrade existing curb ramps to be Americans with Disabilities Act compliant, upgrade guardrails to Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware standards, and add sidewalk to a small portion of State Route 246.

### **Determination**

An Initial Study has been prepared by Caltrans District 5. On the basis of this study, it is determined that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

The project would have no effect on agriculture and forestry resources, cultural resources, energy, land use and planning, mineral resources, population and housing, recreation, tribal cultural resources, and wildfire.

The project would have less than significant effects to aesthetics, air quality, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, public services, transportation, and utilities and service systems

With the following mitigation measures incorporated, the project would have less than significant effects to biological resources:

#### **Southern California Steelhead**

**BIO-33:** Caltrans will restore all areas temporarily impacted for access needs on-site at a 1-to-1 ratio and permanently impacted areas at a 3-to-1 ratio. Trees scoped for removal within jurisdictional areas will also be replaced. Trees with a Diameter at Breast Height between 6 and 12 inches will be replaced at a 3-to-1 ratio, trees with a Diameter at Breast Height between 12 and 24 inches will be replaced at a 5-to-1 ratio, and trees with a Diameter at Breast Height greater than 24 inches will be replaced at a 10-to-1 ratio. Replacement plantings will include appropriate native tree and understory species. To ensure success, monitoring and an appropriate

plant establishment period will be required, which will include regular inspections, weeding, and replacement. Off-site mitigation may be needed to fulfill the compensatory mitigation requirements for impacts to jurisdictional aquatic features due to the limited space available within Caltrans' right-of-way of the project footprint. The exact method of tree replacement and mitigating for permanent impacts (i.e., on-site mitigation, off-site mitigation, root wads, invasive species control, a combination of methods, etc.) will be finalized during permitting to meet mitigation requirements.

**BIO-34:** In accordance with the replacement planting ratios outlined in **BIO-33**, replacement plantings will be detailed in Caltrans' Landscape Architecture Landscape Planting Plan and the final Mitigation Monitoring Plan. The Mitigation Monitoring Plan will be developed in coordination with the project biologist and will include planting specifications and grading plans to ensure survival of planted vegetation and re-establishment of functions and values. The final Mitigation Monitoring Plan will detail mitigation commitments and will be consistent with standards and mitigation commitments from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Mitigation Monitoring Plan will be prepared when more detailed construction plans are developed and will be finalized through the permit review process with regulatory agencies. Restoration plantings will consist of native riparian species and associated riparian understory and bank species.

#### California Tiger Salamander Upland Habitat

**BIO-45:** Caltrans will complete a total of up to approximately 5.25 acres of compensatory mitigation for potential impacts to California tiger salamander upland habitat, which includes:

- A 3-to-1 mitigation ratio for permanent impacts (0.05 acre) for a total of 0.15 acre; and
- A 1-to-1 mitigation ratio for temporary impacts (5.1 acres) for a total of 5.1 acres.

Caltrans will determine actual mitigation credits based on an evaluation and survey of all potentially suitable habitat areas within the Area of Potential Impacts. Before starting ground- or vegetation-disturbing project activities, Caltrans will satisfy the requirement of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife to provide California tiger salamander habitat mitigation by purchasing credits at a California Endangered Species Act-certified and California Department of Fish and Wildlife-approved Conservation Bank (such as La Purisima Bank) authorized to sell credits for the California tiger salamander. Details regarding the exact amount of mitigation required will be developed during the Federal Endangered Species Act and California Endangered Species Act consultation process.

#### California Red-Legged Frog

**BIO-65:** Temporary impacts to upland/dispersal habitat will be mitigated at a 1-to-1 ratio (acreage) and a 3-to-1 ratio (acreage) for permanent impacts to upland/dispersal habitat. The method of mitigation (i.e., on-site mitigation, off-site mitigation, mitigation credits, invasive species control, combination of methods, etc.)



will be determined during the design phase of the project. Compensatory mitigation measures **BIO-33**, **BIO-34**, and **BIO-45** will mitigate impacts to California red-legged frog upland dispersal habitat.

*Waters of the U.S. (Jurisdictional Areas)*

Mitigation measures **BIO-33** and **BIO-34** will mitigate impacts to jurisdictional areas and jurisdictional aquatic features within the project limits.

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Scott Smith  
Office Chief for Environmental Analysis  
California Department of Transportation, District 5

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Date



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# **Chapter 1**      **Proposed Project**

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## **1.1      Introduction**

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Caltrans, as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration, is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As CEQA lead, Caltrans has prepared this Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project. As the NEPA lead, Caltrans will prepare a separate Categorical Exclusion for the project.

This project is programmed in the 2024 State Highway Operation and Protection Program as a long-lead project with funding from the Bridge Preservation, Bridge Scour program, with an additional financial contribution from the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments. Project construction is expected to start in 2030 and completed in 2034.

A Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative are being evaluated. The current estimated construction cost for Build Alternative Design Option 1 is \$96,900,000, and the escalated cost is \$114,000,000. The current estimated construction cost for Build Alternative Design Option 2 is \$92,400,000, and the escalated cost is \$109,000,000. The current estimated construction cost for Build Alternative Design Option 3 is \$101,000,000, and the escalated cost is \$118,000,000. The current estimated construction cost for Build Alternative Design Option 4 is \$95,800,000, and the escalated cost is \$112,000,000.

This project is on State Route 246 in Santa Barbara County, in and near the city of Lompoc, from the State Route 1 and State Route 246 intersection to approximately 0.05 mile east of the Domingos Road intersection. The project proposes to replace the Santa Ynez River Bridge, known locally as Robinson Bridge (Bridge Number 51-0128), at post mile 9.82. The project will also preserve 21.7 lane miles of flexible Class 2 pavement using Capital Preventive Maintenance strategies, place 0.20 foot of Rubberized Hot Mix Asphalt overlay, rehabilitate culverts, upgrade sign panels, upgrade existing curb ramps to be Americans with Disabilities Act compliant, upgrade guardrails to Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware standards, and add sidewalk to a small portion of State Route 246.

## **1.2 Purpose and Need**

### **1.2.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the project is to replace the Santa Ynez River Bridge (Bridge Number 51-0128) to ensure safety and connectivity and preserve other roadway assets:

- Bridge – Replace the Santa Ynez River Bridge (Bridge Number 51-0128) with a new bridge that addresses existing deficiencies.
- Pavement – Improve the ride quality and extend the service life of the existing pavement.
- Guardrail – update existing guardrails, transitions, and end treatments to meet current standards.
- Drainage – Replace and repair culverts that need to be rehabilitated or conflict with bridge construction.
- Complete Streets – Update curb ramps to current Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Provide a new sidewalk between the State Route 1 intersection with State Route 246 and Sweeney Road. Provide a multiuse path for bicycle and pedestrian use on the Santa Ynez River Bridge.

### **1.2.2 Need**

The following are the reasons why this project needs to be constructed:

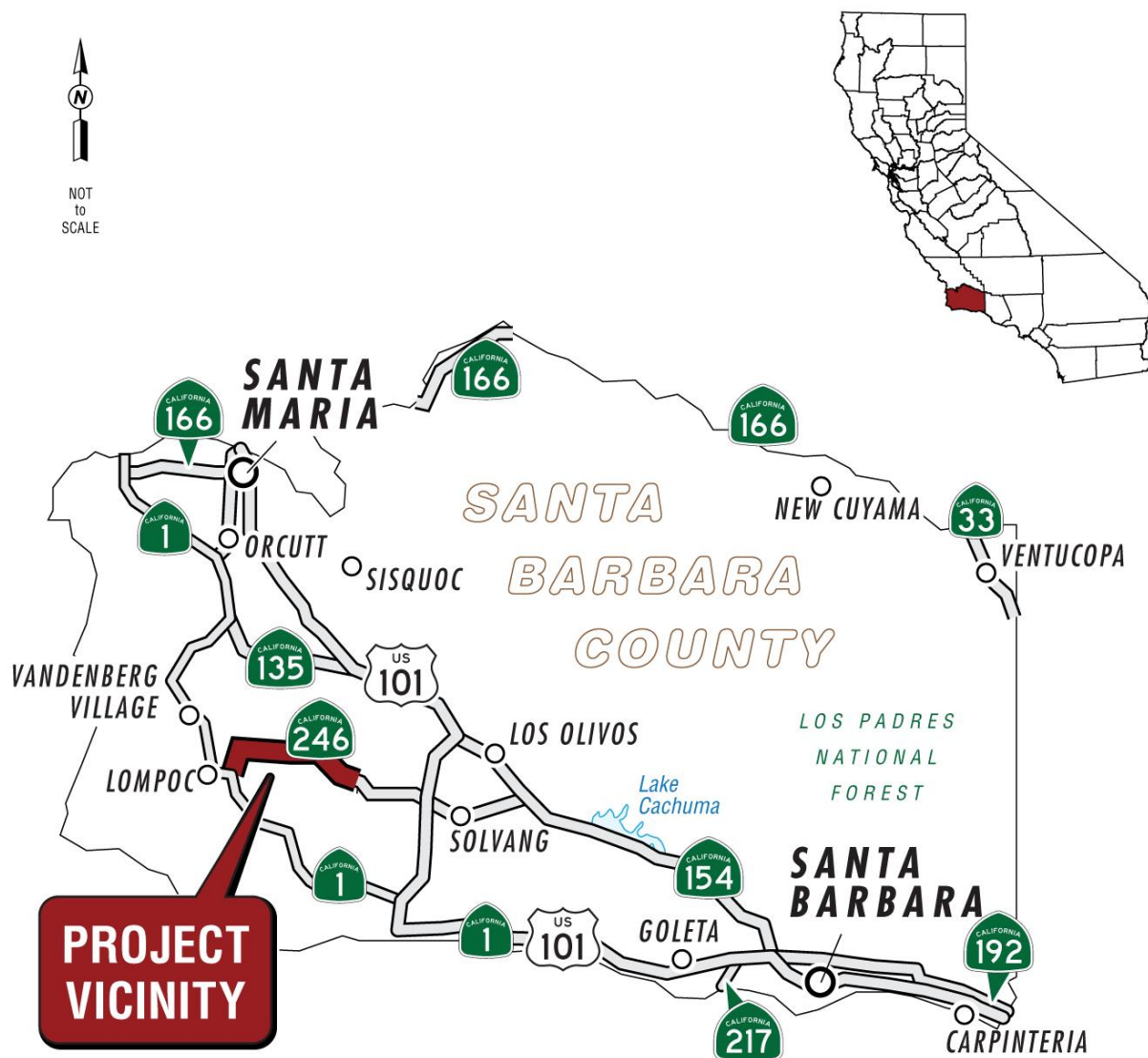
- Bridge – Bridge inspection reports for the Santa Ynez River Bridge identified that continued scour could lead to bridge pier and deck failure. The Federal Emergency Management Agency flood maps indicate that a 100-year flood would overtop the bridge.
- Pavement – The pavement condition within the project limits is exhibiting deterioration. Continued deterioration could result in roadway failure.
- Guardrail – Sections of guardrail within the project limits do not meet the current Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware (MASH) standards. Guardrails will be upgraded in accordance with Caltrans' policy to upgrade existing guardrails to Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware (MASH) standards.
- Drainage - Various culverts exhibit scour, sediment buildup, and shape loss. Continued culvert deterioration could lead to roadway and embankment failure.

- Complete Streets – Identified curb ramps do not meet current Americans with Disabilities Act standards. The existing bridge does not include Complete Streets elements. There is no pedestrian connection between the city of Lompoc and River Park. The Highway 246 Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge Feasibility Report, completed for the city of Lompoc, identified a need for bicycle and pedestrian facilities at or next to the Santa Ynez River Bridge. The Caltrans Active Transportation Plan identified a need for bicycle and pedestrian improvements at the Santa Ynez River Bridge and a need for bicyclist improvements throughout the project limits.

### **1.3 Project Description**

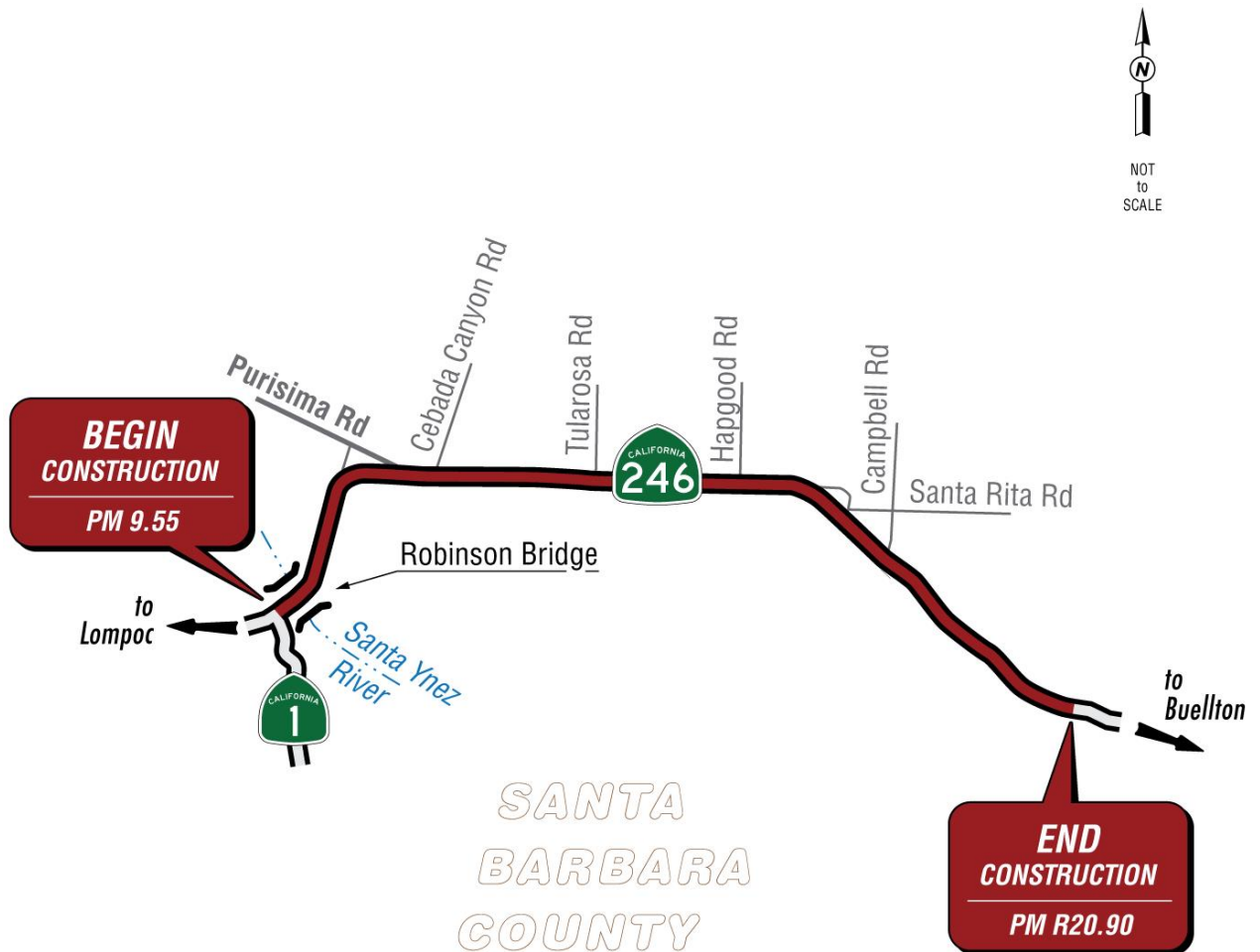
The project is a Capital Preventive Maintenance (CAPM) and bridge replacement project on State Route 246, from post mile 9.55 in the city of Lompoc to approximately 0.05 miles east of the Domingos Road intersection (post mile R20.90). Figure 1-1 shows the project vicinity map and Figure 1-2 shows the project location map.

Figure 1-1 Project Vicinity Map





**Figure 1-2 Project Location Map**



## 1.4 Project Alternatives

The project includes a Build Alternative with four design options and a No-Build Alternative. The four design options are only different in the bridge portion of the project, and the rest of the proposed project elements are identical. The No-Build Alternative would leave the project site in its current state.

### 1.4.1 Build Alternatives

#### ***Bridge Replacement***

The project will replace the existing Santa Ynez River Bridge (Bridge Number 51-0128) at post mile 9.82. There are four proposed design options for the bridge replacement. All options propose to replace the existing bridge with a 550-foot-long new bridge. All design options will include physical barriers along the outside of the pedestrian walkways on the new bridge. The type of pedestrian barrier at the outside of the bridge under consideration include:

1. A Caltrans Standard Type 7 Chain Link Fence.
2. A pedestrian railing with aesthetic treatments.

A pedestrian railing with aesthetic treatments may be selected during the design phase of the project if a maintenance agreement can be completed to ensure the long-term maintenance of a non-standard barrier type.

The four bridge design options are as follows:

#### ***Design Option 1***

Build Alternative Design Option 1 includes a 51-foot-wide precast bridge with five spans (two 89-foot spans and three 124-foot spans), supported by four piers (eight 6-foot-diameter columns), with a Precast Pretensioned wide-flanged girder superstructure at a depth of 5 feet 10.5 inches. This design option would include one 6-foot-wide sidewalk in the eastbound direction only. The sidewalk would be separated by a 2-foot-wide open-style Type 85 concrete barrier at the edge of the shoulder. There would also be a pedestrian barrier on the outside of the sidewalk. Along the edge of the westbound shoulder, there would be another 2-foot-wide Type 85 concrete barrier.

#### ***Design Option 2***

Build Alternative Design Option 2 includes a 51-foot-wide cast-in-place bridge with three spans (two 165-foot spans and one 220-foot span), supported by two piers (eight 7-foot-diameter columns), with a cast-in-place superstructure at a depth of 6 feet 3 inches to 10 feet 6 inches. This design option would include one 6-foot-wide sidewalk in the eastbound direction only. The sidewalk would be separated by a 2-foot-wide open-style Type 85 concrete barrier at the edge of the shoulder. There would also be a pedestrian barrier on the outside of the sidewalk. Along the edge of the westbound shoulder, there would be another 2-foot-wide open-style Type 85 concrete barrier.

#### ***Design Option 3***

Build Alternative Design Option 3 includes a 63-foot-wide precast bridge with five spans (two 89-foot spans and three 124-foot spans), supported by four piers (eight 6-foot-diameter columns), with a Precast Pretensioned wide-flanged girder superstructure at a depth of 5 feet 10.5 inches. This design

option would include a 6-foot-wide sidewalk along the eastbound direction and an 11-foot-wide multiuse path along the westbound direction. The sidewalk and multiuse path would be separated by a 2-foot-wide open-style Type 85 concrete barrier at the edge of the shoulders. There would also be a pedestrian barrier along the outside edges of the sidewalk and multiuse path.

#### *Design Option 4*

Build Alternative Design Option 4 includes a 63-foot-wide cast-in-place bridge with three spans (two 165-foot spans and one 220-foot span), supported by two piers (eight 7-foot-diameter columns), with a cast-in-place superstructure at a depth of 6 feet 3 inches to 10 feet 6 inches. This design option would include a 6-foot-wide sidewalk along the eastbound direction and an 11-foot-wide multiuse path along the westbound direction. The sidewalk and multiuse path would be separated by a 2-foot-wide open-style Type 85 concrete barrier at the edge of the shoulders. There would also be a pedestrian barrier along the outside edges of the sidewalk and multiuse path.

#### *All Design Options*

All four design options propose to remove the existing seven-span Santa Ynez River Bridge (Robinson Bridge, Bridge Number 51-0128) and construct a 550-foot-long replacement structure parallel to the existing horizontal alignment. All design options would raise the vertical profile by 6 feet to provide 2 feet of freeboard above the 2 percent probability flood (50-year event). The new bridge profile would have a uniform downslope at 0.43 percent from west to east. The bridge deck would be crowned with a 2 percent downslope from the roadway centerline to each edge. All design options would be constructed with a 12-foot-wide lane and an 8-foot-wide shoulder in each direction. All design options would include a pedestrian barrier along the outside of the eastbound pedestrian sidewalk on the new bridge. The type of barrier may be one of the two following options: a Caltrans Standard Type 7 Chain Link Fence or a pedestrian railing with aesthetic treatments. The latter option may be adopted if a maintenance agreement can be met to ensure the maintenance of a non-standard barrier type. All design options would be supported by circular columns on separate Cast-in-Steel-Sheet (CISS) foundations. All design options would include cast-in-place abutments and Type N30 approach slabs. Rock slope protection would be included to protect abutment slopes.

All bridge options would be supported by circular columns on separate Cast-in-Steel-Sheet foundations.

#### *Approach Road Realignment*

The roadway section on both approaches to the bridge will be realigned and reconstructed at an elevated profile to connect to the new bridge elevation. Roadway replacement will be from the intersection of North 12th Street, State Route 1, and State Route 246 to the bridge and from the bridge to the east of

the Sweeney Road, River Park Road, and State Route 246 intersection. The entire depth of the existing pavement section will be excavated through this corridor, and a new roadway profile will be achieved through regrading and laying new pavement on top. New approach roads will include two 12-foot-wide travel lanes and 8-foot-wide shoulders with shoulder backing on both sides. Left turn pockets and appropriate tapers will be replaced at existing locations. The approach road west of the bridge and east of the bridge up to the Sweeney Road and River Park Road intersection will include a 6-foot-wide sidewalk in the eastbound direction. Where necessary, cut-and-fill embankment slopes will be at a 2-to-1 horizontal-to-vertical slope.

The project will also realign a portion of Sweeney Road and River Park Road to match the proposed roadway elevation of State Route 246. An existing driveway to a city of Lompoc utility building at post mile 9.75 will also be reconstructed.

### ***Rehabilitation Elements***

#### ***Pavement Improvements***

The project will preserve approximately 21.7 lane miles of flexible Class 2 pavement from post mile 9.55 to post mile R20.90 using the Capital Preventive Maintenance strategy of 0.20 foot of Rubberized Hot Mix Asphalt overlay.

All asphalt concrete dikes will be replaced. Heavily distressed pavement will be repaired with dugouts. Outside of realignment limits, the project will maintain all existing geometric features.

#### ***Upgrade Signs, Pavement Markings, and Guardrail***

The project will upgrade existing signs and pavement markings to the current standard. The project will upgrade existing guardrails to the current Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware standards. Where necessary, guardrail will be extended to meet the minimum length of need. Vegetation control will be placed under guardrail to reduce maintenance effort.

#### ***Rehabilitate Culverts***

The project involves repairing, extending, upsizing, and replacing a total of 653 linear feet of culverts at seven existing culvert locations. The work will use various methods, such as cut and cover, invert paving, cast-in-place lining, and trenchless installation techniques. At locations with culverts replaced through trenchless installation methods, the new culverts will be installed parallel to the existing culverts; the existing culverts will be abandoned and filled per standard. Headwalls will be constructed or replaced at three inlets and four outlets. Flared End Sections would be installed at two inlet or outlet locations. Rock Slope Protection would be placed at inlets and outlets where needed. Rock slope protection areas at culvert inlets in



jurisdictional areas will include gravel filters instead of rock slope protection fabric.

Some locations of culvert improvements will require staging areas, jacking and receiving pits, and access roads.

### ***Culvert Relocation***

A 215-foot section of an existing arched culvert that outlets near the existing bridge abutment will be relocated. The proposed section of the culvert will be installed using cut-and-cover methods. The existing culvert section will be removed. The existing spillway and headwall structure for this culvert will be replaced by a headwall and wing wall structure with rock slope protection. Table 1.1 below details the proposed culvert work.

**Table 1.1 Proposed Culvert Work**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Post Mile</b>	<b>Culvert System Identification Number</b>	<b>System Node</b>	<b>Existing Culvert Size and Type</b>	<b>Proposed Culvert Size and Type</b>	<b>Proposed Strategy</b>
1	9.73	512460000973	New Node (East of Node 6) to 1	48-by-42-inch Concrete Arch Top Box	48-by-42-inch Concrete Arch Top Box or Open Channel	Realignment/relocation of approximately 215 feet north of the existing alignment.
2	10.13	512460001013	2-1, 3-2, and 4-3	18-inch Corrugated Steel Pipe	24-inch Corrugated Steel Pipe	Trenched (cut and cover) replacement
3	14.03	512460101402	2-1	60-inch Corrugated Metal Pipe	60-inch Corrugated Metal Pipe	Install cured-in-place pipe liner from nodes 2-1.
4	18.56	512460101856	3-2	24-inch Corrugated Metal Pipe	24-inch Corrugated Metal Pipe	Install cured-in-place pipe liner from nodes 3-2.
5	18.81	512460101881	2-1, 3-2	72-inch Corrugated Metal Pipe	72-inch Corrugated Metal Pipe	Install invert paving
6	20.10	512460102010	2-1	24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe	36-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe	Replace culvert through trenchless installation
7	20.54	512464102054	2-1	36-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe	36-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe	Trenched replacement of damaged section

### ***Americans With Disabilities Act Curb Ramps and Sidewalk***

The project will upgrade 12 curb ramps to meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Two additional curb ramps will be reconstructed due to the bridge approach road realignment. Approximately 1,680 linear feet of a 6-foot-wide sidewalk will be added along the eastbound direction of State Route 246 between North 12th Street, State Route 1, and the State Route 246 intersection to the new bridge and from the bridge to River Park Road, Sweeney Road, and the State Route 246 intersection. Two of the four design options for the bridge will include an 11-foot-wide multiuse path along the westbound direction of the bridge.

### ***Bridge Construction***

#### ***Design Options 1 and 2***

Design Options 1 and 2 (bridge options with sidewalk along the eastbound direction only) would be constructed in two stages. In stage 1, the existing bridge would be used to maintain traffic while a 30-foot-wide section of the new bridge and approach roads are constructed. In stage 1, existing travel lanes on the bridge would remain at the current configuration. In stage 2, the newly constructed section of the new bridge would be used for traffic while the existing bridge is being demolished and the remaining portion of the new bridge is being constructed. In stage 2, two 12-foot-wide travel lanes are proposed during construction, with temporary railing along the eastbound direction and a newly constructed open-style Type 85 concrete barrier along the westbound direction.

#### ***Design Options 3 and 4***

Design Options 3 and 4 (bridge options with a sidewalk in the eastbound direction and a multiuse path in the westbound direction) would be constructed in three stages. In stage 1, the existing bridge would be used to maintain traffic while a 31-foot, 3-inch portion of the new bridge and approach roads are constructed. In stage 1, existing travel lanes on the bridge would remain at the current configuration. In stage 2, the newly constructed section of the new bridge would be used for traffic while the remaining portion of the bridge is being constructed. In stage 2, two 12-foot-wide travel lanes are proposed during construction, with temporary railing along both directions. In stage 3, traffic would be shifted to construct an open-style concrete barrier and a multiuse path in the westbound direction. During stage 3, two 12-foot-wide lanes with one 8-foot-wide shoulder are proposed.

For all design options, shoring between the temporary roads and new roadways will be needed to maintain traffic.

### ***In-Stream Temporary Construction***

The contractor will be required to keep demolition debris and construction materials from entering the active stream. A temporary working platform or trestle may be used for bridge construction. If a trestle is required, some piles

will need to be installed in the water channel and some on the nearby shore. Dewatering may not be feasible due to 1) the amount of water, 2) a tight construction schedule to complete over-stream and in-stream components of bridge construction during the appropriate season for Southern California steelhead (June 1 to October 31), and 3) expected locations of the piles through the middle of the channel.

Based on site conditions, Caltrans expects that the piles will consist of steel pipe up to 12 inches in diameter. The piles could be installed by oscillating or vibrating but using an impact pile driver will most likely be required, up to 200 strikes per day. Demolished material will be completely removed from the project site.

#### *Construction Timeline*

Construction is expected to begin in Spring 2030. Currently, bridge construction is expected to take two years. A three-year plant establishment period would be needed after construction is completed

### **1.4.2 No-Build (No-Action) Alternative**

The No-Build Alternative would leave the existing site conditions in their current state and not improve any of the project features, including the bridge, pavement, and culverts.

### **1.4.3 Comparison of Alternatives**

The Build Alternative would construct either Design Option 1, Design Option 2, Design Option 3, or Design Option 4. The decision to proceed with the Build Alternative and one of the design options will be made between the release of the draft environmental document and the final environmental document after all technical engineering studies and reports are completed. If the Build Alternative is approved, the design option will be selected based on cost and which design best fits the project's purpose and need.

The No-Build Alternative would do nothing, and the existing bridges would continue deteriorating.

## **1.5 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Build Alternatives**

The project would include Caltrans standard measures that are typically used on all Caltrans projects. Caltrans standard measures are considered features of the project and are evaluated as part of the project. Caltrans standard measures are not implemented to address any specific effects, impacts, or circumstances associated with the project but are instead implemented as part of the project's design to address common issues encountered on

Caltrans projects. The measures listed below are those related to environmental resources and are applicable to the project. These measures can be found in the Caltrans 2023 Standard Specifications document.

- 7-1 Legal Relations and Responsibility to the Public
- 10-4 Water Usage
- 10-5 Dust Control
- 10-6 Watering
- 12-1 Temporary Traffic Control
- 12-3 Temporary Traffic Control Devices
- 12-4 Traffic Control Systems
- 13-1 Water Pollution Control
- 13-2 Water Pollution Control Program
- 13-4 Job Site Management
- 13-6 Temporary Sediment Control
- 13-7 Temporary Tracking Control
- 13-10 Temporary Linear Sediment Barriers
- 14-1 Environmental Stewardship
- 14-2 Cultural Resources
- 14-6 Biological Resources
- 14-7 Paleontological Resources
- 14-8 Noise and Vibration
- 14-9 Air Quality
- 14-10 Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling
- 14-11 Hazardous Waste and Contamination
- 14-12 Other Agency Regulatory Requirements
- 17-2 Clearing and Grubbing

- 18-1 Dust Palliatives
- 20-1 Landscape
- 20-3 Planting
- 20-4 Plant Establishment Work
- 21-2 Erosion Control Work

Additional standard measures would be added to the project as necessary or appropriate.

## **1.6 Discussion of the NEPA Categorical Exclusion**

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

## 1.7 Permits and Approvals Needed

The following permits, licenses, agreements, and certifications are required for project construction:

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board	Section 401 Certification for impacts to waters of the U.S.	To be obtained before construction starts.
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Section 404 Permit for impacts to wetlands and waters of the U.S.	To be obtained before construction starts.
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Section 1602 Agreement for Streambed Alteration impacts to the Santa Ynez River.  2080.1 Consistency Determination or Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit for California red-legged frog.	To be obtained before construction starts.
National Marine Fisheries Service	Section 7 consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service for the Southern California steelhead.	To be obtained before construction starts.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Section 7 consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, least Bell's vireo, and Southwestern willow flycatcher, with conference for the southwestern pond turtle and the western spadefoot toad.	To be obtained before construction starts.





## Chapter 2 CEQA Evaluation

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### 2.1 CEQA Environmental Checklist

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. Potential impact determinations include Significant and Unavoidable Impact, Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated, Less Than Significant Impact, and No Impact. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with a project will indicate that there are no impacts to a particular resource. A “No Impact” answer reflects this determination. The questions in this checklist are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

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

“No Impact” determinations in each section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project as well as the appropriate technical report (bound separately in Volume 2), and no further discussion is included in this document.

#### 2.1.1 Aesthetics

Considering the information in the Visual Impact Assessment dated February 14, 2025, the following significance determinations have been made:

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<b>No Impact</b>

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<b>No Impact</b>

### ***Affected Environment***

The project is bounded by the Santa Ynez River to the north and east. Located on the north side of town, the four-lane Santa Ynez River Bridge on State Route 1 provides the city of Lompoc with a crucial north-south arterial connection to Vandenberg Space Force Base and Santa Maria. On the east side of town, the two-lane Robinson Bridge on State Route 246 provides access east-west to U.S. Route 101 and the rest of the Santa Ynez Valley.

The predominant habitat types present along the project post miles are oak woodland, riparian, and grasslands, intermixed within plots of rural residential and agricultural development. The existing visual quality of the project setting is moderately high to high. The predominantly rural character, undulating landscape, and surrounding natural hillsides combine in a visual context with a moderate to high degree of scenic value.

Applicable planning policies, documents, and guidelines were analyzed to understand the community's sensitivity regarding the aesthetic character of the region and the project areas, as detailed in the Visual Impact Assessment. Interagency coordination is ongoing due to the prominence of the project, funding sources, and the local agency's desire for increased connectivity with existing Complete Streets facilities.

State Route 264 is neither an Officially Designated Scenic Highway nor eligible for inclusion in the State Scenic Highway Program. This project also has no proposed light features.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

Proposed project elements above the bridge deck, such as barriers and railings, would be readily visible from the roadway. By themselves, these types of elements are not uncommon and would not be seen as unexpected

visual elements in a highway setting. However, new pathways, with additional barriers, pedestrian fencing, and bicycle railing, would be a new, somewhat unique, visual element along the highway corridor. The new barrier and railing would be taller than the existing barrier, which, when seen with the wider road shoulders and pathway, would increase the visual scale and engineered appearance of the structure. Drainage structures would be below the highway and would be stained to reduce overall contrast and make them blend with the landscape.

Although the project would remove existing riparian trees and other plants, any vegetation removed would be replaced and established. As a result, the riverbanks would, over time, be fully revegetated and result in a somewhat natural-appearing visual condition. Construction access roads and demolition areas, if restored to natural-appearing landforms, would reduce the noticeability of disturbance and engineered alterations.

As a result of the overall larger bridge structure and vegetation removal for construction, these visual changes would cause a minor reduction in the rural character and visual quality in the immediate project area.

### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

The following avoidance and minimization measures will reduce or eliminate visual impacts associated with the project. Mitigation measures are not proposed.

**AES-1:** Following construction, regrade and recontour any new construction access roads, staging and storage areas, and other temporary uses as necessary to match the surrounding natural topography along State Route 246. Avoid unnatural-appearing remnant landforms where possible.

**AES-2:** Preserve existing vegetation to the maximum extent feasible.

**AES-3:** Bridge rail and pedestrian railing shall be an 'open style' to preserve views and deter graffiti. Railing type and treatment will be developed by the Caltrans Department of Bridge Design in conjunction with District 5 Landscape Architecture.

**AES-4:** Bridge rail shall be aesthetically treated to visually recede or appear consistent with the architectural character and community setting. The aesthetic treatment shall be developed by the Caltrans Department of Bridge Design in conjunction with District 5 Landscape Architecture.

**AES-5:** Pedestrian railing shall be selected or treated to reduce glare and minimize contrast and noticeability. Style and color should be consistent with local character and aesthetic goals, as well as being compatible with the

vehicular railing. Railing type and treatment will be developed by Bridge Design in conjunction with District 5 Landscape Architecture.

**AES-6:** Rock slope protection shall be backfilled with soil and revegetated if feasible. Staining is appropriate to reduce the glare of visible rock slope protection as an alternative to soil cover.

**AES-7:** All visible metal components related to down drains and inlets, including but not limited to flared end sections, connectors, anchorage systems, safety cable systems, etc., should be darkened or colored to blend with the surroundings and reduce reflectivity. The specific color shall be determined by Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architecture.

**AES-8:** All visible concrete drainage elements, including but not limited to headwalls, drain inlet aprons, etc., should be colored to blend with the surroundings and reduce reflectivity. The specific colors of these concrete elements shall be determined by Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architecture.

**AES-9:** If feasible, all existing overhead utilities next to the new bridge shall be placed in the bridge structure. If it is not technically possible to locate conduits within the structure, surface-mounted conduits shall be painted to match the bridge structure.

**AES-10:** Replacement planting shall include aesthetic considerations and inherent biological goals. Revegetation shall include native trees and plants as determined by the project biologist and landscape architect. Revegetation shall occur to the maximum extent horticulturally feasible. Planting should be maintained until established.

### 2.1.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

After an assessment of the project easements and acquisitions, it has been determined that no farmland or forestry resources will be impacted. Although the project passes through areas of prime or unique farmland, proposed project elements and construction activities will not impact unique, prime, or important agricultural resources located outside the Caltrans right-of-way.

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forestry Resources
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>No Impact</b>

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forestry Resources</b>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<b>No Impact</b>
c) Conflict with existing zoning, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	<b>No Impact</b>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.3 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.

Considering the information in the Air Quality Technical Memo dated October 11, 2023, the following significance determinations have been made:

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality</b>
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<b>No Impact</b>

### ***Affected Environment***

The proposed project is in the South Central Coast Air Basin. The South Central Coast Air Basin contains the San Luis Obispo County, Santa Barbara County, and Ventura County Air Pollution Control Districts. The Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District regulates air quality in Santa Barbara County. The county is non-attainment for the State Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub>). It is in attainment for the State Ozone, Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), and Carbon Monoxide standards. The county is in attainment for all federal air quality standards.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

Since no additional lanes or capacity are being added to the highway, there will be no difference in long-term air emissions with or without the proposed project.

Due to the use of standard construction dust and emission minimization practices and procedures, it is anticipated that emissions from Particulate Matter (dust) and equipment exhaust will be kept to a minimum.

During the project's construction period, there would be a temporary increase in air emissions and fugitive dust. The use of equipment during construction can generate fugitive dust that could have substantial temporary impacts on local air quality if large amounts of excavation, soil transport, and subsequent fill operations are necessary. However, it is anticipated that there will be minor earthwork required, and consequently, minimal dust generation will be expected.

To minimize dust emissions from the project, Section 14-9.02 (Air Pollution Control) of the 2022 Standard Specifications states that the contractor is responsible for complying with all local air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes that apply to work performed under the contract, including those provided in Government Code Section 11017 (Public Contract Code Section 10231). Additionally, the project-level Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan will address water pollution control measures that cross-correlate with standard dust emission minimization measures, such as covering soil stockpiles, watering haul roads, watering excavation and grading areas, and so on. By incorporating appropriate engineering design and stormwater Best Management Practices during construction, minimal short-term air quality impacts are anticipated.

### 2.1.4 Biological Resources

Considering the information in the Natural Environment Study dated April 30, 2025, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</b>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</b>
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?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</b>
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?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

### ***Affected Environment***

The Biological Study Area is defined as the area that may be directly, indirectly, temporarily, or permanently impacted by construction-related activities and includes a buffer to encompass all indirect effects on

surrounding natural areas. The size of the Biological Study Area includes a polygon encompassing the project location and staging and access areas (see Appendix D). The Area of Potential Impact is within the Biological Study Area, is made up of potential disturbance for both permanent and temporary impacts and assumes the maximum amount of disturbance associated with the project.

### *Regional Habitat Plans*

The project is in Santa Barbara County and must follow the county's Deciduous Oak Tree Protection and Regeneration Ordinance. This regulation protects deciduous oaks in Santa Barbara County. This project's Biological Study Area contains coast live oak scrub vegetation. Coast live oaks are not deciduous oaks and are not regulated by this ordinance. No deciduous oaks were seen in the Biological Study Area.

### *Natural Communities of Special Concern*

Natural communities of special concern are those natural communities that are of limited distribution statewide or within a county or region and are often vulnerable to the environmental effects of projects. These communities may or may not contain special-status taxa or their habitat. Waters of the State and waters of the U.S. are also considered natural communities of special concern.

### *Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest Natural Community*

Red willow riparian woodland and forest natural community (*Salix gooddingii* – *Salix laevigata* Forest & Woodland Alliance) occurs within the Riparian Woodland and Forest land cover type as dominated by red willow, along with arroyo willow thickets (*Salix lasiolepis* Shrubland Alliance; S4) within the Biological Study Area. Red willows commonly grow with various willows and other riparian trees along creeks and lower drainage terraces. The range of red willows includes most of the state except for the Colorado Desert.

### *Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands*

Executive Order 11990 was issued on May 24, 1977, directing federal agencies to avoid, to the extent possible, the long-term and short-term adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands and to avoid direct or indirect support of new construction in wetlands wherever there is a practicable alternative.

The report found about 23 acres of potential waters of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife within the Area of Potential Impact. The project will require a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and a California



Fish and Game Code Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

### *Special-Status Animal Species*

A query of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's California Natural Diversity Database was originally conducted in 2023 and updated in 2024. A request for an official U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service species list, National Marine Fisheries Service species list, and California Native Plant Society species list was made in 2023 and 2024. These lists can be viewed in the Natural Environment Study.

### *Field Surveys*

The studies conducted for this project included botanical surveys for sensitive plant species and general reconnaissance-level wildlife surveys. The field surveys were conducted in April 2023, June 2023, July 2023, August 2023, April 2024, and November 2024. These surveys were designed to assess habitat suitability for special-status species, characterize and map habitats, natural communities, and land cover types, map potentially jurisdictional features, and develop an inventory of all plant and animal species detected within the Biological Study Area.

Tables 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 show special-status species and habitats that may occur in the project area.

**Table 2.2 Special-Status Plants Known To Occur in the Project Region With Habitat Present**

<b>Common Name/ Scientific Name</b>	<b>Legal Status Federal/State/ California Rare Plant Rank</b>	<b>Habitat Present/ Absent</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Hoover's bent grass <i>Agrostis hooveri</i>	Federally unlisted, state unlisted, with a California Rare Plant Rank of rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, with a threat code extension of fairly endangered in California.	Habitat Present	Suitable soils and habitats are present in the Biological Study Area.  One California Natural Diversity Database occurrence from 2008 occurs within 1 mile of the Biological Study Area.  Species not observed during appropriately timed floristic surveys.  Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.
Santa Ynez groundstar <i>Ancistrocarphus keilii</i>	Federally unlisted, state unlisted, with a California Rare Plant Rank of rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, with a threat code extension of seriously endangered in California.	Habitat Present	Suitable soils and habitats are present.  The historical record from 1929 overlaps the Biological Study Area.  Species not observed during appropriately timed floristic surveys.  Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.
La Purisima manzanita <i>Arctostaphylos purissima</i>	Federally unlisted, state unlisted, with a California Rare Plant Rank of rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, with a threat code extension of seriously endangered in California.	Habitat Present	Suitable soils and habitats are present in the Biological Study Area.  Two California Natural Diversity Database occurrences from 1992 overlap the Biological Study Area. More records occur within the La Purisima Mission State Historic Park from 2016.  Species not observed during appropriately timed floristic surveys.  Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.

Common Name/ Scientific Name	Legal Status Federal/State/ California Rare Plant Rank	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
Sand mesa manzanita <i>Arctostaphylos rudis</i>	Federally unlisted, state unlisted, with a California Rare Plant Rank of rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, with a threat code extension of fairly endangered in California.	Habitat Present	<p>Suitable soils and habitats are present in the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>One California Natural Diversity Database occurrence from 1992 overlaps the Biological Study Area. More records occur within the La Purisima Mission State Historic Park from 2012.</p> <p>Species not observed during appropriately timed floristic surveys.</p> <p>Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.</p>
Santa Barbara ceanothus <i>Ceanothus impressus</i> var. <i>impressus</i>	Federally unlisted, state unlisted, with a California Rare Plant Rank of rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, with a threat code extension of fairly endangered in California.	Habitat Present	<p>Suitable soils and habitats are present in the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>One California Natural Diversity Database occurrence from 1986 is next to the Biological Study Area at Tularosa Road.</p> <p>Species not observed during appropriately timed floristic surveys.</p> <p>Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.</p>

Common Name/ Scientific Name	Legal Status Federal/State/ California Rare Plant Rank	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
Vandenberg monkeyflower <i>Diplacus vandenbergensis</i>	Listed as federally endangered and state unlisted, with a California Rare Plant Rank of rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, with a threat code extension of seriously endangered in California.	Habitat Present	<p>Suitable soil types and habitats are present within the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>One historical record from 1931 occurs within the Biological Study Area at the eastern end. Additional occurrences from 2019 occur at the La Purisima Mission State Historic Park approximately 1.5 miles north of the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>Species not observed during appropriately timed floristic surveys.</p> <p>The Federal Endangered Species Act effects determination is that the project will have no effect on the species.</p> <p>Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.</p>
Mesa horkelia <i>Horkelia cuneata</i> var. <i>puberula</i>	Federally unlisted and state unlisted, with a California Rare Plant Rank of rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, with a threat code extension of seriously endangered in California.	Habitat Present	<p>Suitable soil types and habitats are present within the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>Species was found within the Biological Study Area during surveys.</p> <p>Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.</p>

Common Name/ Scientific Name	Legal Status Federal/State/ California Rare Plant Rank	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
Blushing layia <i>Layia</i> <i>erubescens</i>	Federally unlisted and state unlisted, with a California Rare Plant Rank of rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, with a threat code extension of fairly endangered in California.	Habitat Present	Sandy soils and coastal scrub are present in the Biological Study Area. Many occurrences in Mission Hills near the west end of the Biological Study Area as recently as 2023. Species not observed during appropriately timed floristic surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.
Black-flowered figwort <i>Scrophularia</i> <i>atrata</i>	Federally unlisted and state unlisted, with a California Rare Plant Rank of rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, with a threat code extension of fairly endangered in California.	Habitat Present	Suitable habitats are present within the Biological Study Area. Species was found within the Biological Study Area during surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.

Table 2.3 Special-Status Wildlife and Fish Species Potentially Occurring or Known To Occur in the Project Region That Will Require Avoidance and Minimization Measures

Common Name/Scientific Name	Status Federal/State	Habitat Present/Absent	Rationale
Crotch's bumblebee <i>Bombus crotchii</i>	Candidate for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act, unlisted at the state level.	Habitat Present	Non-native grassland and scrub provide suitable habitat within the Biological Study Area. Numerous mammal burrows along the roadside provide nesting habitat. Water sources and multiple potential food plants, including <i>Phacelia</i> , <i>Clarkia</i> , <i>Eschscholzia</i> , <i>Eriogonum</i> , <i>Lupinus</i> , <i>Medicago</i> , and <i>Salvia</i> spp., are also present.  No California Natural Diversity Database occurrences within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area.  Species not observed during surveys.  Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.
Steelhead (Southern California Distinct Population Segment [DPS]) <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus</i> pop. 10	Endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act, with critical habitat designated, and a candidate for listing as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.	Habitat Present	Suitable spawning habitat in the Santa Ynez River is present in the Biological Study Area.  One California Natural Diversity Database occurrence occurs within the Biological Study Area along the Santa Ynez River.  Critical habitat for the species is present in the Biological Study Area.  The Federal Endangered Species Act effects determination is that the project may affect, likely to adversely affect, Southern California steelhead and its critical habitat.  The California Endangered Species Act effects determination is that there may be take of the Southern California steelhead due to the project. A Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit will be pursued.
California tiger salamander (Santa Barbara County DPS) <i>Ambystoma californiense</i> pop. 2	Endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act, with critical habitat designated, and listed as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act.	Habitat Present	Ponds are surrounded by non-native grassland present within the Biological Study Area.  Multiple California Natural Diversity Database occurrences throughout the eastern half of the Biological Study Area. Additional occurrences are within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area.  Species not observed during surveys.  Critical habitat for the species is present in the Biological Study Area around post mile 18, where culvert work is proposed.  The Federal Endangered Species Act effects determination is that the project may affect, likely to adversely affect, the California tiger salamander and its critical habitat.  The California Natural Diversity Database effects determination is that there may be take of the California tiger salamander due to the project. A Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit will be pursued.  Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.
California red-legged frog <i>Rana draytonii</i>	Listed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act, with critical habitat designated, and listed as a California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern.	Habitat Present	Ponds and suitable upland habitat (coast live oak woodland, riparian woodland, and non-native grassland) are present within the Biological Study Area.  Two California Natural Diversity Database records are present on the eastern end of the Biological Study Area from 1984 and 2008.  Species not observed during surveys.  The Federal Endangered Species Act effects determination is that the project may affect, likely to adversely affect, the California red-legged frog. There will be no effect on its critical habitat.  Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.

Common Name/Scientific Name	Status Federal/State	Habitat Present/Absent	Rationale
Western spadefoot toad <i>Spea hammondi</i>	Proposed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern.	Habitat Present	<p>Ponds are surrounded by non-native grassland and coast live oak woodland present within the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>Multiple California Natural Diversity Database records are present within the eastern half of the Biological Study Area from the 1990s. More recent records occur approximately 2 miles north of the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>Species not observed during surveys.</p> <p>The Federal Endangered Species Act effects determination is that the project may affect, likely to adversely affect, the western spadefoot toad.</p> <p>Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.</p> <p>.</p>
Northern California legless lizard <i>Anniella pulchra</i>	Federally unlisted, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern.	Habitat Present	<p>Coast live oak woodland, riparian woodland and forest, riverine, and non-native grassland habitats are present.</p> <p>One California Natural Diversity Database occurrence from 1982 occurs on the eastern end of the Biological Study Area and multiple occurrences are within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area. The most recent record is from 2018, approximately 4.5 miles away.</p> <p>Species not observed during surveys.</p> <p>Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.</p>
Southwestern pond turtle <i>Actinemys pallida</i>	Proposed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern.	Habitat Present	<p>Ponds and rivers associated with the willow scrub provide aquatic habitat, and the non-native grassland provides suitable upland habitat present within the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>Three California Natural Diversity Database records are present within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area, along the Santa Ynez River to the north and Salsipuedes Creek to the south.</p> <p>Species not observed during surveys.</p> <p>The Federal Endangered Species Act effects determination is that the project may affect, likely to adversely affect, the southwestern pond turtle.</p> <p>Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.</p>
Coast horned lizard <i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>	Federally unlisted, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern.	Habitat Present	<p>Non-native grassland, coast live oak woodland, and riparian woodland are present within the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>Multiple California Natural Diversity Database records occur approximately 3 miles north of the Biological Study Area near Vandenberg Space Force Base.</p> <p>Species not observed during surveys.</p> <p>Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.</p>
Coast patch-nosed snake <i>Salvadora hexalepis virgultea</i>	Federally unlisted, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern.	Habitat Present	<p>Non-native grassland and scrub with sandy substrates are present within the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>One California Natural Diversity Database record from 2004 occurs approximately 2.5 miles north of the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>Species not observed during surveys.</p> <p>Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.</p>
Tricolored blackbird <i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	Federally unlisted and threatened, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern.	Habitat Present	<p>A pond with emergent vegetation is present within the Biological Study Area, and additional potential habitat exists directly next to the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>No California Natural Diversity Database records, but multiple eBird flock sightings are present within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>Species not observed during surveys.</p> <p>The California Endangered Species Act effects determination is that there will be no take of the tricolored blackbird.</p> <p>Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.</p>

Common Name/Scientific Name	Status Federal/State	Habitat Present/Absent	Rationale
Southwestern willow flycatcher <i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	Endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act with critical habitat designated, endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.	Habitat Present	Riparian woodland and forest and willow scrub habitat is present in the Biological Study Area at the Santa Ynez River. Two California Natural Diversity Database occurrences from 1989 and 1995 occur for multiple breeding adults present within 5 miles of the eastern end of the Biological Study Area. Critical habitat for the species is present in the Biological Study Area along the Santa Ynez River. The Federal Endangered Species Act effects determination is that the project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect the southwestern willow flycatcher or its critical habitat. The California Endangered Species Act effects determination is that there will be no take of the species. Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.
Least Bell's vireo <i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	Endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act with critical habitat designated, endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.	Habitat Present	Riparian forest, riverine with mulefat thickets, and coast live oak woodland habitat along both flowing and dry rivers/streams are present within the Biological Study Area. One California Natural Diversity Database occurrence is present within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area near Buellton from 2016. The Federal Endangered Species Act effects determination is that the project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect least Bell's vireo. The California Endangered Species Act effects determination is that there will be no take of the species. Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.
Pallid bat <i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	Federally unlisted, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern.	Habitat Present	Non-native grassland, scrub, ornamental trees, riparian woodland, and coast live oak woodland habitat along with human-made structures in rural residential, developed, and paved (bridges and culverts) areas provide suitable habitat for roosting within the Biological Study Area. One California Natural Diversity Database occurrence is present within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area from 1997 at a known bridge roost location. Species not observed during surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.
Western red bat <i>Lasiurus frantzii</i>	Federally unlisted, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern.	Habitat Present	Riparian forest and woodland and ornamental trees are present within the Biological Study Area. No California Natural Diversity Database records are present within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area. Species not observed during surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.
San Diego desert woodrat <i>Neotoma lepida intermedia</i>	Federally unlisted, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern.	Habitat Present	Coyote brush scrub, coastal scrub, and California sage habitat are present within the Biological Study Area. One California Natural Diversity Database occurrence from 2004 is approximately 3 miles north of the Biological Study Area. Species not observed during surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.
American badger <i>Taxidea taxus</i>	Federally unlisted, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern.	Habitat Present	Non-native grassland and scrub associated with sandy soils habitat are present within the Biological Study Area. Two California Natural Diversity Database occurrences from 1990 and 2016 are present within the Biological Study Area. Several occurrences are within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area. A dead American badger was observed on the road during surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.



**Table 2.4 Regional Habitats/Natural Communities of Concern**

Habitat/ Natural Community	Description	Habitat Present /Absent	Rationale
Central Coast Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest	<p>Riparian forest habitats border the edges of rivers and streams and are considered to be among the most valuable wildlife habitats due to the microhabitats that are created by the layering of trees, shrubs, and herbaceous and aquatic vegetation. This environment promotes very high wildlife species diversity. Riparian forests are considered the most complex and support the greatest number of plant and animal species. Riparian forests also enhance the functions of nearby habitats and are considered most valuable when occurring in an unbroken corridor throughout the length of the watershed. Arroyo willow (<i>Salix lasiolepis</i>) dominates this community, specifically. Other species characteristic of the riparian forest plant community include <i>Alnus rhombifolia</i>, <i>Myrica californica</i>, and <i>Salix lasiandra</i>.</p> <p>The only alliance within this community is the arroyo willow thickets (<i>Salix lasiolepis</i> Shrubland Alliance).</p>	Habitat Present	<p>This community is present within the Biological Study Area at the Santa Ynez River and at some drainages.</p> <p>Arroyo willow thickets (<i>Salix lasiolepis</i> Shrubland Alliance) have a state rarity rank of S4, meaning they are apparently secure within California, and a global rarity rank of G4, meaning they are globally secure, with some factors that may exist to cause concern. They are not considered sensitive by Sawyer et al., 2009.</p> <p>No further studies are needed.</p>

Habitat/ Natural Community	Description	Habitat Present /Absent	Rationale
Central Maritime Chaparral	<p>A variable sclerophyll scrub of moderate to high cover (50-100 percent) dominated by forms of woolly-leaf manzanita (<i>Arctostaphylos tomentosa</i>) plus one or more other narrowly distributed manzanita.</p> <p>Occurs on well-drained, sandy substrates within the zone of summer coastal fog incursion. Fire appears necessary for continued reproduction. Can be found in areas where the soil is more mesic and less sandy; sites with Monterey Pine Forest, Bishop Pine Forest, and Monterey Pygmy Cypress Forest; with Chamise and Upper Sonoran Mixed Chaparral on stonier sites out of the foggy area; and with Lucian Coastal Scrub closer to the coast or on shaley substrates.</p> <p>Survives at scattered locations near Monterey and Fort Ord and in southern San Luis Obispo and northern Santa Barbara counties.</p> <p>Alliances within this community include multiple species of manzanita chaparral.</p>	Absent	<p>This community does not occur within the Biological Study Area.</p> <p>No species of manzanita were observed during appropriately timed surveys.</p> <p>No further studies are needed.</p>

Habitat/ Natural Community	Description	Habitat Present /Absent	Rationale
Southern Willow Scrub	<p>Lower on a floodplain, mixed riparian forests become dominated by willows as the frequency and duration of flooding increase. At this boundary, next to the channel, willow scrub communities are formed. The willow scrub communities consist of young, newly established willows and cottonwoods that can survive the frequent physical battering and inundation from flooding. Sandbar willows (<i>Salix exigua</i>) are common in these communities, especially on point bars. The presence of these willows allows finer sediments to accumulate, allowing additional riparian plants to establish.</p> <p>Willow scrub communities are frequently described as early successional habitats because these are the first plant communities to form on newly established point bars along rivers. The dense structure formed by young, multistemmed willows is the preferred nesting and cover habitat for many songbirds. This dense young plant community is also an important browsing and foraging habitat for many riparian wildlife species and a good source of insects.</p> <p>Alliances within this community include sandbar willow thickets, Goodding's Willow - Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest, arroyo willow thickets, and shining willow groves.</p>	Habitat Present	<p>Arroyo willow thickets (<i>Salix lasiolepis</i> Shrubland Alliance) and Goodding's Willow - Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest (<i>Salix gooddingii</i> - <i>Salix laevigata</i> Forest and Woodland Alliance) are present within the Biological Study Area at the Santa Ynez River and at some drainages.</p> <p>Goodding's Willow - Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest (<i>Salix gooddingii</i> - <i>Salix laevigata</i> Forest and Woodland Alliance) has a state rarity rank of S3 and a global rarity rank of G4, meaning <b>both species</b> and natural communities are considered to be rare and sensitive.</p> <p>Impacts to this alliance are anticipated.</p> <p>Avoidance and minimization measures are proposed.</p>

## ***Environmental Consequences***

This project will result in temporary and permanent impacts on biological resources as a result of bridge construction and culvert repair. Temporary impacts will be caused by vegetation clearing, equipment staging, temporary excavation, replacement of existing features, construction access, placement of rock slope protection in previously hardscaped areas, and temporary stream diversion or temporary trestle installation. Permanent impacts will be caused by constructing new piers, installing rock slope protection in locations that are not currently hardscaped, and rerouting abutments on the Robinson Bridge on State Route 246. Impacts described in this section are also tabulated in Appendix D of this document.

### ***Special-Status Plants***

Two special-status plant species—Mesa horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata* var. *puberula*) and Black-flowered figwort (*Scrophularia atrata*)—were seen during appropriately timed floristic surveys. However, both species were not within the Biological Study Area. Therefore, the project is not expected to impact any special-status plant species. Avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented as part of this project to avoid any unforeseen impacts on special-status plant species.

### ***Special-Status Animal Species***

#### **Crotch's Bumblebee**

The Crotch's bumblebee is a candidate for listing as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act. No focused surveys were conducted, and no individuals were seen during wildlife surveys. The California Natural Diversity Database shows no known occurrences within 5 miles of the project's Biological Study Area, but iNaturalist has three documented occurrences about 5 miles south of the Robinson Bridge. There is potential habitat for Crotch's bumblebee on the project site.

Ground disturbance is the most impactful to Crotch's bumblebees and will be a part of this project's scope. Most of the project is in paved or disturbed areas, and construction activities in these areas will not impact Crotch's bumblebees. Temporary impacts to Crotch's bumblebee could occur if the species is present during vegetation removal, staging, and ground-disturbing activities at locations beyond the highway shoulder where suitable habitat exists. Permanent impacts to the species are unlikely to occur due to the placement of rock slope protection at culverts in areas not suitable for nesting or foraging. Additional surveys before construction will be conducted to help alleviate the risk of Crotch's bumblebee mortality. If Crotch's bumblebees are seen during construction, Caltrans will apply for a Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit.

Avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for the Crotch's bumblebee. With these measures, no compensatory mitigation would be

needed. Further, no cumulative impacts to Crotch's bumblebees are anticipated.

*Southern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment*

The Southern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment is a federally endangered and state candidate endangered species. The project's Biological Study Area overlaps with critical habitat for the species.

No focused surveys were conducted for the species, and no individuals were seen during wildlife surveys and habitat mapping. However, the Southern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment is known to occur in the Santa Ynez River, and the river is a designated federal critical habitat unit for the species. The presence of the species is assumed within the Santa Ynez River and the Biological Study Area.

Dewatering and stream diversions may directly impact the species, and sediment deposits in the Santa Ynez River may indirectly impact the species during project construction. The four design options will have similar beneficial impacts on the streambed and thus the Southern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment. The California Endangered Species Act effects determination is that there may be take of the Southern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment because of the project. A Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit will be pursued. The Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 effects determination is that the proposed project may affect and is likely to adversely affect the Southern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment. The Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 effects determination is that the proposed project may affect and is likely to adversely affect designated critical habitat for the Southern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment. Avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented as part of this project to reduce the impacts on the species. Compensatory mitigation would be determined by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife as part of the Incidental Take Permit.

Impacts on the Southern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment were looked at cumulatively in the Natural Environment Study. It was determined that the proposed project, when considered in a cumulative effects context, is not anticipated to result in substantially adverse cumulative impacts to the Southern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment because the project would be small in scale, would result in mostly temporary impacts, and compensatory mitigation would be implemented to offset impacts to habitat.

*Santa Barbara County Distinct Population Segment of the California Tiger Salamander*

The Santa Barbara County Distinct Population Segment of the California tiger salamander is a federally endangered and California-threatened species. The

project's Biological Study Area is in the Purisima Hills and Santa Rita Valley region of the Santa Barbara County Distinct Population Segment of the California tiger salamander. No protocol-level surveys were done, but the California Natural Diversity Database shows three breeding ponds in the eastern portion of the project area. Surveys in 2007 and 2008 observed the species in the ponds and upland habitat in the vicinity of the Biological Study Area. Many of the potential breeding ponds near the project are on private property, so the presence of California tiger salamanders is assumed.

The proposed project will result in up to 5.1 acres of temporary impacts and up to 0.05 acre of permanent impacts to potential upland dispersal/refuge habitat for the California tiger salamander. Approximately 1.62 acres of critical habitat will be temporarily impacted, and 0.001 acre will be permanently impacted. Temporary impacts will be caused by vegetation clearing for temporary construction access, equipment staging, temporary excavation, and replacement of existing features. Permanent impacts will be caused by placing rock slope protection where it doesn't currently exist at the culverts and installing a new headwall at post mile 20.1. The California Endangered Species Act effects determination is that there may be take of the California tiger salamander because of the project. A Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit will be pursued.

Avoidance and minimization measures will be used to reduce impacts on the Santa Barbara County Distinct Population Segment of the California tiger salamander. Compensatory mitigation will also be used to offset habitat impacts. The mitigation ratio would be 3-to-1 for permanent impacts for a total of .015 acre and 1-to-1 for temporary impacts, with 5.1 acres needed to fulfill mitigation needs.

Before starting ground-disturbing or vegetation-disturbing project activities, Caltrans will satisfy the California Department of Fish and Wildlife requirement to provide California tiger salamander habitat mitigation by purchasing credits at a conservation bank (La Purisima Conservation Bank) authorized to sell credits for the California tiger salamander habitat. Cumulative impacts were analyzed for the California tiger salamander, and it was determined that this project would not be cumulatively considerable for the California tiger salamander distinct population segment.

#### Western Spadefoot Toad

The western spadefoot toad is a federally proposed species and a state species of special concern. No focused surveys were conducted for the western spadefoot toad, and the species was not seen during reconnaissance surveys. The ponds within the Biological Study Area and in the vicinity provide aquatic habitat, and the non-native grassland and coast live oak woodland surrounding the ponds provide upland habitat for this species. The California Natural Diversity Database shows occurrences of the western

spadefoot toad in the northern section of the Biological Study Area. The presence of the species is assumed.

Western spadefoot toads have a similar habitat to the California tiger salamander in the proposed project's area of potential impact. The habitat quality in the project area is low; therefore, the potential to impact the western spadefoot toad is low. The habitat impacts for the California tiger salamander in the project area are assumed to be the same for the western spadefoot toad. The western spadefoot toad could be injured or killed if it is present during project construction. If western spadefoot toads are found in small mammal burrows along the roadway, the relocation process could be stressful to the species.

The Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 effects determination is that the proposed project may affect, and is likely to adversely affect, the western spadefoot toad. The basis for this determination is that western spadefoot toad presence is inferred, and there would be a low but possible potential for take of the species if it is present in work areas. Avoidance and minimization measures will help limit impacts on the species. Also, the compensatory mitigation for the California tiger salamander covers the mitigation needs of the western spadefoot toad. Cumulative impacts were analyzed, and it is anticipated that the proposed project will not result in a substantial contribution to the cumulative impacts of western spadefoot toad upland dispersal habitat.

#### Northern California Legless Lizard and Coast Horned Lizard

The Northern California legless lizard and the coast horned lizard are state species of special concern. No Northern California legless lizards or coast horned lizards were seen during surveys. The scrub, riparian woodland, non-native grassland, and coast live oak woodland within the Biological Study Area provide habitat for both species. One California Natural Diversity Database occurrence was recorded for the California legless lizard within the Biological Study Area at Campbell Pond from 1982. An additional 10 records exist within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area near La Purisima Mission State Historic Park and Vandenberg Village to the northwest and to the east toward Buellton. There are four California Natural Diversity Database occurrence records of the coast horned lizard within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area and none within the Biological Study Area.

The chances are low that the project would impact Northern California legless lizards and Coast horned lizards due to low habitat quality in the potential habitat areas close to the side of the roadway. Avoidance and minimization measures would reduce the potential impacts on the species. Compensatory mitigation is not proposed. Cumulative impacts were analyzed, and it is anticipated that the proposed project will not result in a substantial contribution to the cumulative impacts on California legless lizard or coast horned lizard habitat.

*Coast Patch-Nosed Snake and Two-Striped Garter Snake*

Coast patch-nosed snakes and two-striped garter snakes are state Species of Special Concern. No coast patch-nosed snakes or two-striped garter snakes were seen during surveys. The project's Biological Study Area has suitable habitat for both the two-striped garter snake and the coast patch-nosed snake. However, no California Natural Diversity Database occurrences have been observed for either species within the Biological Study Area.

The project impacts on either species are low due to the low-quality habitat and reoccurring maintenance activities in the known habitat. With the implementation of avoidance and minimization measures, impacts to coast patch-nosed snakes and two-striped garter snakes are not anticipated. With the implementation of avoidance and minimization measures, the project does not have the potential to contribute to an adverse cumulative impact on the coast patch-nosed snake and two-striped garter snake.

*Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and Least Bell's Vireo*

Southwestern willow flycatchers and least Bell's vireos are federal and state endangered species. No southwestern willow flycatchers or least Bell's vireos were seen during surveys. Riparian habitat within the Biological Study Area may provide suitable foraging habitat for the least Bell's vireo and the southwestern willow flycatcher; however, the width of the corridor and proximity to State Route 246 and the city of Lompoc likely decrease the overall value of the site to provide nesting habitat. Nesting pairs of both these species are considered unlikely but cannot be ruled out due to the presence of suitable riparian habitat and critical habitat.

Based on historical data in the vicinity of the Biological Study Area, there is very low potential for the Least bell's vireo and the Southwestern willow flycatcher to be present within the area of potential impact.

With the implementation of avoidance and minimization measures to protect all nesting bird species protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act, California Endangered Species Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and California Fish and Game Code, the Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 effects determination is that the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the least Bell's vireo and the southwestern willow flycatcher. The Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 effects determination is that the proposed project may affect, and is likely to adversely affect, designated critical habitat for southwestern willow flycatchers. Avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented to reduce species impacts. Compensatory mitigation for riparian habitat also mitigates potential impacts on the least Bell's vireo and the southwestern willow flycatcher habitat. The project, when considered in a cumulative effects context, is not anticipated to result in substantially adverse cumulative impacts to the least Bell's vireo and the southwestern willow flycatcher



because the project would be small in scale, would result in mostly temporary impacts, and compensatory mitigation would be implemented to offset impacts to vegetation.

*Pallid Bats, Western Red Bats, Silver-Haired Bats, Yuma Myotis, and Other Roosting Bats*

Roosting bat species are addressed here as a group because they have similar habitat requirements, are similarly impacted by the project, and therefore, will require similar avoidance and minimization measures. Pallid bats and western red bats are state Species of Special Concern. The Yuma myotis is included in the California Natural Diversity Database special animals list. No pallid bat, Yuma myotis, western red bat, or silver-haired bat was seen during surveys. The trees within the riparian woodland, scrub, ornamental trees, rural residential areas, and the bridges and culverts associated with developed areas provide potentially suitable roosting habitats. The Robinson Bridge contains crevices that could support marginal roosting habitat. However, it is unlikely that these features would support maternity roosts due to a lack of optimal roosting habitat. There are two California Natural Diversity Database occurrences of the pallid bat, one occurrence of the Yuma myotis, and no occurrences of the western red bat or the silver-haired bat within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area. However, no California Natural Diversity Database occurrences have been observed for any of these species within the Biological Study Area.

The likelihood of bats roosting in the Biological Study Area is low due to the proximity of the city of Lompoc and highway disturbances. Indirect impacts could result from noise and other construction activities that could alter roosting activities. Direct effects could result in injury or mortality of bats, and harassment could alter roosting behaviors. The implementation of pre-activity surveys and exclusion zones (if necessary) will reduce the potential for adverse effects on roosting bat species. Avoidance and minimization measures would be implemented to help reduce species impacts, and no compensatory mitigation would be needed. With the implementation of avoidance and minimization measures, the project would not have the potential to contribute to an adverse cumulative impact on the species.

*San Diego Desert Woodrat*

The San Diego desert woodrat is a state Species of Special Concern. No San Diego desert woodrats or nests were seen during surveys. The coyote brush scrub, coastal scrub, and California sage provide marginal habitat for this species. There is one California Natural Diversity Database occurrence record for the San Diego desert woodrat within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area north of La Purisima Mission State Historic Park. Preconstruction surveys would be conducted to avoid killing San Diego desert woodrats. Avoidance and minimization measures would be implemented to help reduce species impacts, and no compensatory mitigation would be needed. With the

implementation of avoidance and minimization measures, the project would not have the potential to contribute to an adverse cumulative impact on the species.

#### American Badger

The American badger is a state species of special concern. During surveys, one dead American badger was found on the roadside within the Biological Study Area at post mile 18.57, directly next to proposed work at a culvert, likely caused by a vehicle collision. No potential dens were seen within the Biological Study Area. There have been two California Natural Diversity Database occurrences within the Biological Study Area and three roadkill observations. If an American badger is burrowing within the project area, it could be directly impacted. Noise, light, and other construction activities may also impact the species' behaviors. Avoidance and minimization measures would be implemented to help reduce species impacts, and no compensatory mitigation would be needed. With the implementation of avoidance and minimization measures, the project would not have the potential to contribute to an adverse cumulative impact on the species.

#### California Red-Legged Frog

The California red-legged frog is a federally threatened and state Species of Special Concern. No protocol surveys were conducted for the California red-legged frog, but its presence is inferred in the Biological Study Area. There are known occurrence records for the species within the agricultural ditches found in the Biological Study Area, and the species is presumed to still exist in the area. The riparian woodland habitat along the Santa Ynez River may also provide upland habitat, dispersal habitat, or both. The existing State Route 246 likely impedes California red-legged frog dispersal between ponds in the Santa Rita Valley that are separated by the highway.

Project construction activities could injure or kill California red-legged frogs, if present, during the agricultural ditch relocation and sidewalk expansion activities. The potential need to capture and relocate California red-legged frogs would subject these animals to stresses that could result in adverse effects. Injury or death could occur via accidental crushing by worker foot traffic or construction equipment. Erosion and sedimentation could also occur, which would directly or indirectly affect water quality. The potential for these impacts is anticipated to be low due to no observations of the species within the Biological Study Area during surveys; however, this could change over time because the species could expand populations. There will be no impacts on designated critical habitat because it does not occur within the Biological Study Area. Temporary impacts will be caused by vegetation clearing for temporary construction access, equipment staging, temporary excavation, and replacement of existing features. Permanent impacts will be caused by placing rock slope protection where it does not currently exist at the culverts and installing a new headwall at post mile 20.1.

The Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 effects determination states that the proposed project may affect, and is likely to adversely affect, California red-legged frogs. The basis for this determination is that California red-legged frog presence has been inferred, and there would be a low but possible potential for take of the species due to project activities. Avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented along with compensatory mitigation to alleviate impacts on the species. Cumulative impacts were analyzed for this project, and it is anticipated that the proposed project will not result in a substantial contribution to the cumulative impacts of California red-legged frog upland dispersal habitat.

#### Southwestern Pond Turtle

The southwestern pond turtle is a federally proposed species and a State Species of Special Concern. No southwestern pond turtles were seen during surveys. The ponds, riverine habitat, and channels associated with the willow scrub provide aquatic habitat, and the riparian and non-native grassland next to the suitable aquatic features provide upland habitat within the Biological Study Area. There are six California Natural Diversity Database occurrence records of southwestern pond turtles within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area, but none occur within the Biological Study Area.

Project construction could injure or kill southwestern pond turtles, if present, during diversion and dewatering and general construction activities. The potential need to capture and relocate the species would subject the turtles to stresses that could result in adverse effects. Injury or death could occur via accidental crushing by worker foot traffic or construction equipment. Erosion and sedimentation could also occur, which would directly or indirectly affect water quality. The potential for these impacts is anticipated to be low due to a single observation of an unknown turtle species within the Biological Study Area during surveys; however, this could change over time because the species could potentially expand populations.

The Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 effects determination states that this project may affect, and is likely to adversely affect, southwestern pond turtles. The basis for this determination is that southwestern pond turtle presence is inferred, and there would be a low but possible potential for take of the species because of project activities. Avoidance and minimization measures as well as compensatory mitigation will help to reduce species impacts. Cumulative impacts were analyzed for this project, and it is anticipated that the proposed project will not result in a substantial contribution to cumulative impacts on southwestern pond turtle upland dispersal habitat.

#### Tricolored Blackbirds and Other Nesting Birds

The tricolored blackbird is a state-threatened species and a Species of Special Concern. No tricolored blackbirds were seen during surveys. There

are no California Natural Diversity Database tricolored blackbird breeding occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the Biological Study Area. Potential nesting habitat for other avian species occurs in trees and shrubs within the Biological Study Area. Active nests of other birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code were observed in the vicinity of the Biological Study Area during the April 2023 biological surveys. One active killdeer nest was seen on the ground in non-native grassland next to the Biological Study Area. An active red-tailed hawk nest was seen in a eucalyptus tree next to the Biological Study Area.

Removing vegetation could directly impact active bird nests and any eggs or young living in nests. Indirect impacts could also result from noise and disturbance associated with construction, which could alter perching, foraging, and/or nesting behaviors. Only a temporary loss of vegetation supporting potential nesting habitat would occur. Avoidance and minimization measures, such as appropriate timing of vegetation removal, pre-activity surveys, and exclusion zones, are included in the following section to reduce impacts on nesting birds.

Vegetation will be replaced within the project limits to offset temporary impacts. Because impacts to nesting birds, including tricolored blackbirds, will be avoided, the proposed project will not contribute cumulative impacts to nesting birds. As such, a cumulative impact analysis is not warranted.

### *Invasive Species*

Many invasive plant species, as identified by the online California Invasive Plant Inventory Database, were seen within the Biological Study Area. Five of the species had an invasiveness rating of high: giant reed (*Arundo donax*), red brome (*Bromus rubens*), highway iceplant (*Carpobrotus edulis*), pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*), and perennial veldt grass (*Ehrharta calycina*). Of these five invasive plants, red brome and perennial veldt grass are abundant in the Biological Study Area, and highway iceplant is common. The giant reed and pampas grass were rare and were seen in the riparian woodland along the Santa Ynez River.

Ground disturbance and other aspects of project construction (e.g., erosion control, landscaping) could potentially spread or introduce invasive species within the Biological Study Area. Minimization measures are included to help stop the spread of invasive species.

### *Natural Communities and Habitats of Concern*

#### *Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest Natural Community*

Riparian woodland occupies 9.06 acres within the Biological Study Area and the Santa Ynez River. Impacts on red willow habitat will differ depending on the design option. The temporary and permanent impacts are shown below. Trees will be removed and trimmed as part of project activities by the bridge

replacement and culverts. Any trees removed will be replaced at a minimum 1-to-1 ratio. The final replacement ratio may be higher, up to 10 to 1, based on size and permit conditions. Any trees removed will be replaced with native trees that are appropriate for the region and habitat. Additional tree replacement criteria may be adopted to meet project permit conditions.

#### Design Options 1 and 2

A total of approximately 1.2 acres of red willow woodland and forest will be temporarily impacted, and approximately 0.07 acre will be permanently impacted. Removal of the four existing pier walls and the concrete spillway at the culvert within riparian habitat will offset the new permanent impacts by approximately 0.02 acre, resulting in a net of 0.05 acre of new permanent impacts to red willow woodland and forest.

#### Design Options 3 and 4

A total of approximately 1.3 acres of red willow woodland and forest will be temporarily impacted and approximately 0.07 acre will be permanently impacted. Removal of the four existing pier walls and the concrete spillway at the culvert within riparian habitat will offset the new permanent impacts by approximately 0.02 acre, resulting in a net of 0.05 acre of new permanent impacts to red willow woodland and forest.

The avoidance and minimization measures and compensatory mitigation proposed for jurisdictional areas have been assessed as sufficient to minimize impacts to red willow riparian woodland and forest.

#### *Jurisdictional Wetlands and Other Waters and Jurisdictional Areas*

Potential jurisdictional waters were delineated in the project's Jurisdictional Delineation Report. The project will have a net reduction in structural elements in the stream and riparian corridor regardless of the selected bridge design option, which would result in a net benefit to stream habitat in the Santa Ynez River. Throughout the entire project limits, there would be a maximum of 40 square feet of permanent impacts to the streambed. Individual impact calculations were made for each design option.

#### Design Option 1

Under design option 1, permanent impacts to jurisdictional features will occur from realigning State Route 246 at the bridge approaches, widening the bridge, and placing new piers and rock slope protection where hardscaping does not currently exist. The new bridge will consist of four piers that are each comprised of two circular columns, each 28 square feet. Four pier columns will be placed within the jurisdictional streambed, resulting in approximately 0.003 acre (112 square feet) of piers in the jurisdictional streambed. However, removing two of the existing pier walls within the streambed will fully offset the impacts of the new pier columns, resulting in a net benefit of approximately 0.005 acre of stream function. Therefore, no new permanent impacts would

occur on the Santa Ynez River streambed. The addition of new rock slope protection within jurisdictional streambeds at culverts at post miles 18.79, 20.1, and 20.54 will result in an additional 0.006 acre of permanent impacts to jurisdictional streambeds.

Removing the four existing pier walls within the riparian habitat may result in fewer new permanent impacts on jurisdictional riparian habitat. A total of approximately 0.07 acre of riparian habitat will be permanently impacted by bridge replacement activities. Placing new rock slope protection within jurisdictional features at culverts at post miles 18.79, 20.1, and 20.54 will result in 0.02 acre (871 square feet) of permanent impacts to jurisdictional riparian habitat.

Temporary impacts to jurisdictional features will occur from temporary access, staging areas, replacement of existing hardscaped features, and temporary stream diversion or trestle installation. A total of approximately 0.60 acre of streambed will be temporarily impacted at the bridge, and culvert repair and replacement activities will result in an additional 0.05 acre of temporary impacts to streambed.

A total of 1.20 acres of jurisdictional riparian habitat will be temporarily impacted at the bridge, and culvert replacement activities will result in an additional 0.24 acre of temporary impacts to jurisdictional riparian habitat. Culvert replacement activities will result in 0.04 acre of temporary impacts to streambank and 0.002 acre of temporary impacts to wetlands. There will be no temporary impacts to freshwater ponds.

### Design Option 2

Under design option 2, permanent impacts to jurisdictional features will occur from realigning State Route 246, widening the bridge, and placing new piers and rock slope protection where hardscaping does not currently exist. The new bridge will consist of two piers that are each composed of two circular columns, each 28 square feet. There will be no new piers within the streambed; therefore, removing two existing pier walls within the streambed will offset the impacts of the new pier columns, resulting in a net benefit of approximately 327 square feet (0.008 acre) of stream function. Therefore, no new permanent impacts would occur on the Santa Ynez River streambed. Placing new rock slope protection within jurisdictional features at culverts at post miles 18.79, 20.1, and 20.54 will result in an additional 0.006 acre (261 square feet) of permanent impacts to the jurisdictional streambed.

Removing the four existing pier walls within the riparian habitat may result in fewer new permanent impacts on jurisdictional riparian habitat. A total of approximately 0.07 acre of riparian habitat will be permanently impacted by bridge replacement activities. Placing new rock slope protection within jurisdictional features at culverts at post miles 18.79, 20.1, and 20.54 will

result in 0.02 acre (871 square feet) of permanent impacts to jurisdictional riparian habitat.

Temporary impacts to jurisdictional features will occur from temporary access, staging areas, replacement of existing hardscaped features, temporary stream diversion, and trestle installation.

A total of approximately 0.61 acre of streambed will be temporarily impacted at the bridge, and culvert repair and replacement activities will result in an additional 0.05 acre of temporary impacts to jurisdictional streambed.

A total of 1.2 acres of jurisdictional riparian habitat will be temporarily impacted at the bridge, and culvert replacement activities will result in an additional 0.24 acre of temporary impacts to jurisdictional riparian habitat. Culvert replacement activities will result in 0.04 acre of temporary impacts to streambank and 0.002 acre of temporary impacts to wetlands.

### Design Option 3

Under design option 3, permanent impacts to jurisdictional features will occur from realigning State Route 246, widening the bridge, and placing new piers and rock slope protection where hardscaping does not currently exist. The new bridge will consist of four piers that are each composed of two circular columns, each 28 square feet. Four piers will be placed in the jurisdictional streambed, with one column being partially in the riparian zone, resulting in approximately 0.002 acre (102 square feet) of piers in the jurisdictional streambed. However, removing two of the existing pier walls within the streambed will offset the impacts of the new pier columns, resulting in a net benefit of approximately 225 square feet (0.006 acre) of stream function. Therefore, no new permanent impacts would occur on the Santa Ynez River streambed. Placing new rock slope protection within jurisdictional features at culverts at post miles 18.79, 20.1, and 20.54 will result in 0.006 acre (261 square feet) of permanent impacts to the jurisdictional streambed.

A total of approximately 0.07 acre of riparian habitat will be permanently impacted by bridge replacement activities. However, removing the four existing pier walls and the concrete spillway at the culvert within riparian habitat will offset the new permanent impacts by approximately 0.02 acre, resulting in a net of 0.05 acre of new permanent impacts to riparian habitat at the bridge. Placing new rock slope protection within jurisdictional features at culverts at post miles 18.79, 20.1, and 20.54 will result in 0.02 acre (871 square feet) of permanent impacts to jurisdictional riparian habitat.

Temporary impacts to jurisdictional features will occur from temporary access, staging areas, replacement of existing hardscaped features, temporary stream diversion, or trestle installation. A total of approximately 0.64 acre of streambed will be temporarily impacted, and culvert repair and replacement

activities will result in an additional 0.05 acre of temporary impacts to jurisdictional streambed.

A total of 1.30 acres of jurisdictional riparian habitat will be temporarily impacted at the bridge, and culvert replacement activities will result in an additional 0.25 acre of temporary impacts to jurisdictional riparian habitat. Culvert replacement activities will result in 0.04 acre of temporary impacts to streambank and 0.002 acre of temporary impacts to wetlands. To minimize temporary impacts on the streambed, the diversion system and temporary fills will be removed during the wet seasons to allow the stream to flow unobstructed.

#### Design Option 4

Under design option 4, permanent impacts to jurisdictional features will occur from realigning State Route 246, widening the bridge, and placing new piers and rock slope protection where hardscaping does not currently exist. The new bridge will consist of two piers that are each composed of two circular columns, each 28 square feet. There will be no new piers within the streambed; therefore, removing two existing pier walls within the streambed will offset the impacts of the new pier columns, resulting in a net benefit of approximately 327 square feet (0.008 acre) of stream function. Therefore, there will be no new permanent impacts on the Santa Ynez River streambed. Placing new rock slope protection within jurisdictional features at culverts at post miles 18.79, 20.1, and 20.54 will result in an additional 0.006 acre (261 square feet) of permanent impacts to the jurisdictional streambed.

A total of approximately 0.07 acre of riparian habitat will be permanently impacted by bridge replacement activities. However, the removal of the four existing pier walls within the riparian habitat may result in fewer new permanent impacts on the jurisdictional riparian habitat and offset new permanent impacts by approximately 0.02 acre, resulting in a net of 0.05 acre of new permanent impacts to riparian habitat at the bridge. Placing new rock slope protection within jurisdictional features at culverts at post miles 18.79, 20.1, and 20.54 will result in 0.02 acre (871 square feet) of permanent impacts to jurisdictional riparian habitat.

Temporary impacts to jurisdictional features will occur from temporary access, staging areas, replacement of existing hardscaped features, temporary stream diversion, or trestle installation. A total of approximately 0.64 acre of streambed will be temporarily impacted at the bridge, and culvert repair and replacement activities will result in an additional 0.05 acre of temporary impacts to jurisdictional streambed.

A total of 1.30 acres of jurisdictional riparian habitat will be temporarily impacted at the bridge, and culvert replacement activities will result in an additional 0.25 acre of temporary impacts to jurisdictional riparian habitat. Culvert replacement activities will result in 0.04 acre of temporary impacts to



streambank and 0.002 acre of temporary impacts to wetlands. To minimize temporary impacts to the streambed, the diversion system and temporary fills will be removed during the wet seasons to allow the stream to flow unobstructed.

### *Wildlife Connectivity*

Within the western and eastern portions of the Biological Study Area, the Santa Ynez River, surrounding riparian habitat, and Santa Rosa Creek facilitate wildlife passage for fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. The Robinson Bridge and the Santa Rosa Creek Bridge preserve connectivity throughout the corridor. Additionally, the Santa Ynez River throughout the project limits and project post mile limits 17.6 to 19.1 are classified as essential and irreplaceable wildlife connectivity areas. All other areas throughout the project limits are designated as either limited for connectivity possibility or possible connections with implementation flexibility according to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Terrestrial Connectivity Areas of Conservation Emphasis (ACE) model.

The Robinson Bridge is not currently classified by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the Fish Passage Assessment Database as a barrier to passage for the Southern California steelhead or other fish species. Caltrans consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife regarding the new bridge design determined that replacing the pier walls with fewer pier walls will result in improved conditions due to the reduction of pier wall scouring and subsequent steelhead stranding during periods of flow reduction.

None of the culverts in this project are considered to be barriers to fish passage, and the project will not add features that will alter the highway or impair existing wildlife connectivity opportunities. Therefore, the project is not expected to result in adverse impacts on wildlife connectivity.

### *Fish Passage*

The Robinson Bridge runs over the Santa Ynez River, which is Southern California steelhead critical habitat. The proposed project will have fewer piers in the river than the current bridge. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Fish Passage Assessment Database (FishPAD) has labeled this bridge as not a barrier for fish passage. On November 6, 2024, Caltrans and California Department of Fish and Wildlife staff met at the Robinson Bridge and determined that the new bridge would be an improvement for fish passage because fewer piers in the river would result in less scour to the river bottom and a lower risk of stranding fish. None of the culverts that are being improved by the project are considered fish passage barriers.

### *Cumulative Impacts*

Cumulative impacts were analyzed as part of the Natural Environment Study. Resources considered in the analysis were determined to be the following: jurisdictional waters and all the special-status species in the section above. Multiple Resource Study Areas were considered for the resources and species. Reasonably foreseeable projects within the Resource Study Areas were analyzed for their direct or indirect impacts. Resource Study Area maps can be viewed in Section 2.1.21 of this document. All the projects were determined to have no unmitigated, significant impacts. Caltrans concluded that the incremental contribution of the project to cumulative impacts on these resources would not be cumulatively considerable.

### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

#### *Jurisdictional Aquatic Features*

The proposed project will impact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife jurisdictional areas within the Area of Potential Impact. The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented to reduce the potential impacts to these jurisdictional areas resulting from the project:

**BIO-1:** Prior to construction, Caltrans shall obtain a Section 404 Nationwide Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for activities that impact their respective jurisdictions. All permit terms and conditions will be incorporated into construction plans and implemented during construction.

**BIO-2:** Prior to any ground-disturbing activities, Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing, flagging, or another boundary marking system shall be used to demarcate jurisdictional features and the dripline of trees to be protected within the project limits. Caltrans-defined Environmentally Sensitive Areas shall be noted on design plans and delineated in the field prior to the start of construction activities.

**BIO-3:** A temporary trestle may be used instead of, or in addition to, stream diversion and dewatering for bridge replacement activities within the Santa Ynez River to allow year-round work to occur. Pile driving and trestle construction will be limited to June 1 through October 31, when water levels are at a seasonal minimum. Deviations from this work window will only be made with permission from the relevant regulatory agencies.

**BIO-4:** If a trestle is not used, in-stream work within the Santa Ynez River shall take place between June 1 and October 31 in any given year when the surface water is likely to be at a seasonal minimum. Construction activities in jurisdictional areas at the culvert locations shall also be timed to occur

between June 1 and October 31. Deviations from this work window will only be made with permission from the relevant regulatory agencies. Activities that may be approved outside the typical construction window include tree removal and trimming that does not require grubbing or ground disturbance; restoration seeding, planting, and maintenance of plantings; and stormwater measures that require the use of equipment, subject to prior agency approval. Maintenance of stormwater best management practices (BMPs) using hand tools is permitted year-round.

**BIO-5:** Other than installation of the temporary diversion system and, if necessary, installation of piles for a temporary work trestle, in-stream construction work will be performed in a dry work environment.

**BIO-6:** If dewatering or diversion operations are necessary, a detailed dewatering/diversion plan, including water quality monitoring requirements, will be prepared and implemented.

**BIO-7:** During construction, readily accessible spill prevention and cleanup materials shall always be kept by the contractor on-site during construction. All project-related hazardous material spills within the project site shall be cleaned up immediately.

**BIO-8:** During construction, sediment and erosion control measures shall be implemented and maintained. Silt fencing, fiber rolls, barriers, and other BMPs shall be installed as needed to stabilize the project site. At a minimum, erosion controls shall be maintained by the contractor on a daily basis throughout the construction period.

**BIO-9:** All equipment must be cleaned and free of weed propagules prior to entry into jurisdictional features.

**BIO-10:** To the extent feasible, staging, parking, and refueling of equipment and vehicles must occur at least 100 feet from jurisdictional areas. If staging of equipment and materials must occur closer than 100 feet from jurisdictional areas, the staging areas must have adequate BMPs to prevent discharges from leaving the staging area and entering jurisdictional areas. If fueling must occur in areas less than 100 feet from streams, a refueling plan outlining secondary containment and spill prevention measures must be prepared and approved by Caltrans and agency staff.

**BIO-11:** At a minimum, all equipment and vehicles shall be checked and maintained by the contractor on a daily basis to ensure proper operation and avoid potential leaks or spills. Drip pans must be placed under equipment that is stationary for more than 12 hours. Stationary equipment used in jurisdictional areas, such as generators, must be placed in secondary containment. Equipment must be removed from the channel if the National

Weather Service predicts a chance of at least 0.1 inch of rain within a 24-hour period for Lompoc, California.

**BIO-12:** Limited night work is permitted within jurisdictional areas. Lighting must be angled down and pointed toward work areas to minimize illumination of nearby jurisdictional areas outside project limits.

**BIO-13:** All litter, construction debris, equipment, loose materials, and soil spoils shall be removed from jurisdictional areas at the end of every work shift. Stockpiles of materials, including temporarily stockpiled soils, may not be stored within jurisdictional areas. Stockpiles not actively being used for construction must be covered and surrounded with a linear sediment barrier.

**BIO-14:** Stream contours shall be restored as close as possible to their original condition.

#### *Mitigation for Jurisdictional Aquatic Features*

Mitigation measures **BIO-33** and **BIO-34** discussed in subsequent sections of this document will mitigate impacts to jurisdictional aquatic features.

#### *Red Willow Riparian*

The avoidance and minimization measures proposed for jurisdictional areas have been assessed as sufficient to minimize impacts to red willow riparian woodland and forest. Mitigation measures **BIO-33** and **BIO-34** have also been assessed as sufficient for mitigating red willow riparian woodland and forest.

#### *Invasive Species*

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented:

**BIO-15:** During construction, Caltrans will ensure that the spread or introduction of invasive exotic plant species will be avoided to the maximum extent possible.

**BIO-16:** Only clean fill shall be imported. When practicable, invasive exotic plants on the project site shall be removed and properly disposed of. All invasive vegetation removed from the construction site shall be taken to a landfill to prevent the spread of invasive species. If soil from weedy areas must be removed off-site, the top 6 inches containing the seed layer in areas with weedy species shall be disposed of at a landfill. Inclusion of any species that occurs on the Cal-IPC Invasive Plant Inventory in the Caltrans erosion control seed mix or landscaping plans for the project shall be avoided.

**BIO-17:** To minimize the introduction of invasive plant species, all vehicles, machinery, and equipment shall be in a clean and soil-free condition before entering the project limits. Construction equipment shall be certified as “weed-free” by Caltrans before entering the construction site.

### Critical Habitat

Numerous measures in Chapter 4 of the Natural Environment Study (NES) apply to Southern California steelhead, California tiger salamander, southwestern willow flycatcher, and other taxa and are also applicable to federally designated critical habitat. These measures have been assessed as sufficient to minimize impacts to Southern California steelhead, California tiger salamander, and southwestern willow flycatcher critical habitat.

### Special-Status Plants

The following avoidance and minimization measures are proposed for special-status plants. No impacts to special-status plant species are proposed, and no mitigation measures are proposed.

**BIO-18:** All areas (including along the boundary of the right-of-way) containing any listed plant species shall be delineated on the project's plan sheets as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs). These areas shall be marked with highly visible construction fencing and will be off limits to construction equipment and personnel.

**BIO-19:** To avoid impacts to any vegetation, all staging and equipment and storage areas shall occur in existing pullouts or at paved locations that have been cleared by Caltrans Environmental.

**BIO-20:** Preconstruction surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to any ground-disturbing activities to confirm the presence or absence of special-status plant species.

### Crotch's Bumblebee and Obscure Bumblebee

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for potential impacts to Crotch's bumblebee and obscure bumblebee resulting from the project:

**BIO-21:** During the design phase, a focused non-invasive survey will be conducted prior to ground disturbance for Crotch's bumblebee and its nests, following California Department of Fish and Wildlife guidance (2023).

**BIO-22:** A Worker Environmental Awareness Training course will be provided for all construction personnel prior to the start of any ground disturbance or vegetation removal to discuss Crotch's bumblebee identification, ecology, habitat, and avoidance and minimization measures.

**BIO-23:** Prior to any ground-disturbing activities, ESA fencing shall be installed, as appropriate, around Crotch's bumblebee feeding and nesting habitat to be avoided. ESAs shall be noted on design plans and delineated in the field prior to the start of construction activities.

**BIO-24:** If a Crotch's bumblebee is identified in the project area, Caltrans will coordinate with CDFW, and, if necessary, a Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit will be acquired, on-site mitigation may be required, and the following would be implemented:

- a. Any blooming flowering plants that are scoped for removal would be inspected immediately prior to work to ensure that no bumblebees are on or near the plant. If a bumblebee is identified on or adjacent to vegetation that is to be removed, work in that area would not proceed until the bumblebee leaves the area of its own accord.
- b. No work will occur within 50 feet of an active Crotch's bumblebee nest unless approved by CDFW.

*Southern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment*

The project has the potential to result in take of Southern California steelhead; therefore, Caltrans must consult with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) Section 7 to obtain a Biological Opinion for the project. The Biological Opinion will include several reasonable and prudent measures and terms and conditions to reduce the effects of the project on steelhead and their habitat. In addition to avoidance and minimization measures listed in Section 4.1.1.3 of the Natural Environment Study for impacts to jurisdictional aquatic resources that provide cover and shade for Southern California steelhead, the following measures will serve to further minimize potential project-related impacts to steelhead:

**BIO-25:** A temporary trestle may be used instead of, or in addition to, stream diversion and dewatering for bridge replacement activities within the Santa Ynez River to allow year-round work to occur. Pile driving and trestle construction will be limited to June 1 through October 31. This construction window is when water levels are at their lowest to avoid adult spawning migration and peak smolt emigration times. Deviations from this work window will only be made with permission from the relevant regulatory agencies.

**BIO-26:** If a trestle is not used, in-stream work within the Santa Ynez River will take place between June 1 and October 31 in any given year when the surface water is likely to be at a seasonal minimum. Deviations from this work window will only be made with permission from the relevant regulatory agencies. During in-stream work, a qualified biologist will be retained with experience in steelhead biology and ecology, aquatic habitats, biological monitoring (including diversion/dewatering, if used), and capturing, handling, and relocating fish species. During in-stream work, the biological monitor(s) will continuously monitor placement and removal of any required stream diversions and trestle installation or removal, and will capture stranded steelhead and other native fish species and relocate them to suitable habitat, as appropriate. The biologist(s) will capture steelhead stranded as a result of

diversion/dewatering and relocate them to the nearest suitable instream habitat. The biologist(s) will note the number of steelhead observed in the affected area, the number of steelhead relocated, and the date and time of the collection and relocation.

**BIO-27:** During in-stream work, if pumps are incorporated to assist in temporarily dewatering the site, intakes will be completely screened with no larger than 3/32-inch (2.38 mm) wire mesh to prevent steelhead and other sensitive aquatic species from entering the pump system. Pumps will release the water so that suspended sediment will not re-enter the stream. The form and function of pumps used during the dewatering activities will be checked daily at a minimum to ensure a dry work environment and minimize adverse effects to aquatic species and habitats.

**BIO-28:** Caltrans will design replacement bridge structures without scuppers, deck drains, or other facilities that drain stormwater directly into the stream in order to prevent pollutants such as 6PPD-quinone (an oxidation product of 6PPD, an additive intended to prevent damage to tire rubber from ozone) from directly entering waterways.

**BIO-29:** Before any activities within the Santa Ynez River begin, the approved biologist will conduct a Worker Environmental Awareness Training course (WEAT) for all persons employed or otherwise working on the project site prior to performing any work on-site. The Worker Environmental Awareness Training course will include a discussion of the biology of Southern California steelhead, its protected status, proximity to the project site, project-specific avoidance and minimization measures, and the implications of violating the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and permit conditions. Upon completion of the training course, employees will sign a form stating they attended the course and understand all protection measures.

**BIO-30:** When the biological monitor is on-site, they shall monitor erosion and sediment controls to identify and correct any conditions that could adversely affect steelhead or steelhead habitat. The biological monitor shall be granted the authority to stop work activity as necessary and to recommend measures to avoid/minimize adverse effects to steelhead and steelhead habitat.

**BIO-31:** Sound-attenuating devices shall be used during pile driving if any feasible method is available for dry pile driving.

**BIO-32:** Vibration and oscillation of piles shall be used to the greatest extent feasible to install piles and reduce the need for hammer driving.

#### *Southern California Steelhead Mitigation Measures*

The following proposed measures will mitigate the impacts on Southern California steelhead. Final compensatory mitigation will be determined in

coordination with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife during the CESA 2081 ITP permitting process.

**BIO-33:** Caltrans will restore all areas temporarily impacted for access needs on-site at a 1-to-1 ratio and permanently impacted areas at a 3-to-1 ratio. Trees scoped for removal within jurisdictional areas will also be replaced. Trees with a DBH between 6 and 12 inches will be replaced at a 3-to-1 ratio, trees with a DBH between 12 and 24 inches will be replaced at a 5-to-1 ratio, and trees with a DBH greater than 24 inches will be replaced at a 10-to-1 ratio. Replacement plantings will include appropriate native tree and understory species. To ensure success, monitoring and an appropriate plant establishment period will be required, which will include regular inspections, weeding, and replacement. Off-site mitigation may be needed to fulfill the compensatory mitigation requirements for impacts to jurisdictional aquatic features due to limited space available within Caltrans' right-of-way. The exact method of tree replacement and mitigating for permanent impacts (i.e., on-site mitigation, off-site mitigation, root wads, invasive species control, a combination of methods, etc.) will be finalized during permitting to meet mitigation requirements.

**BIO-34:** Replacement plantings will be detailed in Caltrans' Landscape Architecture Landscape Planting Plan and the final Mitigation Monitoring Plan (MMP). The MMP will be developed in coordination with the project biologist and will include planting specifications and grading plans to ensure survival of planted vegetation and re-establishment of functions and values. The final MMP will detail mitigation commitments and will be consistent with standards and mitigation commitments from the USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW. The MMP will be prepared when more detailed construction plans are developed and will be finalized through the permit review process with regulatory agencies. Restoration plantings will consist of native riparian species and associated riparian understory and bank species.

*Santa Barbara County Distinct Population Segment of California Tiger Salamander*

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for potential impacts to the Santa Barbara County Distinct Population Segment of California Tiger Salamander upland habitat resulting from the project:

**BIO-35:** Caltrans will evaluate and survey all potentially suitable habitat areas within the API to determine suitability for the California tiger salamander and designate such areas as California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Areas (SPA) in project plans and specifications.

**BIO-36:** Caltrans will obtain approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife of designated biologist(s) and designated monitor(s) prior to project-related activities that may result in impacts to the California tiger salamander. The designated biologist or



designated monitor with the appropriate permits will be present to conduct surveys prior to and monitor all initial ground- or vegetation-disturbing activities in California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Areas to help minimize or avoid impacts. Designated monitors will monitor project activities after initial ground-disturbing activities have been completed, provided the permitted designated biologist is readily available should the need arise to relocate a California tiger salamander.

**BIO-37:** Caltrans will submit a relocation plan to the Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for approval prior to construction. Designated biologists and/or designated monitors who handle California tiger salamanders will ensure that their activities do not transmit diseases or pathogens harmful to amphibians, such as chytrid fungus (*Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*), by following the fieldwork code of practice developed by the Declining Amphibians Task Force.

**BIO-38:** Work activities that could potentially harm the California tiger salamander will be stopped until the designated biologist arrives to relocate the California tiger salamander to the pre-approved location. If the designated biologist or designated monitor recommends that work be stopped, they will notify the resident engineer immediately. The resident engineer will resolve the situation by requiring that all actions that are causing these effects be stopped.

**BIO-39:** Before any activities begin, the approved biologist will conduct a Worker Environmental Awareness Training course for all persons employed or otherwise working on the project site prior to performing any work on-site. The WEAT course will include a discussion of the biology of the California tiger salamander, its protected status, proximity to the project site, project-specific avoidance and minimization measures, and the implications of violating the Federal Endangered Species Act and permit conditions. Upon completion of the training course, employees will sign a form stating they attended the course and understand all protection measures.

**BIO-40:** Caltrans will limit all project-related vehicle and pedestrian access to established roads and staging areas. Caltrans will locate staging areas within previously disturbed areas to the extent possible, clearly delineate them, and they will contain all project-related parking and storage needs. Caltrans will limit the number of access routes, the size of staging areas, and the total area of activity to the maximum extent feasible to achieve the project.

**BIO-41:** During project activities, all trash that may attract predators will be properly contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and construction debris will be removed from work areas.

**BIO-42:** If work will occur in a California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Area between October 1 and May 31, temporary California Tiger Salamander exclusionary fencing will be installed during dry conditions prior to work within the California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Area to protect California tiger salamander habitat outside of the California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Area and prevent individuals from dispersing into work areas. The designated biologist or monitor will inspect the area regularly when work is scheduled within a California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Area to ensure the integrity of the fence and that workers avoid entering California Tiger Salamander habitat outside of the California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Area.

**BIO-43:** Caltrans will consult the National Weather Service 24-hour forecast daily. If there is over a 70 percent chance of precipitation forecasted, the designated biologist will survey the work area to ensure that California tiger salamanders have been cleared.

**BIO-44:** If an unpredicted rainfall event starts while construction activities are in progress, Caltrans will suspend all work activities in a California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Area until the designated biologist surveys the work area to ensure that California tiger salamanders have been cleared.

#### California Tiger Salamander Mitigation

As part of the California Endangered Species Act and Federal Endangered Species Act consultations, Caltrans expects that compensatory mitigation will be required to offset habitat impacts resulting from the project. The following mitigation estimates have been made for this project, according to mitigation ratios required by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for other Caltrans projects with California tiger salamander impacts.

**BIO-45:** Caltrans will complete a total of up to 5.25 acres of compensatory mitigation for potential impacts to California tiger salamander upland habitat, which includes:

- A 3-to-1 mitigation ratio for permanent impacts (0.05 acre) for a total of 0.15 acre; and
- A 1-to-1 mitigation ratio for temporary impacts (5.1 acres) for a total of 5.1 acres.

Caltrans will determine actual mitigation credits based on an evaluation and survey of all potentially suitable habitat areas within the Area of Potential Impacts and calculation of the value of impacted California Tiger Salamander habitat using the methodology outlined in Searcy and Shaffer (2008). Before starting ground- or vegetation-disturbing project activities, Caltrans will satisfy the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife requirement to provide California Tiger Salamander habitat mitigation

by purchasing credits at a California Endangered Species Act-certified and California Department of Fish and Wildlife-approved Conservation Bank (such as La Purisima Bank) authorized to sell credits for California Tiger Salamander. Details regarding the exact amount of mitigation required will be developed during the Federal Endangered Species Act and California Endangered Species Act consultation process.

*California Red-Legged Frog*

Caltrans anticipates the proposed project will qualify for Federal Endangered Species Act incidental take coverage under the Programmatic Biological Opinion for Projects Funded or Approved under the Federal Highway Administration's Federal Aid Program (United States Fish and Wildlife Service 2011), which includes the following project-specific measures:

**BIO-46:** Only United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologists shall participate in activities associated with the capture, handling, and monitoring of California red-legged frogs.

**BIO-47:** Ground disturbance shall not begin until written approval is received from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service that the biologist is qualified to conduct the work.

**BIO-48:** A United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall survey the project area no more than 48 hours before the start of work activities. If any life stage of the California red-legged frog is found, and these individuals are likely to be killed or injured by work activities, the approved biologist shall be allowed sufficient time to move them from the site before work begins. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall relocate the California red-legged frogs to the shortest distance possible to a location that contains suitable habitat and will not be affected by project construction. The relocation site shall be in the same drainage to the extent practicable. Caltrans shall coordinate with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on the relocation site prior to the capture of any California red-legged frogs.

**BIO-49:** Before any activities begin on a project, a United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall conduct a training session for all construction personnel. At a minimum, the training shall include a description of the California red-legged frog and its habitat, the specific measures that are being implemented to conserve the California red-legged frog for the current project, and the boundaries within which the project may be accomplished. Brochures, books, and briefings may be used in the training session, with a qualified person on hand to answer any questions. The training will also include descriptions of other special-status species with the potential to occur in the project area.

**BIO-50:** A United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall be present at the work site until all California red-legged frogs have been removed, workers have been instructed, and disturbance of habitat has been completed. After this time, Caltrans shall designate a person to monitor on-site compliance with all minimization measures. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall ensure this monitor receives the training outlined in measure BIO-4 above and in the identification of California red-legged frogs. If the monitor or the United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist recommends that work be stopped because California red-legged frogs would be affected in a manner not anticipated by Caltrans and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service during review of the proposed action, they shall notify the resident engineer immediately. The resident engineer shall resolve the situation by requiring that all actions that are causing these effects be stopped. When work is stopped, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service shall be notified as soon as possible.

**BIO-51:** During project activities, all trash that may attract predators or scavengers shall be properly contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and debris shall be removed from work areas.

**BIO-52:** All refueling, maintenance, and staging of equipment and vehicles shall occur at least 60 feet from riparian habitat or water bodies and not in a location from which a spill would drain directly toward aquatic habitat, unless otherwise preapproved by the necessary agencies. The monitor shall ensure that contamination of the habitat does not occur during operations. Before work starts, Caltrans shall ensure that a plan is in place for a prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. All workers shall be informed of the importance of preventing spills and the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.

**BIO-53:** Habitat contours shall be returned to a natural configuration at the end of project construction. This measure shall be implemented in all areas disturbed by project construction, unless the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and Caltrans determine that it is not feasible or modification of original contours would benefit the California red-legged frog.

**BIO-54:** The number of access routes, the size of staging areas, and the total area of activity shall be limited to the minimum necessary to achieve the project. Environmentally Sensitive Areas shall be established to confine access routes and construction areas to the minimum area necessary to complete construction and minimize the impact on California red-legged frog habitat; this goal includes locating access routes and construction areas outside of wetlands and riparian areas to the maximum extent practicable.

**BIO-55:** Caltrans shall attempt to schedule work for times of the year when impacts to the California red-legged frog would be minimal. For example,

work that would affect large pools that may support breeding would be avoided, to the maximum degree practicable, during the breeding season (November through May). Isolated pools that are important to maintain California red-legged frogs through the driest portions of the year would be avoided, to the maximum degree practicable, during the late summer and early fall. Habitat assessments, surveys, and technical assistance between Caltrans and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service during project planning shall be used to assist in scheduling work activities to avoid sensitive habitats during key times of the year.

**BIO-56:** To control sedimentation during and after project completion, Caltrans shall implement Best Management Practices outlined in any authorizations or permits issued under the authorities of the Clean Water Act received for the project. If Best Management Practices are ineffective, Caltrans shall attempt to remedy the situation immediately, in coordination with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

**BIO-57:** If a work site is to be temporarily dewatered by pumping, intakes will be completely screened with wire mesh not larger than 0.2 inch (5 millimeters) to prevent California red-legged frogs from entering the pump system. Water will be released or pumped downstream at an appropriate rate to maintain downstream flows during construction. Upon completion of construction activities, any diversions or barriers to flow will be removed in a manner that would allow flow to resume with the least disturbance to the substrate. Alteration of the stream bed will be minimized to the maximum extent possible; any imported material will be removed from the stream bed upon project completion.

**BIO-58:** Unless approved by the Service, water will not be impounded in a manner that may attract California red-legged frogs.

**BIO-59:** A United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall permanently remove any individuals of exotic species, such as bullfrogs (*Rana catesbeiana*), signal and red swamp crayfish (*Pacifastacus leniusculus*; *Procambarus clarkii*), and centrarchid fishes from the project area to the maximum extent possible. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall be responsible for ensuring his or her activities comply with the California Fish and Game Code.

**BIO-60:** If Caltrans demonstrates that disturbed areas have been restored to conditions that allow them to function as habitat for the California red-legged frog, these areas will not be included in the amount of total habitat permanently disturbed.

**BIO-61:** To ensure that diseases are not conveyed between work sites by the Service-approved biologist, the fieldwork code of practice developed by the Declining Amphibian Populations Task Force will be followed at all times.

**BIO-62:** Project sites will be re-vegetated with an assemblage of native riparian, wetland, and upland vegetation suitable for the area. Locally collected plant materials will be used to the extent practicable. Invasive, exotic plants will be controlled to the maximum extent practicable. This measure will be implemented in all areas disturbed by project construction, unless the Service and Caltrans determine that it is not feasible or practical.

**BIO-63:** Caltrans will not use herbicides as the primary method to control invasive, exotic plants. However, if Caltrans determines that the use of herbicides is the only feasible method for controlling invasive plants at a specific project site, it will implement the following additional protective measures for the California red-legged frog:

- a. Caltrans will not use herbicides during the breeding season for the California red-legged frog.
- b. Caltrans will conduct surveys for the California red-legged frog immediately before the start of any herbicide use. If found, California red-legged frogs will be relocated to suitable habitat far enough from the project area that no direct contact with herbicides will occur.
- c. Giant reed and other invasive plants will be cut and hauled out by hand and then painted with glyphosate or glyphosate-based products, such as Aquamaster® or Rodeo®.
- d. Licensed and experienced Caltrans staff or a licensed and experienced contractor will use a hand-held sprayer for foliar application of Aquamaster® or Rodeo® where large monoculture stands occur at an individual project site.
- e. All precautions will be taken to ensure that no herbicide is applied to native vegetation.
- f. Herbicides will not be applied on or near open water surfaces (no closer than 60 feet from open water).
- g. Foliar applications of herbicide will not occur when wind speeds are in excess of 3 miles per hour.
- h. No herbicides will be applied within 24 hours of forecasted rain.
- i. Application of all herbicides will be done by qualified Caltrans staff or contractors to ensure that overspray is minimized, that all application is made in accordance with label recommendations, and with the implementation of all required and reasonable safety measures. A safe dye will be added to the mixture to visually denote treated sites. Application of herbicides will be consistent with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Pesticide Programs, Endangered Species Protection Program County bulletins.
- j. All herbicides, fuels, lubricants, and equipment will be stored, poured, or refilled at least 60 feet from riparian habitat or water bodies in a location

where a spill would not drain directly toward aquatic habitat. Caltrans will ensure that contamination of habitat does not occur during such operations. Before the start of work, Caltrans will ensure that a plan is in place for a prompt and effective response to accidental spills. All workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.

**BIO-64:** Upon completion of the project, Caltrans shall ensure that a Project Completion Report is completed and provided to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, following the template provided with the Programmatic Biological Opinion.

#### California Red-Legged Frog Mitigation

**BIO-65:** Temporary impacts to upland/dispersal habitat will be mitigated at a 1-to-1 ratio (acreage) and a 3-to-1 ratio (acreage) for permanent impacts to upland/dispersal habitat. The method of mitigation (i.e., on-site mitigation, off-site mitigation, mitigation credits, invasive species control, combination of methods, etc.) will be determined during the design phase of the project. Additionally, compensatory mitigation measures **BIO-33**, **BIO-34**, and **BIO-42** will mitigate impacts to California red-legged frog upland dispersal habitat.

#### Western Spadefoot Toad

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for potential impacts to the western spadefoot toad upland habitat resulting from the project:

Avoidance and minimization measures **BIO-35** through **BIO-44** and **BIO-46** through **BIO-64** apply to the western spadefoot toad. Mitigation Measures **BIO-45** and **BIO-65** also apply.

#### Southwestern Pond Turtle

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for potential impacts to the southwestern pond turtle upland habitat resulting from the project:

**BIO-66:** Preconstruction Survey: No more than 24 hours before the date of initial ground disturbance and vegetation clearing, a United States Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife-approved biologist with experience in the identification of all life stages of the southwestern pond turtle will conduct a pre-construction survey at the project locations. The survey will consist of walking the project limits and within the project site to determine the possible presence of the species. The approved biologist will investigate all areas (such as small woody debris, refuse, burrows, etc.) that could be used by southwestern pond turtles for migration, nesting, sheltering.

**BIO-67:** Before any activities begin, the approved biologist will conduct a Worker Environmental Awareness Training course for all persons employed or otherwise working on the project site before performing any work on-site. The WEAT will include a discussion of the biology of the southwestern pond turtle, its protected status, proximity to the project site, project-specific avoidance and minimization measures, and the implications of violating the FESA and permit conditions. Upon completion of the training course, employees will sign a form stating they attended the course and understand all protection measures.

**BIO-68:** Biological Monitoring – The approved biologist will monitor construction activities where pond turtles are present or assumed present. The approved biologist will be present during all initial ground disturbance at locations immediately adjacent to or within habitat that supports populations of southwestern pond turtles.

**BIO-69:** Relocation – To mitigate potential impacts resulting from project construction, individuals will be relocated by the approved biologist to a nearby location outside of the construction area with suitable habitat.

Avoidance and minimization measures **BIO-1** through **BIO-14**, **BIO-35** through **BIO-44**, and **BIO-46** through **BIO-64** apply.

#### Southwestern Pond Turtle Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures **BIO-33**, **BIO-34**, **BIO-45**, and **BIO-65** also apply.

Northern California legless lizard and coast horned lizard

**BIO-70:** If coast horned lizards or Northern California legless lizards are detected in the project limits during preconstruction surveys or construction, individuals will be relocated by a qualified biologist to a nearby location outside of the construction area with suitable habitat.

Additionally, avoidance and minimization measures **BIO-35** through **BIO-44** and **BIO-46** through **BIO-64** apply.

#### Coast Patch-Nosed Snake and Two-Striped Garter Snake

The following avoidance measures will be implemented to minimize and avoid impacts to the coast patch-nosed snake and two-striped garter snake:

**BIO-71:** A qualified biologist would conduct a preconstruction survey before the start of ground disturbance at locations with suitable coast patch-nosed snake and two-striped garter snake habitat.

**BIO-72:** If present, a qualified biologist would relocate individuals to a nearby location outside the construction area with suitable habitat.



*Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and Least Bell's Vireo*

The following measures will be implemented to minimize and avoid impacts to least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher:

**BIO-73:** Focused surveys following United States Fish and Wildlife Service survey guidelines for least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher shall be completed to determine the presence/absence of least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher wherever suitable habitat is present within 500 feet of the limits of construction. Surveys shall be conducted within one year before the start of construction activities. If the least Bell's vireo and the southwestern willow flycatcher are detected during these surveys, formal Section 7 consultation will be initiated.

**BIO-74:** Caltrans will provide the United States Fish and Wildlife Service with a report detailing Least bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher survey efforts for the breeding season before construction.

**BIO-75:** Before any activities begin, the approved biologist will conduct a Worker Environmental Awareness Training course for all persons employed or otherwise working on the project site before performing any work on-site. The WEAT course will include a discussion of the biology of the least Bell's vireo and the southwestern willow flycatcher, their protected status, proximity to the project site, project-specific avoidance and minimization measures, and the implications of violating FESA and permit conditions. Upon completion of the training course, employees will sign a form stating they attended the course and understand all protection measures.

**BIO-76:** Before construction, vegetation removal shall be scheduled to occur from October 1 to January 31, outside the typical nesting bird season, if possible, to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds. If tree removal or other construction activities are proposed to occur within 100 feet of potential habitat during the nesting season (February 1 to September 30), a nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than five calendar days before construction.

**BIO-77:** If least Bell's vireo or southwestern willow flycatcher are observed within 100 feet of the project area during construction or during the preconstruction surveys, all project activities shall stop immediately, and the relevant resource agencies shall be consulted. Development of additional avoidance and minimization measures will occur as necessary in coordination with the pertinent agencies.

*Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and Least Bell's Vireo Mitigation*

Mitigation measures **BIO-33** and **BIO-34** will mitigate the impacts to least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher habitat. Impacts to vegetation would be offset by replacement plantings within the project limits, which will also replace in-kind nesting habitat.

Tri-Colored Blackbird and Nesting Birds

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented to minimize impacts to nesting migratory birds:

**BIO-78:** Caltrans will schedule vegetation removal between October 1 and January 31, outside the typical nesting bird season, as feasible. If construction activities are proposed to occur within 100 feet of potential habitat during the nesting season (February 1 to September 30), a nesting bird survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than three days before construction. Partially built nests may only be removed if they have been monitored by a qualified biologist and determined to be inactive. If an active nest is found, a qualified biologist will determine an appropriate buffer based on the habits and needs of the species. The buffer area will be avoided until a qualified biologist has determined that juveniles have fledged and are no longer dependent on the nest. If a tricolored blackbird is detected within the project limits or within 250 feet of construction activities, a qualified biologist will determine whether a nesting colony is present in the area. If nesting tricolored blackbirds are confirmed, California Department of Fish and Wildlife will be notified, and a buffer zone for the colony will be defined. No take of tricolored blackbird will occur.

**BIO-79:** During the non-nesting season (October 1 to January 31), methods to deter new nests on the bridge will be implemented to prevent new nests from forming during project activities. Exact methods of deterrence will be determined during the design phase. Removal of nests as they are beginning to form may be conducted as a last resort to further prevent nesting during project activities. There will be no removal of fully formed active nests.

**BIO-80:** Active bird nests must not be disturbed, and eggs or young of birds covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code must not be killed, destroyed, injured, or harassed at any time.

Tri-Colored Blackbird and Nesting Birds Mitigation

No additional mitigation is proposed beyond the replacement plantings within the project limits, which will also replace in-kind nesting habitat.

Pallid Bat, Western Red Bat, Silver-Haired Bat, Yuma Myotis, and Other Roosting Bats

**BIO-81:** Tree removal shall be scheduled to occur from September 2 to January 31, outside the typical bat maternity roosting season, if possible, to avoid potential impacts to roosting bats.

**BIO-82:** If tree removal or other construction activities are proposed to occur within 100 feet of potential habitat during the bat maternity roosting season (February 1 to September 1), a bat roost survey shall be conducted by a biologist determined qualified by Caltrans within 14 days before construction.

The biologist(s) conducting the preconstruction surveys will also identify the nature of the bat utilization (i.e., no roosting, night roost, day roost, maternity roost) and determine if passive bat exclusion will be necessary and feasible. If an active day roost is found, a qualified Caltrans biologist shall determine an appropriate buffer based on the habits and needs of the species. The buffer area shall be avoided until a qualified biologist has determined that roosting activity has stopped or exclusionary methods have successfully evicted roosting bats.

**BIO-83:** If bats are found by a qualified biologist to be maternity roosting, the roost(s) will be designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Area, and all construction activities shall be avoided within 100 feet until the end of the maternity roosting season (beginning of September) or until pups are volant (capable of flight).

*Pallid Bat, Western Red Bat, Silver-Haired Bat, Yuma Myotis, and Other Roosting Bats Mitigation*

With the above avoidance and minimization efforts specific to roosting bats as well as compensatory mitigation measures **BIO-33** and **BIO-34** for impacts to vegetation, no additional mitigation is proposed for roosting bats.

*San Diego Desert Woodrat*

**BIO-84:** Before initial ground disturbance, a preconstruction visual survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist within suitable woodrat habitat to determine the presence of woodrat nests.

**BIO-85:** If woodrat nests are present within the area of construction activities, an ESA with a 25-foot buffer around each nest will be established to avoid nests.

**BIO-86:** Construction activities requiring grading or vegetation removal within the 25-foot protective buffer should only occur under the supervision of a qualified biologist.

**BIO-87:** If project activities cannot avoid removing the nest, then it should be dismantled by hand before grading or vegetation removal activities, under the supervision of a qualified biologist. Dismantling shall occur during the non-breeding season (October 1 through December 31). If young are encountered during nest dismantling, the dismantling activity will stop and nest material will be replaced back on the nest, and the nest should be left alone and rechecked in two to three weeks to see if the young are out of the nest or capable of being out on their own (as determined by a qualified biologist); once the young can fend for themselves, the nest dismantling can continue. Where appropriate, nest material will be relocated to a suitable location nearby.

San Diego Desert Woodrat Mitigation

No mitigation measures are required for this species.

American Badger

The following avoidance and minimization measures are recommended:

**BIO-88:** No less than 14 days and no more than 30 days before the beginning of ground disturbance and/or construction activities, a qualified biologist shall conduct a survey to determine if any American badger dens are present at the project site. If dens are found, they shall be monitored for badger activity. Potentially active dens will be monitored with tracking medium or infrared cameras for three consecutive days to determine the current use. If no badger activity is observed during this period, then the den will be excavated by hand or carefully with equipment or blocked during the duration of construction under the direction of a qualified biologist to preclude (prevent) subsequent use. If American badger activity is observed at a den, Caltrans will coordinate with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for suitable buffer implementation or exclusion methods.

**BIO-89:** Observations of occupied badger dens or American badgers within the project area shall be submitted to the California Natural Diversity Database upon project completion.

**BIO-90:** No rodent control pesticides shall be used, including anticoagulant rodenticides such as brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difethialone, and difenacoum. This is necessary to minimize the possibility of primary or secondary poisoning of American badgers or other special-status species.

American Badger Mitigation

No mitigation measures are required for the American badger.

### 2.1.5 Cultural Resources

Caltrans applies standard specifications to all projects in the event of the discovery of unanticipated cultural materials. If cultural materials are discovered during project construction, all earth-moving activity within and around the immediate discovery area will be diverted until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find.

If human remains are discovered, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities shall stop in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the county coroner should be contacted. If the remains are thought by the coroner to be of Native American, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, who, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, will then notify the Most Likely Descendant. At this time, the person who discovers the remains will contact Caltrans District 5 Environmental Branch staff so that they may work with the Most Likely Descendant on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

Considering the information in the Historical Property Survey Report dated October 2024 and the Archaeological Survey dated October 2024, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Cultural Resources
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<b>No Impact</b>
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.6 Energy

Caltrans incorporates energy efficiency, conservation, and climate change measures into transportation planning, project development, design, operations, and maintenance of transportation facilities, fleets, buildings, and equipment to minimize the use of fuel supplies and energy sources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Because the project is not a capacity-increasing project, the operation will not increase energy usage. Energy usage will be required during construction but minimized whenever possible by recycling materials and implementing

greenhouse gas reduction strategies. Considering the measures in the greenhouse gas section, the following significance determinations have been made:

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Energy</b>
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.7 Geology and Soils

According to the California Department of Conservation, the section of the project where the Robinson Bridge will be replaced lies on the Santa Ynez River Fault Line, which is a Quaternary Fault. The project site is not in a landslide-prone area. The project will not increase erosion or result in the loss of topsoil.

Considering the information in the Paleontological Identification Report dated February 7, 2025, and the Preliminary Geotechnical Design Report dated January 17, 2025, the following significance determinations have been made:

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils</b>
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.	<b>No Impact</b>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<b>No Impact</b>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<b>No Impact</b>
iv) Landslides?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils
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-site or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<b>No Impact</b>

### ***Affected Environment***

The project locations are in the Santa Ynez Mountain Range, within the Transverse Ranges Province of California. State Route 246 traverses the Santa Rita Valley, which is generally composed of quaternary alluvial deposits associated with valley and stream channels. The Orcutt Sands may be encountered along the toe of hillslopes, which consist of aeolian sand and, locally, basal pebble layers.

The soils around the proposed project culverts have low susceptibility to erosion, as indicated by their low potassium content, coarse texture, and high clay content. Further information on the soil types at the project site can be viewed in the geotechnical reports and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Survey Report. Within the project site, liquefaction potential may exist at the culvert rehabilitation sites since they are within the floodplain deposits of Holocene-age gravel and sand. The culvert sites are not in any mapped California Geological Survey liquefaction zones.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

The project will include grading along the approach roads to the new Robinson Bridge, below the Robinson Bridge, and around some of the culverts that will be rehabilitated. Best Management Practices will be used during project construction to minimize erosion to the extent feasible. The proposed project has liquefaction potential around some of the proposed culverts, and this will be analyzed using site-specific geotechnical investigations in the next phase of the project.

### 2.1.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Considering the information in the Climate Change Report dated November 6, 2024, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Greenhouse Gas Emissions
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>

#### ***Affected Environment***

California has been innovative and proactive in addressing greenhouse gas emissions and climate change by passing multiple Senate and Assembly bills and Executive Orders.

In 2005, Executive Order S-3-05 initially set a goal to reduce California's greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050, with interim reduction targets. Later Executive Orders and Assembly and Senate bills refined interim targets and codified the emissions reduction goals and strategies. The California Air Resources Board was directed to create a climate change scoping plan and implement rules to achieve "real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases." Ongoing greenhouse gas emissions reduction was also mandated in Health and Safety Code Section 38551(b). In 2022, the California Climate Crisis Act was passed, establishing state policy to reduce statewide human-caused greenhouse gas emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels, achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045, and achieve and maintain negative emissions thereafter.

The proposed project is along State Route 246, from State Route 1 at post mile 9.55 in the city of Lompoc to post mile R20.90 near the city of Buellton. State Route 246 is the primary transportation route between Santa Ynez, Lompoc, and Buellton, where it intersects with U.S. Route 101. Most of the project is surrounded by rural farmland; however, the project area is urban from post miles 9.55 to 9.7 in the Lompoc area. Within the city of Lompoc, the project area has a well-developed road and street network with residential and commercial buildings. The route in the project area is a major arterial route and is heavily used during peak hours, especially in the urban area. The City of Lompoc Transit runs public transportation operations throughout Lompoc and Buellton within the project limits. The project area is in the Santa Ynez Valley within the Santa Ynez River Watershed. The geography along the project area of State Route 246 is a mix of flat topography intermixed with



slight hills. The primary crops grown in the region include asparagus, broccoli, and cauliflower, which are ideally suited for the area's temperate Mediterranean climate. Annual temperature averages a high of 68 degrees Fahrenheit and a low of 49 degrees Fahrenheit; additionally, the average annual rainfall is 16 inches.

## ***Environmental Consequences***

### ***Operational Emissions***

The purpose of the proposed project is to rehabilitate or replace existing assets and improve multimodal operations; it will not increase the vehicle capacity of the roadway. Because the project would not increase the number of travel lanes or modify vehicle capacity on State Route 246, no increase in vehicle miles traveled is anticipated. This type of project generally causes minimal or no increase in operational greenhouse gas emissions. While some greenhouse gas emissions during the construction period would be unavoidable, no increase in operational greenhouse gas emissions is expected.

### ***Construction Emissions***

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

The use of long-life pavement, improved traffic management plans, and changes in materials can also help offset greenhouse gas emissions produced during construction by allowing longer intervals between maintenance and rehabilitation activities.

Construction climate change emissions were estimated using the Caltrans Construction Emissions Tool (CAL-CET) using default settings for a pavement preservation project. For example, the estimated average carbon dioxide emissions are 605 tons per year, and the construction phase is approximately 458 working days. Additionally, the estimated average carbon dioxide equivalent emissions are about 1,217 tons generated over the 458-day construction period. Note that these estimates are based on assumptions made during the environmental planning phase of the project and are considered a “ballpark” of energy usage.

The following is a list of standard specifications all Caltrans projects use to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- Sections 7-1.02A and 7-1.02C, Emissions Reduction, require contractors to comply with all laws applicable to the project and to certify they are aware of and will comply with all California Air Resources Board emission reduction regulations.
- Section 14-9.02, Air Pollution Control, requires contractors to comply with all air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes. Certain common regulations, such as equipment idling restrictions, that reduce construction vehicle emissions also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Section 14-10 Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling. Recycling greater quantities of construction waste will help offset greenhouse gas emissions.
- Section 12, Temporary Traffic Control, outlines the standards for properly implementing traffic controls during construction.
- Standard Specifications Section 21-2.02K, Compost, will guide the inclusion of compost or mulch in the landscape plan where it is appropriate. Landscaping components, such as mulch and compost, improve carbon sequestration rates in soils and reduce organic waste.

***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

The following measures are proposed to help minimize greenhouse gas emissions generated from construction activities.

**GHG-1:** Limit idling to 5 minutes for delivery and dump trucks and other diesel-powered equipment when not in active operation.

**GHG-2:** Schedule delivery truck trips outside peak morning and evening commute hours.

**GHG-3:** For improved fuel efficiency from construction equipment:

- Maintain equipment in proper tune and working condition.
- Use the right-sized equipment for the job.
- Use equipment with new technologies.

**GHG-4:** When feasible, use alternative fuels such as renewable diesel for construction equipment.

**GHG-5:** Supplement existing construction environmental training with information on methods to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to construction.

**GHG-6:** When feasible, produce Hot Mix Asphalt using warm mix technology.

**GHG-7:** Use Rubberized Hot Mix Asphalt to lower the rolling resistance of highway surfaces as much as possible while still maintaining design and safety standards.

**GHG-8:** Use Partial Depth Recycling to recycle existing pavement where feasible.

### 2.1.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Considering the information in the 0-Phase Initial Site Assessment dated January 17, 2023, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
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?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<b>No Impact</b>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<b>No Impact</b>

### ***Affected Environment***

#### ***Records Search***

A review of the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List (“Cortese List” pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5), including the State Water Resources Control Board’s GeoTracker database and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control’s EnviroStor database, as well as environmental records (e.g., California Geologic Energy Management Division, Caltrans files), was performed on January 17, 2023. Three known contaminated sites are identified on the GeoTracker database within 1,000 feet of the intersection of State Route 1 and State Route 246, which serves as the beginning of the project limits. The three known contaminated sites include the following:

1. The former Grefco-North property at State Route 1 and State Route 246 (T10000005691, case closed in 2014).
2. The Grefco property at 300 12th Street (T0608300028, case closed in 2011).
3. The Grefco Minerals Plant at 333 East Highway 246 (T10000005698, case closed in 2014).

Each site that had petroleum-related contamination has since been remediated.

Contamination at the former Grefco-North property and Grefco North Minerals Plant occurred along the southern border of the parcel next to State Route 246 as a result of petroleum fuel-related contamination from leaking underground storage tanks. The site was remediated via the excavation and removal of sand and soil contaminated with petroleum products in 2004. Any

remnant contamination still present on the site has likely attenuated (weakened) over the last 21 years. Contamination associated with this case is unlikely to impact the proposed project.

Contamination at the former Grefco Minerals plant occurred along the northern border of the parcel as a result of oil leakage from hydraulic equipment, over 600 feet from Caltrans' right-of-way. Former contamination from this site would not impact the proposed project.

Contamination at the Grefco property occurred closer to Caltrans' right-of-way along State Route 246, next to and possibly within areas proposed for a temporary construction easement and permanent easement. The site has been fully remediated through soil excavation and disposal, soil excavation and bioremediation, extraction and treatment of groundwater, and injection of hydrogen peroxide. It is expected that soil and groundwater immediately next to and within the proposed easements have been fully remediated and no significant contaminants remain. Therefore, the Grefco property is not expected to pose a risk or impact the proposed project. If the size or location of the proposed easements changes, case documents from this site should be reviewed again to confirm these conclusions.

One additional GeoTracker site is located within 1,000 feet of post mile R17.5: the Santa Rita Ridge Estates site located along Campbell Road off State Route 246 (T10000013324, case closed in 2009). Contamination occurred as a result of a ranch burn dump site. A total of 1,101 tons of contaminated soil was excavated and removed in 2007. Any remnant contamination still present on the site has likely attenuated (weakened) over the last 18 years. Contamination associated with this case is unlikely to impact the proposed project.

#### *Aerially Deposited Lead*

The historical use of leaded gasoline in automobiles has resulted in soils along roadways throughout California containing elevated concentrations of lead. Soil with lead concentrations exceeding stipulated thresholds must be managed under the July 1, 2016, Aerially Deposited Lead Agreement between Caltrans and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. The Aerially Deposited Lead Agreement outlines which soils can be safely reused within the project limits and which soils must be exported and disposed of as hazardous waste. Caltrans has developed standard special provisions to comply with the 2016 Aerially Deposited Lead Agreement and to ensure the proper management, reuse, and disposal of Aerially Deposited Lead-contaminated soils.

Aerially Deposited Lead may be present within the project limits because there are unpaved surfaces next to the highway at each work location included in the project scope (Aerially Deposited Lead does not accumulate beneath pavement).

### *Yellow Thermoplastic or Traffic Stripe*

Yellow traffic paint purchased by Caltrans before 1997 contained high concentrations of lead. The application of yellow thermoplastic material containing high concentrations of lead continued until at least 2004 to 2006. The lead concentrations in the older yellow paint and yellow thermoplastic are high enough to make these hazardous materials when they are removed.

Older hazardous yellow traffic stripes within the project limits have already been removed by projects through this portion of the State Route 246 corridor, specifically by project EA 05-0S400 in 2010.

### *Naturally Occurring Asbestos*

Naturally occurring asbestos refers to silicate minerals that occur as asbestiform fibers and are found as a natural component of soils or rocks. Disturbance of rocks containing naturally occurring asbestos can release asbestos fibers into the air, which pose a human health risk when inhaled. In District 5, naturally occurring asbestos can be found within serpentine and ultramafic rocks of the Coast Ranges and within fault zones.

A review of geologic mapping and mineral hazard maps indicates that naturally occurring asbestos is not present near this project.

### *Lead-Containing Paint and Asbestos-Containing Materials*

Bridges and structures may have materials with lead-containing paint and asbestos.

### *Treated Wood Waste*

Caltrans guardrail supports and signposts often consist of wood that has been treated with chemical preservatives to prevent rot or insect attack. Treated wood waste is considered to be a California hazardous waste but is subject to alternative management standards under Health and Safety Code Section 25230 that allow for simplified management and transport of treated wood waste and disposal at non-hazardous waste landfills that meet certain requirements.

Guardrails, three-beam barriers, and signs with wooden posts are present in the project limits.

### *Electrical Equipment*

Removal and disposal of electrical equipment may generate hazardous waste or require special handling. Electrical equipment could include mercury-containing switches, sensors, or timers; ballasts with polychlorinated biphenyl; and other electronic wastes or electrical components that require special handling. Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-11.15 contains the requirements for managing and disposing of electrical equipment, including

instructions for packaging and transporting to an appropriately permitted disposal facility.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

#### ***Aerially Deposited Lead***

Because soils will be exported as part of this project, a site-specific aerially deposited lead study will be required to document the lead concentrations in the soil at project work locations. The aerially deposited lead study will be completed during the project design phase once the limits of excavation are known. The appropriate Caltrans Standard Special Provisions for aerially deposited lead soil management will be determined during the project design phase. Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 7-1.02K(6)(j)(iii) will be included in the construction contract if analysis reveals that excess soil is nonhazardous and unregulated per the terms of the 2016 Aerially Deposited Lead Agreement between Caltrans and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control below 80 milligrams per kilogram total lead and 5 milligrams per liter soluble lead. Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-11.08 and/or 14-11.09 will be included if excess soil is determined to have lead concentrations greater than 80 milligrams per kilogram of total lead and 5 milligrams per liter of soluble lead. A lead compliance plan will be required.

#### ***Yellow Thermoplastic or Traffic Stripe***

Residue from the removal of the existing traffic paint and thermoplastic within the project limits will be a nonhazardous waste because the potentially hazardous stripe was previously removed. The appropriate Caltrans Standard Special Provisions for the removal of traffic stripes and pavement markings will be determined during the project design phase once the removal method is known (e.g., Caltrans Standard Special Provisions Section 84-9.03B for separate removal of the paint/stripe or Caltrans Standard Special Provisions Section 36-4 for cold planing or grinding).

A Lead Compliance Plan will also need to be developed and implemented by the construction contractor.

#### ***Naturally Occurring Asbestos***

Because geologic mapping and mineral hazard maps indicate that naturally occurring asbestos is not present near this project, naturally occurring asbestos will not be an issue for this project.

#### ***Lead-Containing Paint and Asbestos-Containing Materials***

Since the Santa Ynez River Bridge, or Robinson Bridge (Bridge Number 51-0128), will be removed and replaced, a task order will need to be prepared to sample for lead-containing paint and asbestos-containing materials. The task order will be performed during the project's design phase, and if lead-containing paint or asbestos-containing material is discovered, appropriate

specifications for handling and disposal of these materials will be included in the construction contract.

#### *Treated Wood Waste*

Guardrails, thrie beam barriers, and signs with wooden posts will either be upgraded or replaced as part of this project. Therefore, Caltrans Standard Special Provisions Section 14-11.14 should be included in the construction contract for proper management and disposal of treated wood waste.

#### *Electrical Equipment*

No electrical equipment will be replaced or disposed of as part of the project.

#### **Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**

The Caltrans Standard Specifications will be sufficient to handle any routine hazardous waste issues that may be encountered during construction.

### **2.1.10 Hydrology and Water Quality**

Considering the information in the Floodplain Evaluation Report dated March 3, 2025, and the Water Quality Report dated April 30, 2025, the following significance determinations have been made.

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality</b>
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water or groundwater quality?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<b>No Impact</b>
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-site or off-site;	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-site or off-site;	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>



Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality
(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	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<b>No Impact</b>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<b>No Impact</b>

### ***Affected Environment***

The project is located within the Santa Ynez Hydrologic Unit and spans over:

1. The Lompoc Hydrologic Area and an undefined Hydrologic Sub-Area (Number 314.10).
2. Santa Rita Hydrologic Area and an undefined Hydrologic Sub-Area (Number 314.20).

The receiving water bodies for this project are Santa Rosa Creek (Santa Barbara County) and the Santa Ynez River (Cachuma Lake to below the city of Lompoc). The Robinson Bridge, which would be replaced as part of this project, would go over the Santa Ynez River. The Santa Ynez River is 303(d) listed as impaired with detailed impurities. The impurities in the Santa Ynez River are Benthic Community Effects, Molybdenum, Oxygen (Dissolved), Sedimentation/Siltation, Sodium, Temperature (Water), Total Dissolved Solids, and Toxicity.

The project is located within the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin. The groundwater elevation is about 75 to 80 feet, about 2 to 10 feet below river bottom elevations.

The project is not located within the limits of areas of special biological significance. The project is not in a moderate or high Significant Trash Generating Area. Also, there are no existing treatment Best Management Practices within this project's limits. The project lies within the Santa Ynez River but does not raise the base flood elevation or alter the (100-year) floodplain.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

Currently, the total proposed disturbed soil area across the project area is 11.49 acres, which will be used for the Construction General Permit compliance. This area accounts for all disturbed soil associated with the removal, modification, and replacement of structures and associated contractor staging and stockpile locations. As a result, the proposed project could temporarily increase the sediment-laden flow to the receiving waters. However, these temporary impacts to the receiving waters can be minimized by implementing temporary Best Management Practices that will be included in the contractor-supplied and department-approved Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

The project will produce 8,270 square feet of net impervious surface, which will, in turn, increase the amount of stormwater runoff, which has the potential to affect receiving water quality. The nature of these impacts depends on the uses and flow rate or volume of the receiving water, rainfall characteristics, and highway characteristics. Heavy metals associated with vehicle tire and brake wear, oil and grease, and exhaust emissions are the primary pollutants associated with transportation corridors. However, in the presence of effective combinations of temporary and permanent erosion and sediment controls, these impacts are anticipated to be minimal.

Temporary and permanent disturbances to aquatic resources are anticipated to take place. Construction of the new bridges will also require clear water diversion from the river. Dewatering Best Management Practices will be implemented in accordance with the Caltrans Field Guide to Construction Site Dewatering and procedures outlined in the Construction Site Best Management Practices Manual. However, specific details on the nature of any diversion(s) are still under discussion with the appropriate resource agencies.

Earthwork, excavation, and pile-driving operations are not expected to encounter groundwater during construction activities. Hence, no temporary groundwater impacts are expected at the time of this document. No permanent impacts on groundwater are expected with the proposed project scope.

The project would not contribute to the cumulative impacts within the Santa Ynez River Watershed.

### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

#### ***Temporary Soil Stabilization***

**WQ-1:** Minimize active Disturbed Soil Areas during the rainy season using scheduling techniques.

**WQ-2:** Preserve existing vegetation to the maximum extent feasible.

**WQ-3:** Implement temporary protective cover/erosion control on all non-active Disturbed Soil Areas and soil stockpiles.

**WQ-4:** Control erosive forces of stormwater runoff with effective storm flow management such as temporary concentrated flow conveyance devices, earthen dikes, drainage swales, lined ditches, outlet protection/velocity dissipation devices, and slope drains as determined feasible.

*Temporary Sediment Controls*

**WQ-5:** Implement linear sediment controls such as fiber rolls, check dams, or gravel bag berms on all active and non-active Disturbed Soil Areas during the rainy season.

**WQ-6:** To further help prevent sediment discharge, stabilized construction site entrances, temporary drainage inlet protection, and street sweeping and vacuuming will be necessary.

**WQ-7:** Implement appropriate wind erosion controls year-round.

*Non-Stormwater Management*

**WQ-8:** The appropriate non-stormwater Best Management Practices will be implemented year-round as follows:

**WQ-9:** Water conservation practices are implemented on all construction sites and wherever water is used.

**WQ-10:** Paving and grinding procedures are implemented where paving, surfacing, resurfacing, grinding, or saw cutting may pollute stormwater runoff or discharge to the storm drain system or watercourses.

**WQ-11:** Procedures and practices designed for construction contractors to recognize illicit connections or illegally dumped or discharged materials on a construction site and report incidents to the resident engineer.

**WQ-12:** The following activities must be performed at least 100 feet from concentrated flows of stormwater, drainage courses, and inlets if within the floodplain and at least 50 feet if outside of the floodplain: stockpiling materials, storing equipment and liquid waste containers, washing vehicles or equipment, and fueling and maintaining vehicles and equipment.

**WQ-13:** Pile driving operations will be part of construction activities.

**WQ-14:** Concrete curing will be used in the construction of structures such as buildings, sidewalks, and retaining walls. Concrete curing includes the use of both chemical and water methods. Proper procedures will minimize the pollution of runoff during concrete curing.

**WQ-15:** Since the project involves structure demolition/removal over the Santa Ynez River, proper procedures will be implemented to minimize pollution during these activities.

**WQ-16:** The following construction site Best Management Practices are anticipated to be bid items for this project:

- Job Site Management
- Prepare Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program
- Rain Event Action Plan
- Stormwater Sampling and Analysis Day
- Stormwater Annual Report
- Move In/Move Out (Temporary Erosion Control)
- Temporary Hydraulic Mulch (Bonded Fiber Matrix)
- Temporary Check Dam
- Temporary Drainage Inlet Protection
- Temporary Fiber Roll
- Temporary Large Sediment Barrier
- Temporary Construction Entrance
- Street Sweeping
- Temporary Concrete Washout
- Temporary Fence (type Environmentally Sensitive Area)

The following project features and standardized measures implemented by the project will minimize any temporary or permanent water quality impacts created by the project:

**WQ-17:** The project will comply with the provisions of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for the State of California, Department of Transportation, Order Number 2022-0033-Division of Water Quality, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Number CAS000003, and any subsequent permits in effect at the time of construction.

**WQ-18:** The project will comply with the provisions of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit) Order Number 2022-0057-Division of Water Quality, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Number CAS000002, and any subsequent permits in effect at the time of construction.

**WQ-19:** The project will comply with the Construction General Permit by preparing and implementing a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan or Water Pollution Control Plan to address all construction-related activities, equipment, and materials that have the potential to impact water quality for the appropriate risk level. The Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan or the Water Pollution Control Plan will identify the sources of pollutants that may affect the quality of stormwater and include Best Management Practices to control the pollutants, such as sediment control, catch basin inlet protection, construction materials management, and non-stormwater Best Management Practices. All work must conform to the Construction Site Best Management Practices requirements specified in the latest edition of the Stormwater Quality Handbooks: Construction Site Best Management Practices Manual to control and minimize the impacts of construction and construction-related activities, materials, and pollutants on the watershed. These include but are not limited to temporary sediment control, temporary soil stabilization, scheduling, waste management, materials handling, and other non-stormwater Best Management Practices.

**WQ-20:** Design Pollution Prevention Best Management Practices will be implemented, such as preservation of existing vegetation, slope/surface protection systems (permanent soil stabilization), concentrated flow conveyance systems such as ditches, berms, dikes, and swales, overside drains, flared end sections, and outlet protection/velocity dissipation devices.

**WQ-21:** Caltrans-approved treatment Best Management Practices will be implemented consistent with the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for the State of California, Department of Transportation, Order Number 2022-0033-Division of Water Quality, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Number CAS000003, and any subsequent permits in effect at the time of construction. Treatment Best Management Practices may include biofiltration strips, biofiltration swales, infiltration basins, detention devices, dry weather flow diversion, Gross Solids Removal Devices, media filters, bioretention, Open Graded Friction Course, wet basins, and other Best Management Practices.

### **2.1.11 Land Use and Planning**

Existing or future land use within or next to the project limits on State Route 246 would not change as a result of this project or divide the established

communities. This project would not conflict with the City of Lompoc 2030 General Plan and would help to bring the goals laid out in the plans to fruition, such as improving pedestrian mobility and upgrading the Robinson Bridge. Considering this information, the following significance determinations have been made:

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Land Use and Planning</b>
a) Physically divide an established community?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.12 Mineral Resources

According to mapping from the California Department of Conservation, the project is in disturbed areas and will not impact any known mineral resources.

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Mineral Resources</b>
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>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.13 Noise

Considering the information in the Noise Technical Memo dated October 11, 2023, the following significance determinations have been made:

<b>Question—Would the project result in:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Noise</b>
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>Less Than Significant Impact</b>

Question—Would the project result in:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Noise
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<b>No Impact</b>
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<b>No Impact</b>

### ***Affected Environment***

The project spans about 11.35 miles along the Santa Ynez Valley, between Lompoc and Buellton, with the project limits ending at Domingos Road, where State Route 246 splits into two separate segments. From post mile 9.55 to post mile R20.90, the proposed improvements cross through the east of Lompoc, with commercial and industrial businesses, structures, and farming immediately next to the roadway. From post mile 9.7 to post mile R20.90, the land is mostly used for farming and other industrial purposes.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

#### ***Operation***

Since no additional lanes or capacity are being added to the highway, no change in long-term noise is expected.

#### ***Construction***

Local noise levels in the vicinity of construction will experience a short-term increase due to construction activities. The amount of construction noise will vary with the particular activities and associated models and types of equipment used by the contractor. Caltrans policy states that normal construction equipment should not emit noise levels greater than 86 A-weighted decibels at 50 feet from the source from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Since construction would be temporary and intermittent, conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications, and because local noise levels are significantly influenced by existing local traffic noise, the project's potential temporary noise impact will be minimal. However, nighttime work will be required. To minimize impacts on residents' normal nighttime sleep activities, it is recommended that construction work be done during the day whenever possible. When nighttime construction is necessary, the noisiest construction activities should be done as early in the evening as possible. Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02 requires the contractor to control and monitor noise resulting from work activities and not to exceed 86 A-weighted decibel maximum noise level at 50 feet from the job site from 9

p.m. to 6 a.m. The following minimization measures shall be implemented, as provided below, to reduce noise impacts.

***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Noise Abatement Measures***

**NOI-1:** Notify the public in advance of the construction schedule when construction noise and upcoming construction activities likely to produce an adverse noise environment are expected. This notice shall be given two weeks in advance. Notice should be published in local news media of the dates and duration of proposed construction activity. The District 5 Public Information Office posts notice of the proposed construction and potential community impacts after receiving notice from the resident engineer.

**NOI-2:** Shield loud pieces of stationary construction equipment if complaints are received.

**NOI-3:** Shield loud pieces of stationary construction equipment with sound barriers if complaints are received.

**NOI-4:** Locate portable generators, air compressors, etc., as far away from sensitive noise receptors as feasible.

**NOI-5:** Limit grouping major pieces of equipment operating in one area to the greatest extent feasible.

**NOI-6:** Use newer equipment that is quieter and ensure that all equipment items have the manufacturers' recommended noise abatement measures, such as mufflers, engine covers, and engine vibration isolators, intact and operational. Internal combustion engines used for any purpose on or related to the job shall be equipped with a muffler or baffle of a type recommended by the manufacturer.

**NOI-7:** Consult district noise staff if complaints are received during the construction process, and their noise control plan and contractor shall conduct construction noise monitoring.

**2.1.14 Population and Housing**

The project would not involve altering the existing capacity or alignment of State Route 246. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to induce growth or conflict with any existing population or housing in the region. Considering this information, the following significance determinations have been made:



<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Population and Housing</b>
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>No Impact</b>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.15 Public Services

State Route 246 is anticipated to remain open for most of the construction period. Detours would be implemented to ensure that public services would have adequate access during construction. A Traffic Management Plan would be completed as part of the design phase of the proposed project and would ensure all Caltrans standards for access and traffic handling are met. Considering this information, the following significance determinations have been made:

<b>Question:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Public Services</b>
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:  Fire protection?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
Police protection?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
Schools?	<b>No Impact</b>
Parks?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
Other public facilities?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>

### ***Affected Environment***

Public service providers and emergency response agencies within the project area include the California Highway Patrol, the county of Santa Barbara, and the city of Lompoc. City-run services include the Lompoc Fire Department, the Lompoc Police Department, and the Lompoc 911 Dispatch Center.

Because the repavement and culvert replacement component of the project spans rural and agricultural lands on either side of State Route 246, access to public facilities would not be blocked during or after construction. One-way lane closures will be needed throughout the repaving process, which will be administered by a traffic control company. The traveling public will have eastbound and westbound access to State Route 246 within the project limits during construction. For the entirety of the staged construction period for the Robinson Bridge, two-lane access will be maintained for the traveling public in the eastbound and westbound directions. Phase 1 of construction will maintain the use of the existing travel lanes, with the use of the newly constructed bridge for travel in phase 2. In phase 3, access will continue to be maintained while the shoulder is widened.

Temporary construction easements and permanent drainage easements will be needed during construction, which would require the acquisition of a small portion of the city of Lompoc's River Park, a city park and regional recreational area. The entrance to the park would also require a temporary detour during the 2-year construction period.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

#### ***Fire and Police Protection***

The project will temporarily reduce traffic speed and impede emergency response times during the construction period. Intermittent single-lane closures will be implemented as indicated by the Traffic Management Plan to allow for continued access for law enforcement, firefighters, and other emergency responders. Detour routes for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians will be indicated on the Traffic Management Plan. Caltrans standard specifications for temporary traffic control will be implemented throughout the construction period.

#### ***Schools***

There are no schools located within the project limits on State Route 246. Therefore, temporary and intermittent lane closures are not anticipated to interfere with access to educational facilities along the route. Additionally, the construction of certain project features may require night work and would not interfere with daytime access to educational facilities.

#### ***Parks***

Intermittent and temporary lane closures could impede access to Lompoc's River Park. Additionally, a temporary construction detour will be required at

the park's entrance for 2 years starting in 2029. The project will acquire portions of the park in order to administer temporary construction easements and drainage easements. The park will remain open to the public during the construction period, as stipulated in the project-specific Transportation Management Plan. Appendix E of this document details potential recreational or 4(f) impacts.

State Route 246 will remain open through the project area during the construction process, with at least one lane open in the eastbound and westbound directions. In addition, a project-specific Transportation Management Plan will be developed during the project's design phase and will implement strategies such as portable changeable message signs, construction area signs, intermittent single-lane closures, and public awareness campaigns. While construction may result in temporary lane closures and slower traffic flow, public access to State Route 246 and adjacent facilities will be maintained during the construction process. Therefore, this project will have a less than significant impact on public services and response times.

### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

No additional avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are proposed. The Transportation Management Plan will reduce construction-related delays to the extent feasible.

#### **2.1.16 Recreation**

This project does not include the construction or expansion of any recreational facilities.

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Recreation</b>
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<b>No Impact</b>

#### **2.1.17 Transportation**

The city of Lompoc and Santa Barbara County Association of Governments see the replacement of Robinson Bridge as a top priority for their communities and is consistent with local plans. The project is mentioned as a

project of importance in the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments' Connected 2050 Regional Transportation Plan.

Further, this project will not add lanes to State Route 246, so vehicle miles traveled will not increase. From the Caltrans Memorandum: "Caltrans Policy on Transportation Impact Analysis and CEQA Significance Determinations for Projects on the State Highway System." All elements within the project are exempt from vehicle miles traveled analysis because they will not increase capacity, and the project will be consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).

Throughout project construction, State Route 246 will remain open, and a safe alternative route for crossing the Santa Ynez River will be implemented to ensure adequate access for citizens and emergency services.

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Transportation</b>
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<b>No Impact</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)?	<b>No Impact</b>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>

### ***Affected Environment***

The project is on State Route 246 between the cities of Lompoc to Buellton in Santa Barbara County. The highway serves as a major local thoroughfare and emergency access route.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

Regarding emergency access, the completed project would improve highway reliability, rehabilitate the pavement, and add other Complete Streets elements. There would be traffic delays during construction due to temporary closures and/or one-way traffic control. However, traffic stops and detours would be executed in accordance with a construction Traffic Control Plan.

Emergency services would be notified of potential disruptions, delays, or detours in advance to minimize impacts on emergency access.

### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

No additional avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are proposed. The construction Traffic Control Plan, as well as the Transportation Management Plan, will reduce construction-related delays to the extent feasible.

#### **2.1.18 Tribal Cultural Resources**

The project is in an area previously disturbed by various highway construction projects, agricultural maintenance activities, and utility placement; thus, the potential to affect cultural resources is low.

It is Caltrans' policy to avoid cultural resources whenever possible. Further investigations may be needed if cultural resources are identified in the project area and cannot be avoided. If buried cultural materials are encountered during construction, it is Caltrans' policy that work stop in that area until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the find. Additional surveys will be required if the project changes to include areas not previously surveyed.

Tribal consultation was carried out with local Native American tribal members. The Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation has requested to have monitors present at the initial ground disturbance for the bridge portion of the project during construction.

Considering the information in the Historical Property Survey Report dated October 2024 and the Archaeological Survey dated October 2024, the following significance determinations have been made:

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

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Tribal Cultural Resources
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or	<b>No Impact</b>

<b>Question:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Tribal Cultural Resources</b>
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.	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.19 Utilities and Service Systems

Considering the information in the Caltrans Draft Project Report and the City of Lompoc 2030 General Plan, the following determinations have been made:

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems</b>
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<b>No Impact</b>

### ***Affected Environment***

The project is located on State Route 246 between the cities of Lompoc and Buellton in Santa Barbara County. The City of Lompoc General Plan evaluates utilities in relation to potential impacts regarding water, wastewater, stormwater facilities, and solid waste. The general plan cites increased development as a risk factor for the availability and conservation of water and increased demand on water purveyance systems.

Various utilities are present within the project limits and adjacent to the state right-of-way, which have been confirmed by visual surveys, permit review, and Caltrans Right-of-Way Department review. As such, it is anticipated that relocation of utilities and utility policy exceptions may be required for one or more utilities that deviate from Caltrans utility encroachment policy.

Exact locations of existing utilities would be confirmed during the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates phase of the project using positive location activities such as potholing. Potentially affected utilities include a SoCalGas distribution line east of River Park and Sweeney Road, a city of Lompoc water main between North 12th Street and the intersection of State Route 1, a Comcast telecommunication line between State Route 1 and River Park Road, and a Pacific Gas and Electric electrical transmission and distribution line west of Robinson Bridge and River Park Road.

The project's planned improvements consist of roadway elements that do not require natural gas, wastewater treatment, or solid waste during routine operations. The project does not include new wastewater or natural gas lines. Culvert repair and relocation activities will be confined to methods such as trenchless installation, realignment, and repair of damaged pipe liners and damaged sections. New rock slope protection areas would be added to culverts as appropriate.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

Following construction, the subsequent plant establishment period will require the use of water for irrigation purposes to ensure the continued success of newly planted areas. Water used for irrigation purposes would be provided by commercially available sources and would comply with Caltrans Standard Specifications for water conservation during irrigation and landscape processes, such as specification 10-6 for watering (see section 1.5).

The project is not expected to result in increased development that would increase the demand on water resources, water purveyance systems, or other utility systems. The repair and relocation of culverts is anticipated to result in improved stormwater function. Additionally, the project is not anticipated to change the existing functions of utilities within the region, including electrical, natural gas, wastewater treatment, or solid waste. Conflicting overhead utilities within the project area would be moved underground as applicable and as required by the California Public Utilities Commission.

**Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**

Caltrans would continue communication with the utility owners throughout the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates phase and the Construction phase of the project to ensure that construction methods implemented for the project's work locations would enable protection in place of existing utilities as feasible. For utilities that require relocation, Caltrans would review the locations during the design and construction phases to ensure no significant environmental effects are caused. No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are proposed for utility and service system-related impacts.

**2.1.20 Wildfire**

Portions of the project are in areas of high or very high fire hazard severity zones. However, the project's components would not have any impact on wildfire. The project would involve the construction of a bridge that would decrease the risk of floods in the Santa Ynez River overtopping the bridge and any flood-related fire risk.

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Wildfire
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>



<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Wildfire</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

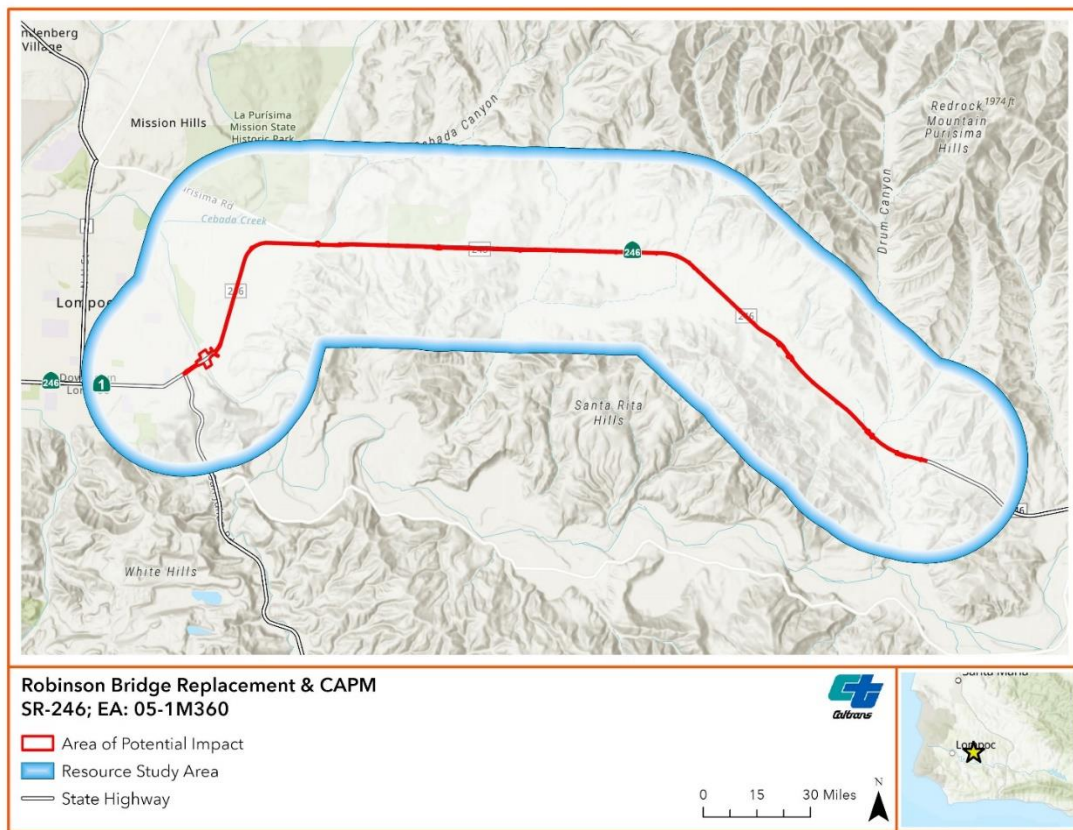
<b>Question:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Mandatory Findings of Significance</b>
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</b>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>

### Affected Environment

The affected environment for the project is the State Route 246 corridor in the Santa Ynez Watershed in Santa Barbara County between post miles 9.55 and R20.90. Most of the project area is rural, with the city of Lompoc at the western end of the project and the city of Buellton at the eastern end. Land uses in the project area include commercial, residential, agricultural, and open space/recreational areas.

The project limits contain natural communities and jurisdictional waters that support a variety of animal and plant species, including special-status native species, as well as federally designated critical habitat. Figures 2-1 and 2-2 show the two resource study areas that were used to analyze cumulative impacts for biological resources for this project. Figure 2-2 consists of the resource study area for the Santa Ynez River Watershed Hydrologic Unit Code 8, which includes the receiving water bodies of Santa Rosa Creek and the Santa Ynez River.

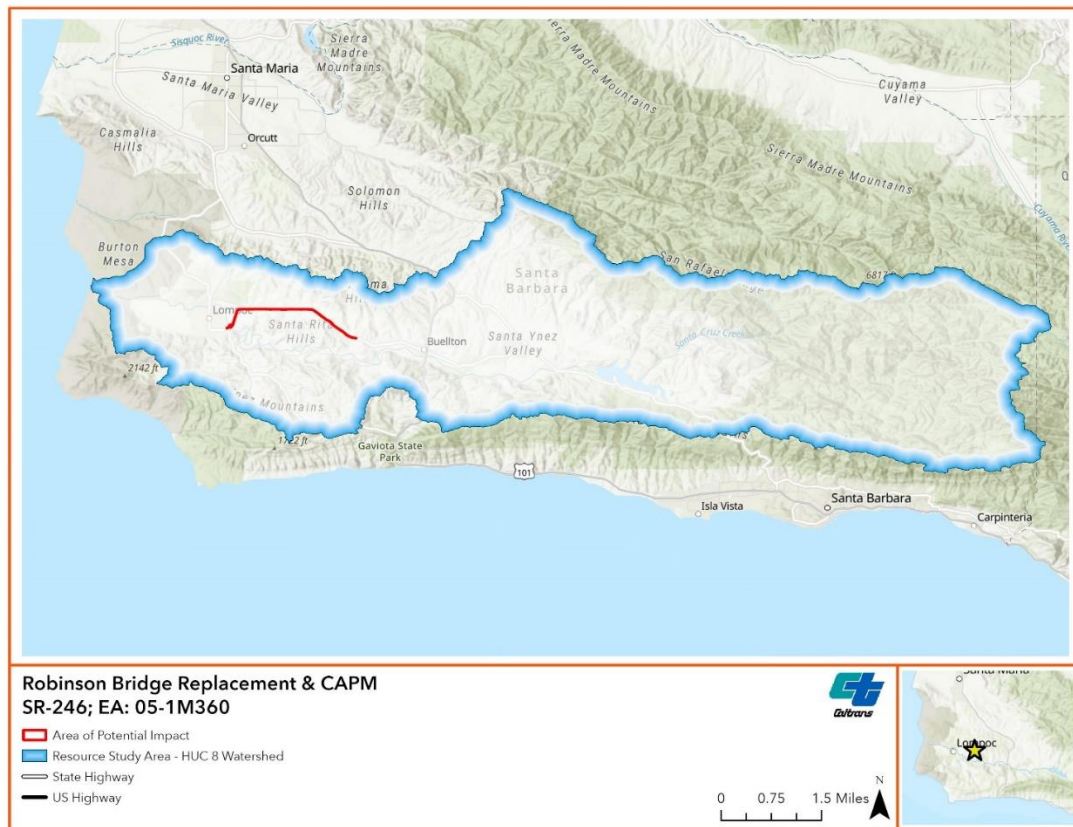
**Figure 2-1 Resource Study Area 1**



This resource study area is for the following species:

- Mesa horkelia
- Black-flower figwort

- Elegant buckwheat and other special-status species
- Crotch's bumblebee
- Obscure bumblebee
- California tiger salamander
- California red-legged frog
- Western spadefoot toad
- Southwestern pond turtle
- Northern California legless lizard
- Coast horned lizard
- Coast patch-nosed snake
- Two-striped garter snake
- Southwestern willow flycatcher
- Least bell's vireo
- Tricolored blackbird and other nesting birds
- Pallid bat
- Western red bat
- Silver-haired bat
- Yuma myotis and other roosting bats
- San Diego desert woodrat
- American badger

**Figure 2-2 Resource Study Area 2**

This resource study area is for Jurisdictional Aquatic Resources, Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest, and Southern California Steelhead.

## ***Environmental Consequences***

### ***Biological Resources***

The project could cause significant impacts on sensitive biological resources, including natural habitats, jurisdictional waters, stream and riparian features, special-status animal species, and designated critical habitat, though these impacts would be limited in duration and scope.

The project's Biological Study Area includes a 25-to-10-foot buffer from the project's preliminary Area of Potential Impacts and covers roughly 207.24 acres. The Biological Study Area consists of all areas that would be directly affected by permanent and temporary construction impacts, as well as nearby areas that could potentially be indirectly affected by project activities. Temporary impacts to jurisdictional features will occur from temporary access, staging areas, replacement of existing hardscaped features, and temporary stream diversion or trestle installation. Depending on the selected design option, there would be either less than 0.001 acre of net permanent impacts or no net permanent impacts. There will be a net of approximately 0.07 acre of permanent impacts to the Regional Water Quality Control Board and

California Department of Fish and Wildlife jurisdictional riparian habitat. There will be no net permanent impacts to the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, or California Department of Fish and Wildlife jurisdictional streambank, wetland, or freshwater ponds.

Depending on the design option that is chosen, approximately 0.65-0.69 acre of United States Army Corps of Engineers and Regional Water Quality Control Board wetlands would be impacted by project activities. Approximately 1.44-1.55 acres of Regional Water Quality Control Board and California Department of Fish and Wildlife jurisdictional riparian habitat may be temporarily impacted by project activities. Approximately 0.04 acre of Regional Water Quality Control Board and California Department of Fish and Wildlife jurisdictional streambank and 0.002 acre of United States Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife jurisdictional wetland habitat will be temporarily impacted. There will be no temporary impacts to freshwater ponds.

Permanent impacts to red willow riparian woodland following project completion would be a maximum of 0.05 acre, and temporary impacts to red willow riparian woodland would range from 1.2 to 1.3 acres, depending on the selected design option.

Primary concerns regarding project impacts on biological resources include the potential effects of temporary impacts and permanent impacts on jurisdictional aquatic resources and red willow riparian woodland and forest habitats of special concern. Impacts to the California tiger salamander and the Southern California steelhead are also anticipated, and California Endangered Species Act consultation will be required, and either a 2080.1 Consistency Determination or a Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit is anticipated. Caltrans will conduct Section 7 consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, least Bell's vireo, and southwestern willow flycatcher, and will facilitate conferences for the southwestern pond turtle and western spadefoot toad. Caltrans will conduct a Section 7 consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service for the Southern California steelhead.

However, the project design would incorporate Caltrans standard measures and Best Management Practices that would reduce the potential for environmentally damaging conditions or practices to occur (see Section 1.5). Also, implementing the avoidance, minimization, and mitigation (Compensatory Mitigation under CEQA) measures listed in this document would reduce potentially significant environmental impacts on biological resources to a less than significant level. See Section 2.1.4, Biological Resources, and Appendix B, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Summary, for details.

### *Cumulative Impacts*

As defined by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, "cumulative impacts" refer to two or more individual effects that, when considered together, are considerable or compound or increase other environmental impacts. A cumulative impact analysis should focus on resources significantly impacted by the project or on resources in poor or declining health or at risk, even if project impacts are less than significant.

The assessment of cumulative impacts also includes defining a Resource Study Area, a geographic area within which impacts on a resource are analyzed and which is often broader than the boundaries used for project-specific analyses. This project has multiple Resource Study Areas, which are shown in Figures 2-1 and 2-2.

The project would have individually limited impacts on environmental resources, as discussed in Sections 2.1.1 through 2.1.20 of this document. Impacts on the affected resources would be managed by implementing the project-specific measures listed for each resource area (see Appendix B).

Most of these impacts would be temporary in nature, as would the impacts of similar projects in the area that would affect the same resources.

The project would minimally realign and expand the existing state highway system in the project area and is not anticipated to alter or influence growth or development patterns in the region and does not have environmental effects that would be expected to cause long-term, substantial adverse effects on human beings or cultural resources, either directly or indirectly.

Based on the findings of this Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, this cumulative impact discussion focuses on effects relating to Biological Resources, for which potentially significant impacts were determined.

### *Biological Resources*

According to the Caltrans Natural Environment Study and the cumulative report, the project is not expected to contribute to adverse cumulative impacts on the following biological resources that are or may be present in the Biological Study Area:

- Jurisdictional Aquatic Resources
- Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest
- Mesa Horkelia, Black-Flower Figwort, Elegant Buckwheat, and other special-status plant species
- Crotch's Bumblebee and Obscure Bumblebee

- Southern California Steelhead
- California Tiger Salamander
- California Red-Legged Frog
- Western Spadefoot Toad
- Southwestern Pond Turtle
- Northern California Legless Lizard and Coast Horned Lizard
- Coast Patch-Nosed Snake and Two-Striped Garter Snake
- Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and Least Bell's Vireo
- Tricolored Blackbird and other nesting birds
- Pallid Bat, Western Red Bat, Silver-Haired Bat, Yuma Myotis, and other roosting bats
- San Diego Desert Woodrat
- American Badger

Several other projects, including Caltrans projects, in this Resource Study Area may incur temporary and permanent impacts on biological resources, including jurisdictional features, special-status species, and any associated federally designated critical habitat. However, when considered in a cumulative effects context, the proposed project is not anticipated to substantially contribute to adverse cumulative impacts on biological resources because most of the project's impacts on these resources would be temporary, and the proposed avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures would adequately address both temporary and permanent impacts.

### *Effects on Human Beings*

The project consists of needed repairs and upgrades to transportation systems that support the daily routines of human beings who live, work, and visit the project area. The project could cause temporary, substantial, adverse, direct, and/or indirect effects on human beings because of the proximity of construction noise to residences and businesses along State Route 246 and the city of Lompoc. These short-term impacts would temporarily affect the activities of residents, businesses, and visitors to the project area. These effects would be minimized by using Caltrans standard specifications and the avoidance and minimization measures included in this document. Upon project completion, normalcy would return for people in the project area, and access for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users would be improved in comparison with current conditions.

### *Santa Ynez River Watershed Hydrology and Water Quality*

The recently constructed and future identified projects with potential cumulative effects on the Santa Ynez River watershed consist of transportation projects and other projects involving the repair and replacement of roadway elements, cannabis cultivation, and culvert repair. These projects are proposed and undertaken by both public and private agencies. These projects are in various states of analysis and approval, and detailed information regarding their respective impacts is not available. Regardless, available sources indicate that avoidance measures, compensatory mitigation, or regulatory agency permit conditions regarding watershed protection were made a condition of their approval.

Projects that would potentially release pollutants or sediments into the San Ynez River Watershed are subject to regulatory permit approval and regulation by the Central California Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Santa Ynez River Watershed has been identified on the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board 303(d) list for Total Maximum Daily Loads Priority Schedule of impaired waters. Under the U.S. Clean Water Act, Total Maximum Daily Loads is a regulatory plan for restoring impaired waters that identifies the maximum amount of a pollutant that a body of water can receive while still meeting water quality standards. Per the Region 3 Watershed Management Initiative, primary pollutants of concern in the Santa Ynez River watershed include but are not limited to sedimentation and siltation.

The proposed project could temporarily increase the sediment-laden flow to the receiving water bodies and increase impervious surfaces, which in turn may result in increased stormwater runoff. However, these temporary impacts to the receiving waters can be minimized by implementing temporary best management practices, such as erosion control, that will be included in the contractor-supplied and department-approved Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The proposed project would not contribute to future sedimentation impairment and would ultimately improve sediment-laden flow by eliminating future embankment and roadway failure. Additionally, the replacement bridge structure will be designed without scuppers, deck drains, or other facilities that drain stormwater directly into the stream. This will prevent pollutants such as 6PPD-quinone (an oxidation product of 6PPD, an additive intended to prevent damage to tire rubber from ozone) from directly entering waterways and causing detriment to salmonid species such as the Southern California steelhead. Therefore, this project is not anticipated to result in cumulative impacts regarding impairments or watershed pollutants.



***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

No further avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures beyond those listed in the preceding sections of this document, as well as in Appendix B, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Summary, would be required.



## **Chapter 3**      **Coordination**

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### **3.1      Coordination Meetings**

Multiple meetings with local partners were held during the planning phases of this project:

- On April 28, 2022, there was a Lompoc area meeting with the city of Lompoc, Santa Barbara County, and the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments. The plan for the whole of the Lompoc area was discussed. In this meeting, it was requested that the Robinson Bridge project be accelerated if possible. At this point, the Robinson Bridge project had not started the environmental phase.
- On January 18, 2023, there was another Lompoc area meeting with the city of Lompoc, Santa Barbara County, and the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments. This meeting presented partners with a new consolidated plan for the Lompoc area based on partner input and feasibility.
- On June 11, 2024, there was a meeting regarding several Lompoc-area projects with the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, the city of Lompoc, and Santa Barbara County attendees.
- On July 22, 2024, there was an additional meeting with several Lompoc-area projects, with Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, the city of Lompoc, and Santa Barbara County attendees.
- On August 19, 2024, there was also a meeting for this project, which included Santa Barbara County Flood Control attendance.
- On October 3, 2024, a meeting was held that included Santa Barbara County, Wallace Group, and SWCA Environmental Consultants. This meeting discussed utilities and possible unity conflicts between this project and other projects near the Robinson Bridge.
- On November 6, 2024, a site visit was held with California Department of Fish and Wildlife representatives in attendance. This meeting discussed fish passage for the new Robinson Bridge. It was determined that the new bridge would not be a fish passage barrier.
- On December 4, 2024, a partnership meeting was held with Santa Barbara County and the city of Lompoc. This meeting discussed the new Robinson Bridge, particularly the multiuse path(s) on the bridge. Santa Barbara County and the city of Lompoc prefer a multiuse path on both sides of the new Robinson Bridge.

- On March 12, 2025, a public meeting was held at Cabrillo High School in Vandenberg Village to discuss immediate safety improvements at the intersection of State Route 1 and Santa Lucia Canyon Road. Partners in attendance included representatives of the California Highway Patrol, Vandenberg Space Force Base, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, the county of Santa Barbara, and the city of Lompoc. Members of the public in attendance brought attention to concerns within the greater Lompoc area, including the replacement and widening of the Robinson Bridge.
- On April 10, 2025, a partnership meeting was held with the city of Lompoc, Caltrans, and the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments. Specific aspects of the project's scope were revisited and revised, such as the multi-use pathway on both sides of the bridge. Caltrans made the decision in cooperation with these project stakeholders to include a multi-use pathway on one side of the bridge only in design options three and four.

## **Chapter 4**      List of Preparers

---

Myles Barker, Editorial Specialist. B.A., Mass Communication and Journalism, California State University, Fresno; 5 years of editing experience. Contribution: Technical Editor.

AnnMarie Blackburn, Environmental Scientist, Biologist. B.S. Zoology, University of California, Santa Barbara. M.S. Range and Wildlife Management, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Kingsville, Texas; 7 years of experience in wildlife biology and ecology. Contribution: biological setting and impacts analysis

Skyler Blackwell, Environmental Scientist, Environmental Generalist/Environmental Scientist. B.S., Environmental Management and Protection, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; 2 years of experience in environmental resource management. Contribution: Preparation of Climate Change Report.

Trevor Burmester, Environmental Scientist, Air Quality/Noise/Water Quality Specialist. B.S., Public Health, University of Nevada, Reno; 3 years of experience in environmental analysis. Contribution: Analysis of air quality, noise, and water quality impacts and preparation of related documents.

Hannah Ehrlich, Environmental Scientist (Archaeology), PQS Co-Principal Investigator Prehistoric Archaeology. B.S., Anthropology and Geography, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; 7 years of experience in cultural resource management. Contribution: Preparation of archaeological technical studies and Section 106 consultation.

Erin Henry, Environmental Scientist/Generalist. B.A. Cultural Anthropology and Environmental Development, California State University, Chico; 1 year of environmental planning experience and 2 years of experience in cultural resource management/archaeology. Contribution: Preparation of the environmental document.

Kristen Langager, Landscape Architect. B.S., Landscape Architecture, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; 19 years of Landscape Architecture experience, 5 years as a Visual Technical Specialist. Contribution: Visual Impact Assessment.

Lucas Marsalek, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisor). B.S., Forestry and Natural Resource Management, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; 14 years of environmental planning experience. Contribution: Reviewer of environmental document.

Ryan McKee, P.G., C.E.G. Engineering Geologist – California Department of Transportation. M.S., Geology, California State University, San Jose, B.S., Earth Sciences, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; 5 years of experience in environmental subsurface remediation, 8 years of experience in Geotechnical/Engineering Geology. Contribution: Preparation of geotechnical reports.

Jake Minnick, Landscape Architect. Bachelor's of Landscape Architecture, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; 10 years of Landscape Architecture experience. Contribution: Visual Impact Assessment.

Laura Riccardelli, Environmental Scientist, Environmental Generalist/Environmental Scientist. B.S., Environmental Science, University of California, Los Angeles; 4 years of experience in environmental resource management. Contribution: Preparation of environmental document and 4(f) Analysis.

Nina Tortosa, Environmental Scientist/Aquatic Resource Biologist. M.S. (in progress), Biological Sciences, California State University, Sacramento, Sacramento, California; 6 years of wildlife biology experience, 7 years of project management experience. Contribution: Preparation of the Jurisdictional Delineation Study.

Damaris Wyatt G.I.T., Engineering Geologist, Hazardous Waste and Paleontology Specialist. M.S. Geosciences, The Pennsylvania State University, B.S. Earth Science-Geology, University of California, Santa Barbara; 3 years of geoprofessional experience in California and Connecticut. Contribution: Supplemental Initial Site Assessment, Paleontological Investigation Report.

# Appendix A Title VI Policy Statement

CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

GAVIN NEWSOM, GOVERNOR

## California Department of Transportation

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
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September 2024

### TITLE VI/NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the assurances set forth in the Caltrans' Title VI Program Plan, to ensure that no person in the United States shall on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Related non-discrimination authorities, remedies, and state law further those protections, including sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, age, low income, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

Caltrans is committed to complying with 23 C.F.R. Part 200, 49 C.F.R. Part 21, 49 C.F.R. Part 303, and the Federal Transit Administration Circular 4702.1B. Caltrans will make every effort to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its services, programs, and activities, whether they are federally funded or not, and that services and benefits are fairly distributed to all people, regardless of race, color, or national origin (including LEP). In addition, Caltrans will facilitate meaningful participation in the transportation planning process in a non-discriminatory manner.

The overall responsibility for this policy is assigned to the Caltrans Director. The Caltrans Title VI Coordinator is assigned to the Caltrans Office of Civil Rights Deputy Director, who then delegates sufficient responsibility and authority to the Office of Civil Rights' managers, including the Title VI Branch Manager, to effectively implement the Caltrans Title VI Program. Individuals with questions or requiring additional information relating to the policy or the implementation of the Caltrans Title VI Program should contact the Title VI Branch Manager at [title.vi@dot.ca.gov](mailto:title.vi@dot.ca.gov) or at (916) 639-6392, or visit the following web page: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/title-vi>.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Tavares'.

TONY TAVARES  
Director

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





## **Appendix B** Avoidance, Minimization and/or Mitigation Summary

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To ensure that all of the environmental measures identified in this document are executed at the appropriate times, the following mitigation program (as shown in the proposed Environmental Commitments Record that follows) would be implemented. During project design, avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures will be incorporated into the project's final plans, specifications, and cost estimates as appropriate. All permits will be obtained before project implementation. During construction, environmental and construction/engineering staff will ensure that the commitments contained in the Environmental Commitments Record are fulfilled. Following construction and appropriate phases of project delivery, long-term mitigation, maintenance, and monitoring will take place as applicable. Because the following Environmental Commitments Record is a draft, some fields have not been completed; they will be filled out as each of the measures is implemented.

Note: Some measures may apply to more than one resource area. Duplicated or redundant measures have not been included in this Environmental Commitments Record.

### **2.1.1 Aesthetics**

**AES-1:** Following construction, regrade and recontour any new construction access roads, staging and storage areas, and other temporary uses as necessary to match the surrounding natural topography along State Route 246. Avoid unnatural-appearing remnant landforms where possible.

**AES-2:** Preserve existing vegetation to the maximum extent feasible.

**AES-3:** Bridge rail and pedestrian railing shall be an 'open style' to preserve views and deter graffiti. Railing type and treatment will be developed by the Caltrans Department of Bridge Design in conjunction with District 5 Landscape Architecture.

**AES-4:** Bridge rail shall be aesthetically treated to visually recede or appear consistent with the architectural character and community setting. The aesthetic treatment shall be developed by the Caltrans Department of Bridge Design in conjunction with District 5 Landscape Architecture.

**AES-5:** Pedestrian railing shall be selected or treated to reduce glare and minimize contrast and noticeability. Style and color should be consistent with local character and aesthetic goals, as well as being compatible with the vehicular railing. Railing type and treatment will be developed by Bridge Design in conjunction with District 5 Landscape Architecture.

**AES-6:** Rock slope protection shall be backfilled with soil and revegetated if feasible. Staining is appropriate to reduce the glare of visible rock slope protection as an alternative to soil cover.

**AES-7:** All visible metal components related to down drains and inlets, including but not limited to flared end sections, connectors, anchorage systems, safety cable systems, etc., should be darkened or colored to blend with the surroundings and reduce reflectivity. The specific color shall be determined by Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architecture.

**AES-8:** All visible concrete drainage elements, including but not limited to headwalls, drain inlet aprons, etc., should be colored to blend with the surroundings and reduce reflectivity. The specific colors of these concrete elements shall be determined by Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architecture.

**AES-9:** If feasible, all existing overhead utilities next to the new bridge shall be placed in the bridge structure. If it is not technically possible to locate conduits within the structure, surface-mounted conduits shall be painted to match the bridge structure.

**AES-10:** Replacement planting shall include aesthetic considerations and inherent biological goals. Revegetation shall include native trees and plants as determined by the project biologist and landscape architect. Revegetation shall occur to the maximum extent horticulturally feasible. Planting should be maintained until established.

## **2.1.4 Biological Resources**

### **Jurisdictional Aquatic Features**

The proposed project will impact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife jurisdictional areas within the Area of Potential Impact. The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented to reduce the potential impacts to these jurisdictional areas resulting from the project:

**BIO-1:** Prior to construction, Caltrans shall obtain a Section 404 Nationwide Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for activities that impact their respective jurisdictions. All permit terms and conditions will be incorporated into construction plans and implemented during construction.

**BIO-2:** Prior to any ground-disturbing activities, Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing, flagging, or another boundary marking system shall be used to demarcate (separate) jurisdictional features and the dripline of trees to be protected within the project limits. Caltrans-defined Environmentally Sensitive

Areas shall be noted on design plans and delineated in the field prior to the start of construction activities.

**BIO-3:** A temporary trestle may be used instead of, or in addition to, stream diversion and dewatering for bridge replacement activities within the Santa Ynez River to allow year-round work to occur. Pile driving and trestle construction will be limited to June 1 through October 31, when water levels are at a seasonal minimum. Deviations from this work window will only be made with permission from the relevant regulatory agencies.

**BIO-4:** If a trestle is not used, in-stream work within the Santa Ynez River shall take place between June 1 and October 31 in any given year when the surface water is likely to be at a seasonal minimum. Construction activities in jurisdictional areas at the culvert locations shall also be timed to occur between June 1 and October 31. Deviations from this work window will only be made with permission from the relevant regulatory agencies. Activities that may be approved outside the typical construction window include tree removal and trimming that does not require grubbing or ground disturbance; restoration seeding, planting, and maintenance of plantings; and stormwater measures that require the use of equipment, subject to prior agency approval. Maintenance of stormwater best management practices (BMPs) using hand tools is permitted year-round.

**BIO-5:** Other than installation of the temporary diversion system and, if necessary, installation of piles for a temporary work trestle, in-stream construction work will be performed in a dry work environment.

**BIO-6:** If dewatering or diversion operations are necessary, a detailed dewatering/diversion plan, including water quality monitoring requirements, will be prepared and implemented.

**BIO-7:** During construction, readily accessible spill prevention and cleanup materials shall always be kept by the contractor on-site during construction. All project-related hazardous material spills within the project site shall be cleaned up immediately.

**BIO-8:** During construction, sediment and erosion control measures shall be implemented and maintained. Silt fencing, fiber rolls, barriers, and other BMPs shall be installed as needed to stabilize the project site. At a minimum, erosion controls shall be maintained by the contractor on a daily basis throughout the construction period.

**BIO-9:** All equipment must be cleaned and free of weed propagules prior to entry into jurisdictional features.

**BIO-10:** To the extent feasible, staging, parking, and refueling of equipment and vehicles must occur at least 100 feet from jurisdictional areas. If staging of equipment and materials must occur closer than 100 feet from jurisdictional

areas, the staging areas must have adequate BMPs to prevent discharges from leaving the staging area and entering jurisdictional areas. If fueling must occur in areas less than 100 feet from streams, a refueling plan outlining secondary containment and spill prevention measures must be prepared and approved by Caltrans and agency staff.

**BIO-11:** At a minimum, all equipment and vehicles shall be checked and maintained by the contractor on a daily basis to ensure proper operation and avoid potential leaks or spills. Drip pans must be placed under equipment that is stationary for more than 12 hours. Stationary equipment used in jurisdictional areas, such as generators, must be placed in secondary containment. Equipment must be removed from the channel if the National Weather Service predicts a chance of at least 0.1 inch of rain within a 24-hour period for Lompoc, California.

**BIO-12:** Limited night work is permitted within jurisdictional areas. Lighting must be angled down and pointed toward work areas to minimize illumination of nearby jurisdictional areas outside project limits.

**BIO-13:** All litter, construction debris, equipment, loose materials, and soil spoils shall be removed from jurisdictional areas at the end of every work shift. Stockpiles of materials, including temporarily stockpiled soils, may not be stored within jurisdictional areas. Stockpiles not actively being used for construction must be covered and surrounded with a linear sediment barrier.

**BIO-14:** Stream contours shall be restored as close as possible to their original condition.

### **Mitigation for Jurisdictional Aquatic Features**

Mitigation measures **BIO-33** and **BIO-34** discussed in subsequent sections of this document will mitigate impacts to jurisdictional aquatic features.

### **Red Willow Riparian**

The avoidance and minimization measures proposed for jurisdictional areas have been assessed as sufficient to minimize impacts to red willow riparian woodland and forest. Mitigation measures **BIO-33** and **BIO-34** have also been assessed as sufficient for mitigating red willow riparian woodland and forest.

### **Invasive Species**

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented:

**BIO-15:** During construction, Caltrans will ensure that the spread or introduction of invasive exotic plant species will be avoided to the maximum extent possible.

**BIO-16:** Only clean fill shall be imported. When practicable, invasive exotic plants on the project site shall be removed and properly disposed of. All invasive vegetation removed from the construction site shall be taken to a landfill to prevent the spread of invasive species. If soil from weedy areas must be removed off-site, the top 6 inches containing the seed layer in areas with weedy species shall be disposed of at a landfill. Inclusion of any species that occurs on the Cal-IPC Invasive Plant Inventory in the Caltrans erosion control seed mix or landscaping plans for the project shall be avoided.

**BIO-17:** To minimize the introduction of invasive plant species, all vehicles, machinery, and equipment shall be in a clean and soil-free condition before entering the project limits. Construction equipment shall be certified as “weed-free” by Caltrans before entering the construction site.

### **Critical Habitat**

Numerous measures in Chapter 4 of the Natural Environment Study (NES) apply to Southern California steelhead, California tiger salamander, southwestern willow flycatcher, and other taxa and are also applicable to federally designated critical habitat. These measures have been assessed as sufficient to minimize impacts to Southern California steelhead, California tiger salamander, and southwestern willow flycatcher critical habitat.

### **Special-Status Plants**

The following avoidance and minimization measures are proposed for special-status plants. No impacts to special-status plant species are proposed, and no mitigation measures are proposed.

**BIO-18:** All areas (including along the boundary of the right-of-way) containing any listed plant species shall be delineated on the project’s plan sheets as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs). These areas shall be marked with highly visible construction fencing and will be off limits to construction equipment and personnel.

**BIO-19:** To avoid impacts to any vegetation, all staging and equipment and storage areas shall occur in existing pullouts or at paved locations that have been cleared by Caltrans Environmental.

**BIO-20:** Preconstruction surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to any ground-disturbing activities to confirm the presence or absence of special-status plant species.

### **Crotch’s Bumblebee and Obscure Bumblebee**

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for potential impacts to Crotch’s bumblebee and obscure bumblebee resulting from the project:

**BIO-21:** During the design phase, a focused non-invasive survey will be conducted prior to ground disturbance for Crotch's bumblebee and its nests, following California Department of Fish and Wildlife guidance (2023).

**BIO-22:** A Worker Environmental Awareness Training course will be provided for all construction personnel prior to the start of any ground disturbance or vegetation removal to discuss Crotch's bumblebee identification, ecology, habitat, and avoidance and minimization measures.

**BIO-23:** Prior to any ground-disturbing activities, ESA fencing shall be installed, as appropriate, around Crotch's bumblebee feeding and nesting habitat to be avoided. ESAs shall be noted on design plans and delineated in the field prior to the start of construction activities.

**BIO-24:** If a Crotch's bumblebee is identified in the project area, Caltrans will coordinate with CDFW, and, if necessary, a Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit will be acquired, on-site mitigation may be required, and the following would be implemented:

- k. Any blooming flowering plants that are scoped for removal would be inspected immediately prior to work to ensure that no bumblebees are on or near the plant. If a bumblebee is identified on or adjacent to vegetation that is to be removed, work in that area would not proceed until the bumblebee leaves the area of its own accord.
- l. No work will occur within 50 feet of an active Crotch's bumblebee nest unless approved by CDFW.

### **Southern California Steelhead Distinct Population Segment**

The project has the potential to result in take of Southern California steelhead; therefore, Caltrans must consult with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) Section 7 to obtain a Biological Opinion for the project. The Biological Opinion will include several reasonable and prudent measures and terms and conditions to reduce the effects of the project on steelhead and their habitat. In addition to avoidance and minimization measures listed in Section 4.1.1.3 of the Natural Environment Study for impacts to jurisdictional aquatic resources that provide cover and shade for Southern California steelhead, the following measures will serve to further minimize potential project-related impacts to steelhead:

**BIO-25:** A temporary trestle may be used instead of, or in addition to, stream diversion and dewatering for bridge replacement activities within the Santa Ynez River to allow year-round work to occur. Pile driving and trestle construction will be limited to June 1 through October 31. This construction window is when water levels are at their lowest to avoid adult spawning

migration and peak smolt emigration times. Deviations from this work window will only be made with permission from the relevant regulatory agencies.

**BIO-26:** If a trestle is not used, in-stream work within the Santa Ynez River will take place between June 1 and October 31 in any given year when the surface water is likely to be at a seasonal minimum. Deviations from this work window will only be made with permission from the relevant regulatory agencies. During in-stream work, a qualified biologist will be retained with experience in steelhead biology and ecology, aquatic habitats, biological monitoring (including diversion/dewatering, if used), and capturing, handling, and relocating fish species. During in-stream work, the biological monitor(s) will continuously monitor placement and removal of any required stream diversions and trestle installation or removal, and will capture stranded steelhead and other native fish species and relocate them to suitable habitat, as appropriate. The biologist(s) will capture steelhead stranded as a result of diversion/dewatering and relocate them to the nearest suitable instream habitat. The biologist(s) will note the number of steelhead observed in the affected area, the number of steelhead relocated, and the date and time of the collection and relocation.

**BIO-27:** During in-stream work, if pumps are incorporated to assist in temporarily dewatering the site, intakes will be completely screened with no larger than 3/32-inch (2.38 mm) wire mesh to prevent steelhead and other sensitive aquatic species from entering the pump system. Pumps will release the water so that suspended sediment will not re-enter the stream. The form and function of pumps used during the dewatering activities will be checked daily at a minimum to ensure a dry work environment and minimize adverse effects to aquatic species and habitats.

**BIO-28:** Caltrans will design replacement bridge structures without scuppers, deck drains, or other facilities that drain stormwater directly into the stream in order to prevent pollutants such as 6PPD-quinone (an oxidation product of 6PPD, an additive intended to prevent damage to tire rubber from ozone) from directly entering waterways.

**BIO-29:** Before any activities within the Santa Ynez River begin, the approved biologist will conduct a Worker Environmental Awareness Training course (WEAT) for all persons employed or otherwise working on the project site prior to performing any work on-site. The Worker Environmental Awareness Training course will include a discussion of the biology of Southern California steelhead, its protected status, proximity to the project site, project-specific avoidance and minimization measures, and the implications of violating the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and permit conditions. Upon completion of the training course, employees will sign a form stating they attended the course and understand all protection measures.

**BIO-30:** When the biological monitor is on-site, they shall monitor erosion and sediment controls to identify and correct any conditions that could adversely affect steelhead or steelhead habitat. The biological monitor shall be granted the authority to stop work activity as necessary and to recommend measures to avoid/minimize adverse effects to steelhead and steelhead habitat.

**BIO-31:** Sound-attenuating devices shall be used during pile driving if any feasible method is available for dry pile driving.

**BIO-32:** Vibration and oscillation of piles shall be used to the greatest extent feasible to install piles and reduce the need for hammer driving.

### **Southern California Steelhead Mitigation Measures**

The following proposed measures will mitigate the impacts on Southern California steelhead. Final compensatory mitigation will be determined in coordination with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife during the CESA 2081 ITP permitting process.

**BIO-33:** Caltrans will restore all areas temporarily impacted for access needs on-site at a 1-to-1 ratio and permanently impacted areas at a 3-to-1 ratio. Trees scoped for removal within jurisdictional areas will also be replaced. Trees with a DBH between 6 and 12 inches will be replaced at a 3-to-1 ratio, trees with a DBH between 12 and 24 inches will be replaced at a 5-to-1 ratio, and trees with a DBH greater than 24 inches will be replaced at a 10-to-1 ratio. Replacement plantings will include appropriate native tree and understory species. To ensure success, monitoring and an appropriate plant establishment period will be required, which will include regular inspections, weeding, and replacement. Off-site mitigation may be needed to fulfill the compensatory mitigation requirements for impacts to jurisdictional aquatic features due to limited space available within Caltrans' right-of-way. The exact method of tree replacement and mitigating for permanent impacts (i.e., on-site mitigation, off-site mitigation, root wads, invasive species control, a combination of methods, etc.) will be finalized during permitting to meet mitigation requirements.

**BIO-34:** In accordance with the replacement planting ratios outlined in **BIO-33**, replacement plantings will be detailed in Caltrans' Landscape Architecture Landscape Planting Plan and the final Mitigation Monitoring Plan. The Mitigation Monitoring Plan will be developed in coordination with the project biologist and will include planting specifications and grading plans to ensure survival of planted vegetation and re-establishment of functions and values. The final Mitigation Monitoring Plan will detail mitigation commitments and will be consistent with standards and mitigation commitments from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Mitigation Monitoring Plan will be prepared when more detailed construction plans are developed and will be finalized through the permit review process with regulatory agencies.



Restoration plantings will consist of native riparian species and associated riparian understory and bank species.

### **Santa Barbara County Distinct Population Segment of California Tiger Salamander**

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for potential impacts to the Santa Barbara County Distinct Population Segment of California Tiger Salamander upland habitat resulting from the project:

**BIO-35:** Caltrans will evaluate and survey all potentially suitable habitat areas within the API to determine suitability for the California tiger salamander and designate such areas as California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Areas (SPA) in project plans and specifications.

**BIO-36:** Caltrans will obtain approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife of designated biologist(s) and designated monitor(s) prior to project-related activities that may result in impacts to the California tiger salamander. The designated biologist or designated monitor with the appropriate permits will be present to conduct surveys prior to and monitor all initial ground- or vegetation-disturbing activities in California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Areas to help minimize or avoid impacts. Designated monitors will monitor project activities after initial ground-disturbing activities have been completed, provided the permitted designated biologist is readily available should the need arise to relocate a California tiger salamander.

**BIO-37:** Caltrans will submit a relocation plan to the Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for approval prior to construction. Designated biologists and/or designated monitors who handle California tiger salamanders will ensure that their activities do not transmit diseases or pathogens harmful to amphibians, such as chytrid fungus (*Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*), by following the fieldwork code of practice developed by the Declining Amphibians Task Force.

**BIO-38:** Work activities that could potentially harm the California tiger salamander will be stopped until the designated biologist arrives to relocate the California tiger salamander to the pre-approved location. If the designated biologist or designated monitor recommends that work be stopped, they will notify the resident engineer immediately. The resident engineer will resolve the situation by requiring that all actions that are causing these effects be stopped.

**BIO-39:** Before any activities begin, the approved biologist will conduct a Worker Environmental Awareness Training course for all persons employed or otherwise working on the project site prior to performing any work on-site. The WEAT course will include a discussion of the biology of the California tiger salamander, its protected status, proximity to the project site, project-

specific avoidance and minimization measures, and the implications of violating the Federal Endangered Species Act and permit conditions. Upon completion of the training course, employees will sign a form stating they attended the course and understand all protection measures.

**BIO-40:** Caltrans will limit all project-related vehicle and pedestrian access to established roads and staging areas. Caltrans will locate staging areas within previously disturbed areas to the extent possible, clearly delineate them, and they will contain all project-related parking and storage needs. Caltrans will limit the number of access routes, the size of staging areas, and the total area of activity to the maximum extent feasible to achieve the project.

**BIO-41:** During project activities, all trash that may attract predators will be properly contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and construction debris will be removed from work areas.

**BIO-42:** If work will occur in a California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Area between October 1 and May 31, temporary California Tiger Salamander exclusionary fencing will be installed during dry conditions prior to work within the California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Area to protect California tiger salamander habitat outside of the California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Area and prevent individuals from dispersing into work areas. The designated biologist or monitor will inspect the area regularly when work is scheduled within a California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Area to ensure the integrity of the fence and that workers avoid entering California Tiger Salamander habitat outside of the California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Area.

**BIO-43:** Caltrans will consult the National Weather Service 24-hour forecast daily. If there is over a 70 percent chance of precipitation forecasted, the designated biologist will survey the work area to ensure that California tiger salamanders have been cleared.

**BIO-44:** If an unpredicted rainfall event starts while construction activities are in progress, Caltrans will suspend all work activities in a California Tiger Salamander Special Protection Area until the designated biologist surveys the work area to ensure that California tiger salamanders have been cleared.

### **California Tiger Salamander Mitigation**

As part of the California Endangered Species Act and Federal Endangered Species Act consultations, Caltrans expects that compensatory mitigation will be required to offset habitat impacts resulting from the project. The following mitigation estimates have been made for this project, according to mitigation ratios required by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for other Caltrans projects with California tiger salamander impacts.

**BIO-45:** Caltrans will complete a total of up to 5.25 acres of compensatory mitigation for potential impacts to California tiger salamander upland habitat, which includes:

- A 3-to-1 mitigation ratio for permanent impacts (0.05 acre) for a total of 0.15 acre; and
- A 1-to-1 mitigation ratio for temporary impacts (5.1 acres) for a total of 5.1 acres.

Caltrans will determine actual mitigation credits based on an evaluation and survey of all potentially suitable habitat areas within the Area of Potential Impacts and calculation of the value of impacted California Tiger Salamander habitat using the methodology outlined in Searcy and Shaffer (2008). Before starting ground- or vegetation-disturbing project activities, Caltrans will satisfy the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife requirement to provide California Tiger Salamander habitat mitigation by purchasing credits at a California Endangered Species Act-certified and California Department of Fish and Wildlife-approved Conservation Bank (such as La Purisima Bank) authorized to sell credits for California Tiger Salamander. Details regarding the exact amount of mitigation required will be developed during the Federal Endangered Species Act and California Endangered Species Act consultation process.

### **California Red-Legged Frog**

Caltrans anticipates the proposed project will qualify for Federal Endangered Species Act incidental take coverage under the Programmatic Biological Opinion for Projects Funded or Approved under the Federal Highway Administration's Federal Aid Program (United States Fish and Wildlife Service 2011), which includes the following project-specific measures:

**BIO-46:** Only United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologists shall participate in activities associated with the capture, handling, and monitoring of California red-legged frogs.

**BIO-47:** Ground disturbance shall not begin until written approval is received from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service that the biologist is qualified to conduct the work.

**BIO-48:** A United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall survey the project area no more than 48 hours before the start of work activities. If any life stage of the California red-legged frog is found, and these individuals are likely to be killed or injured by work activities, the approved biologist shall be allowed sufficient time to move them from the site before work begins. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall relocate the California red-legged frogs to the shortest distance possible to a location that contains suitable habitat and will not be affected by project

construction. The relocation site shall be in the same drainage to the extent practicable. Caltrans shall coordinate with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on the relocation site prior to the capture of any California red-legged frogs.

**BIO-49:** Before any activities begin on a project, a United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall conduct a training session for all construction personnel. At a minimum, the training shall include a description of the California red-legged frog and its habitat, the specific measures that are being implemented to conserve the California red-legged frog for the current project, and the boundaries within which the project may be accomplished. Brochures, books, and briefings may be used in the training session, with a qualified person on hand to answer any questions. The training will also include descriptions of other special-status species with the potential to occur in the project area.

**BIO-50:** A United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall be present at the work site until all California red-legged frogs have been removed, workers have been instructed, and disturbance of habitat has been completed. After this time, Caltrans shall designate a person to monitor on-site compliance with all minimization measures. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall ensure this monitor receives the training outlined in measure BIO-4 above and in the identification of California red-legged frogs. If the monitor or the United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist recommends that work be stopped because California red-legged frogs would be affected in a manner not anticipated by Caltrans and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service during review of the proposed action, they shall notify the resident engineer immediately. The resident engineer shall resolve the situation by requiring that all actions that are causing these effects be stopped. When work is stopped, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service shall be notified as soon as possible.

**BIO-51:** During project activities, all trash that may attract predators or scavengers shall be properly contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and debris shall be removed from work areas.

**BIO-52:** All refueling, maintenance, and staging of equipment and vehicles shall occur at least 60 feet from riparian habitat or water bodies and not in a location from which a spill would drain directly toward aquatic habitat, unless otherwise preapproved by the necessary agencies. The monitor shall ensure that contamination of the habitat does not occur during operations. Before work starts, Caltrans shall ensure that a plan is in place for a prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. All workers shall be informed of the importance of preventing spills and the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.

**BIO-53:** Habitat contours shall be returned to a natural configuration at the end of project construction. This measure shall be implemented in all areas disturbed by project construction, unless the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and Caltrans determine that it is not feasible or modification of original contours would benefit the California red-legged frog.

**BIO-54:** The number of access routes, the size of staging areas, and the total area of activity shall be limited to the minimum necessary to achieve the project. Environmentally Sensitive Areas shall be established to confine access routes and construction areas to the minimum area necessary to complete construction and minimize the impact on California red-legged frog habitat; this goal includes locating access routes and construction areas outside of wetlands and riparian areas to the maximum extent practicable.

**BIO-55:** Caltrans shall attempt to schedule work for times of the year when impacts to the California red-legged frog would be minimal. For example, work that would affect large pools that may support breeding would be avoided, to the maximum degree practicable, during the breeding season (November through May). Isolated pools that are important to maintain California red-legged frogs through the driest portions of the year would be avoided, to the maximum degree practicable, during the late summer and early fall. Habitat assessments, surveys, and technical assistance between Caltrans and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service during project planning shall be used to assist in scheduling work activities to avoid sensitive habitats during key times of the year.

**BIO-56:** To control sedimentation during and after project completion, Caltrans shall implement Best Management Practices outlined in any authorizations or permits issued under the authorities of the Clean Water Act received for the project. If Best Management Practices are ineffective, Caltrans shall attempt to remedy the situation immediately, in coordination with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

**BIO-57:** If a work site is to be temporarily dewatered by pumping, intakes will be completely screened with wire mesh not larger than 0.2 inch (5 millimeters) to prevent California red-legged frogs from entering the pump system. Water will be released or pumped downstream at an appropriate rate to maintain downstream flows during construction. Upon completion of construction activities, any diversions or barriers to flow will be removed in a manner that would allow flow to resume with the least disturbance to the substrate. Alteration of the stream bed will be minimized to the maximum extent possible; any imported material will be removed from the stream bed upon project completion.

**BIO-58:** Unless approved by the Service, water will not be impounded in a manner that may attract California red-legged frogs.

**BIO-59:** A United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall permanently remove any individuals of exotic species, such as bullfrogs (*Rana catesbeiana*), signal and red swamp crayfish (*Pacifastacus leniusculus*; *Procambarus clarkii*), and centrarchid fishes from the project area to the maximum extent possible. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service-approved biologist shall be responsible for ensuring his or her activities comply with the California Fish and Game Code.

**BIO-60:** If Caltrans demonstrates that disturbed areas have been restored to conditions that allow them to function as habitat for the California red-legged frog, these areas will not be included in the amount of total habitat permanently disturbed.

**BIO-61:** To ensure that diseases are not conveyed between work sites by the Service-approved biologist, the fieldwork code of practice developed by the Declining Amphibian Populations Task Force will be followed at all times.

**BIO-62:** Project sites will be re-vegetated with an assemblage of native riparian, wetland, and upland vegetation suitable for the area. Locally collected plant materials will be used to the extent practicable. Invasive, exotic plants will be controlled to the maximum extent practicable. This measure will be implemented in all areas disturbed by project construction, unless the Service and Caltrans determine that it is not feasible or practical.

**BIO-63:** Caltrans will not use herbicides as the primary method to control invasive, exotic plants. However, if Caltrans determines that the use of herbicides is the only feasible method for controlling invasive plants at a specific project site, it will implement the following additional protective measures for the California red-legged frog:

- a. Caltrans will not use herbicides during the breeding season for the California red-legged frog.
- b. Caltrans will conduct surveys for the California red-legged frog immediately before the start of any herbicide use. If found, California red-legged frogs will be relocated to suitable habitat far enough from the project area that no direct contact with herbicides will occur.
- c. Giant reed and other invasive plants will be cut and hauled out by hand and then painted with glyphosate or glyphosate-based products, such as Aquamaster® or Rodeo®.
- d. Licensed and experienced Caltrans staff or a licensed and experienced contractor will use a hand-held sprayer for foliar application of Aquamaster® or Rodeo® where large monoculture stands occur at an individual project site.
- e. All precautions will be taken to ensure that no herbicide is applied to native vegetation.

- f. Herbicides will not be applied on or near open water surfaces (no closer than 60 feet from open water).
- g. Foliar applications of herbicide will not occur when wind speeds are in excess of 3 miles per hour.
- h. No herbicides will be applied within 24 hours of forecasted rain.
- i. Application of all herbicides will be done by qualified Caltrans staff or contractors to ensure that overspray is minimized, that all application is made in accordance with label recommendations, and with the implementation of all required and reasonable safety measures. A safe dye will be added to the mixture to visually denote treated sites. Application of herbicides will be consistent with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Pesticide Programs, Endangered Species Protection Program County bulletins.
- j. All herbicides, fuels, lubricants, and equipment will be stored, poured, or refilled at least 60 feet from riparian habitat or water bodies in a location where a spill would not drain directly toward aquatic habitat. Caltrans will ensure that contamination of habitat does not occur during such operations. Before the start of work, Caltrans will ensure that a plan is in place for a prompt and effective response to accidental spills. All workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.

**BIO-64:** Upon completion of the project, Caltrans shall ensure that a Project Completion Report is completed and provided to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, following the template provided with the Programmatic Biological Opinion.

### **California Red-Legged Frog Mitigation**

**BIO-65:** Temporary impacts to upland/dispersal habitat will be mitigated at a 1-to-1 ratio (acreage) and a 3-to-1 ratio (acreage) for permanent impacts to upland/dispersal habitat. The method of mitigation (i.e., on-site mitigation, off-site mitigation, mitigation credits, invasive species control, combination of methods, etc.) will be determined during the design phase of the project. Additionally, compensatory mitigation measures **BIO-33**, **BIO-34**, and **BIO-42** will mitigate impacts to California red-legged frog upland dispersal habitat.

### **Western Spadefoot Toad**

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for potential impacts to the western spadefoot toad upland habitat resulting from the project:

Avoidance and minimization measures **BIO-35** through **BIO-44** and **BIO-46** through **BIO-64** apply to the western spadefoot toad. Mitigation Measures **BIO-45** and **BIO-65** also apply.

## **Southwestern Pond Turtle**

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for potential impacts to the southwestern pond turtle upland habitat resulting from the project:

**BIO-66:** Preconstruction Survey: No more than 24 hours before the date of initial ground disturbance and vegetation clearing, a United States Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife-approved biologist with experience in the identification of all life stages of the southwestern pond turtle will conduct a pre-construction survey at the project locations. The survey will consist of walking the project limits and within the project site to determine the possible presence of the species. The approved biologist will investigate all areas (such as small woody debris, refuse, burrows, etc) that could be used by southwestern pond turtles for migration, nesting, sheltering (such as small woody debris, refuse, burrows, etc) and other essential behaviors.

**BIO-67:** Before any activities begin, the approved biologist will conduct a Worker Environmental Awareness Training course for all persons employed or otherwise working on the project site before performing any work on-site. The WEAT will include a discussion of the biology of the southwestern pond turtle, its protected status, proximity to the project site, project-specific avoidance and minimization measures, and the implications of violating the FESA and permit conditions. Upon completion of the training course, employees will sign a form stating they attended the course and understand all protection measures.

**BIO-68:** Biological Monitoring – The approved biologist will monitor construction activities where pond turtles are present or assumed present. The approved biologist will be present during all initial ground disturbance at locations immediately adjacent to or within habitat that supports populations of southwestern pond turtles.

**BIO-69:** Relocation – To mitigate potential impacts resulting from project construction, individuals will be relocated by the approved biologist to a nearby location outside of the construction area with suitable habitat.

Avoidance and minimization measures **BIO-1** through **BIO-14**, **BIO-35** through **BIO-44**, and **BIO-46** through **BIO-64** apply.

## **Southwestern Pond Turtle Mitigation Measures**

Mitigation measures **BIO-33**, **BIO-34**, **BIO-45**, and **BIO-65** also apply.

## **Northern California Legless Lizard and Coast Horned Lizard**

**BIO-70:** If coast horned lizards or Northern California legless lizards are detected in the project limits during preconstruction surveys or construction,



individuals will be relocated by a qualified biologist to a nearby location outside of the construction area with suitable habitat.

Additionally, avoidance and minimization measures **BIO-35** through **BIO-44** and **BIO-46** through **BIO-64** apply.

### **Coast Patch-Nosed Snake and Two-Striped Garter Snake**

The following avoidance measures will be implemented to minimize and avoid impacts to the coast patch-nosed snake and two-striped garter snake:

**BIO-71:** A qualified biologist would conduct a preconstruction survey before the start of ground disturbance at locations with suitable coast patch-nosed snake and two-striped garter snake habitat.

**BIO-72:** If present, a qualified biologist would relocate individuals to a nearby location outside the construction area with suitable habitat.

### **Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and Least Bell's Vireo**

The following measures will be implemented to minimize and avoid impacts to least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher:

**BIO-73:** Focused surveys following United States Fish and Wildlife Service survey guidelines for least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher shall be completed to determine the presence/absence of least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher wherever suitable habitat is present within 500 feet of the limits of construction. Surveys shall be conducted within one year before the start of construction activities. If the least Bell's vireo and the southwestern willow flycatcher are detected during these surveys, formal Section 7 consultation will be initiated.

**BIO-74:** Caltrans will provide the United States Fish and Wildlife Service with a report detailing Least bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher survey efforts for the breeding season before construction.

**BIO-75:** Before any activities begin, the approved biologist will conduct a Worker Environmental Awareness Training course for all persons employed or otherwise working on the project site before performing any work on-site. The WEAT course will include a discussion of the biology of the least Bell's vireo and the southwestern willow flycatcher, their protected status, proximity to the project site, project-specific avoidance and minimization measures, and the implications of violating FESA and permit conditions. Upon completion of the training course, employees will sign a form stating they attended the course and understand all protection measures.

**BIO-76:** Before construction, vegetation removal shall be scheduled to occur from October 1 to January 31, outside the typical nesting bird season, if possible, to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds. If tree removal or other

construction activities are proposed to occur within 100 feet of potential habitat during the nesting season (February 1 to September 30), a nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than five calendar days before construction.

**BIO-77:** If least Bell's vireo or southwestern willow flycatcher are observed within 100 feet of the project area during construction or during the preconstruction surveys, all project activities shall stop immediately, and the relevant resource agencies shall be consulted. Development of additional avoidance and minimization measures will occur as necessary in coordination with the pertinent agencies.

### **Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and Least Bell's Vireo Mitigation**

Mitigation measures **BIO-33** and **BIO-34** will mitigate the impacts to least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher habitat. Impacts to vegetation would be offset by replacement plantings within the project limits, which will also replace in-kind nesting habitat.

### **Tri-Colored Blackbird and Nesting Birds**

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented to minimize impacts to nesting migratory birds:

**BIO-78:** Caltrans will schedule vegetation removal between October 1 and January 31, outside the typical nesting bird season, as feasible. If construction activities are proposed to occur within 100 feet of potential habitat during the nesting season (February 1 to September 30), a nesting bird survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than three days before construction. Partially built nests may only be removed if they have been monitored by a qualified biologist and determined to be inactive. If an active nest is found, a qualified biologist will determine an appropriate buffer based on the habits and needs of the species. The buffer area will be avoided until a qualified biologist has determined that juveniles have fledged and are no longer dependent on the nest.

**BIO-79:** During the non-nesting season (October 1 to January 31), methods to deter new nests on the bridge will be implemented to prevent new nests from forming during project activities. Exact methods of deterrence will be determined during the design phase. Removal of nests as they are beginning to form may be conducted as a last resort to further prevent nesting during project activities. There will be no removal of fully formed active nests.

**BIO-80:** Active bird nests must not be disturbed, and eggs or young of birds covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code must not be killed, destroyed, injured, or harassed at any time.

### **Tri-Colored Blackbird and Nesting Birds Mitigation**

No additional mitigation is proposed beyond the replacement plantings within the project limits, which will also replace in-kind nesting habitat.

### **Pallid Bat, Western Red Bat, Silver-Haired Bat, Yuma Myotis, and Other Roosting Bats**

**BIO-81:** Tree removal shall be scheduled to occur from September 2 to January 31, outside the typical bat maternity roosting season, if possible, to avoid potential impacts to roosting bats.

**BIO-82:** If tree removal or other construction activities are proposed to occur within 100 feet of potential habitat during the bat maternity roosting season (February 1 to September 1), a bat roost survey shall be conducted by a biologist determined qualified by Caltrans within 14 days before construction. The biologist(s) conducting the preconstruction surveys will also identify the nature of the bat utilization (i.e., no roosting, night roost, day roost, maternity roost) and determine if passive bat exclusion will be necessary and feasible. If an active day roost is found, a qualified Caltrans biologist shall determine an appropriate buffer based on the habits and needs of the species. The buffer area shall be avoided until a qualified biologist has determined that roosting activity has stopped or exclusionary methods have successfully evicted roosting bats.

**BIO-83:** If bats are found by a qualified biologist to be maternity roosting, the roost(s) will be designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Area, and all construction activities shall be avoided within 100 feet until the end of the maternity roosting season (beginning of September) or until pups are volant (capable of flight).

### **Pallid Bat, Western Red Bat, Silver-Haired Bat, Yuma Myotis, and Other Roosting Bats Mitigation**

With the above avoidance and minimization efforts specific to roosting bats as well as compensatory mitigation measures **BIO-33** and **BIO-34** for impacts to vegetation, no additional mitigation is proposed for roosting bats.

### **San Diego Desert Woodrat**

**BIO-84:** Before initial ground disturbance, a preconstruction visual survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist within suitable woodrat habitat to determine the presence of woodrat nests.

**BIO-85:** If woodrat nests are present within the area of construction activities, an ESA with a 25-foot buffer around each nest will be established to avoid nests.

**BIO-86:** Construction activities requiring grading or vegetation removal within the 25-foot protective buffer should only occur under the supervision of a qualified biologist.

**BIO-87:** If project activities cannot avoid removing the nest, then it should be dismantled by hand before grading or vegetation removal activities, under the supervision of a qualified biologist. Dismantling shall occur during the non-breeding season (October 1 through December 31). If young are encountered during nest dismantling, the dismantling activity will stop and nest material will be replaced back on the nest, and the nest should be left alone and rechecked in two to three weeks to see if the young are out of the nest or capable of being out on their own (as determined by a qualified biologist); once the young can fend for themselves, the nest dismantling can continue. Where appropriate, nest material will be relocated to a suitable location nearby.

### **San Diego Desert Woodrat Mitigation**

No mitigation measures are required for this species.

### **American Badger**

The following avoidance and minimization measures are recommended:

**BIO-88:** No less than 14 days and no more than 30 days before the beginning of ground disturbance and/or construction activities, a qualified biologist shall conduct a survey to determine if any American badger dens are present at the project site. If dens are found, they shall be monitored for badger activity. Potentially active dens will be monitored with tracking medium or infrared cameras for three consecutive days to determine the current use. If no badger activity is observed during this period, then the den will be excavated by hand or carefully with equipment or blocked during the duration of construction under the direction of a qualified biologist to preclude (prevent) subsequent use. If American badger activity is observed at a den, Caltrans will coordinate with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for suitable buffer implementation or exclusion methods.

**BIO-89:** Observations of occupied badger dens or American badgers within the project area shall be submitted to the California Natural Diversity Database upon project completion.

**BIO-90:** No rodent control pesticides shall be used, including anticoagulant rodenticides such as brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difethialone, and difenacoum. This is necessary to minimize the possibility of primary or secondary poisoning of American badgers or other special-status species.

### **American Badger Mitigation**

No mitigation measures are required for the American badger.

### **2.1.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

**GHG-1:** Limit idling to 5 minutes for delivery and dump trucks and other diesel-powered equipment when not in active operation.

**GHG-2:** Schedule delivery truck trips outside peak morning and evening commute hours.

**GHG-3:** For improved fuel efficiency from construction equipment:

- Maintain equipment in proper tune and working condition.
- Use the right-sized equipment for the job.
- Use equipment with new technologies.

**GHG-4:** When feasible, use alternative fuels such as renewable diesel for construction equipment.

**GHG-5:** Supplement existing construction environmental training with information on methods to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to construction.

**GHG-6:** When feasible, produce Hot Mix Asphalt using warm mix technology.

**GHG-7:** Use Rubberized Hot Mix Asphalt to lower the rolling resistance of highway surfaces as much as possible while still maintaining design and safety standards.

**GHG-8:** Use Partial Depth Recycling to recycle existing pavement where feasible.

### **2.1.10 Hydrology and Water Quality**

#### **Temporary Soil Stabilization**

**WQ-1:** Minimize active Disturbed Soil Areas during the rainy season using scheduling techniques.

**WQ-2:** Preserve existing vegetation to the maximum extent feasible.

**WQ-3:** Implement temporary protective cover/erosion control on all non-active Disturbed Soil Areas and soil stockpiles.

**WQ-4:** Control erosive forces of stormwater runoff with effective storm flow management such as temporary concentrated flow conveyance devices, earthen dikes, drainage swales, lined ditches, outlet protection/velocity dissipation devices, and slope drains as determined feasible.

### **Temporary Sediment Controls**

**WQ-5:** Implement linear sediment controls such as fiber rolls, check dams, or gravel bag berms on all active and non-active Disturbed Soil Areas during the rainy season.

**WQ-6:** To further help prevent sediment discharge, stabilized construction site entrances, temporary drainage inlet protection, and street sweeping and vacuuming will be necessary.

**WQ-7:** Implement appropriate wind erosion controls year-round.

### **Non-Stormwater Management**

**WQ-8:** The appropriate non-stormwater Best Management Practices will be implemented year-round as follows:

**WQ-9:** Water conservation practices are implemented on all construction sites and wherever water is used.

**WQ-10:** Paving and grinding procedures are implemented where paving, surfacing, resurfacing, grinding, or saw cutting may pollute stormwater runoff or discharge to the storm drain system or watercourses.

**WQ-11:** Procedures and practices designed for construction contractors to recognize illicit connections or illegally dumped or discharged materials on a construction site and report incidents to the resident engineer.

**WQ-12:** The following activities must be performed at least 100 feet from concentrated flows of stormwater, drainage courses, and inlets if within the floodplain and at least 50 feet if outside of the floodplain: stockpiling materials, storing equipment and liquid waste containers, washing vehicles or equipment, and fueling and maintaining vehicles and equipment.

**WQ-13:** Pile driving operations will be part of construction activities.

**WQ-14:** Concrete curing will be used in the construction of structures such as buildings, sidewalks, and retaining walls. Concrete curing includes the use of both chemical and water methods. Proper procedures will minimize the pollution of runoff during concrete curing.

**WQ-15:** Since the project involves structure demolition/removal over the Santa Ynez River, proper procedures will be implemented to minimize pollution during these activities.

**WQ-16:** The following construction site Best Management Practices are anticipated to be bid items for this project:

- Job Site Management

- Prepare Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program
- Rain Event Action Plan
- Stormwater Sampling and Analysis Day
- Stormwater Annual Report
- Move In/Move Out (Temporary Erosion Control)
- Temporary Hydraulic Mulch (Bonded Fiber Matrix)
- Temporary Check Dam
- Temporary Drainage Inlet Protection
- Temporary Fiber Roll
- Temporary Large Sediment Barrier
- Temporary Construction Entrance
- Street Sweeping
- Temporary Concrete Washout
- Temporary Fence (type Environmentally Sensitive Area)

The following project features and standardized measures implemented by the project will minimize any temporary or permanent water quality impacts created by the project:

**WQ-17:** The project will comply with the provisions of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for the State of California, Department of Transportation, Order Number 2022-0033-Division of Water Quality, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Number CAS000003, and any subsequent permits in effect at the time of construction.

**WQ-18:** The project will comply with the provisions of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit) Order Number 2022-0057-Division of Water Quality, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Number CAS000002, and any subsequent permits in effect at the time of construction.

**WQ-19:** The project will comply with the Construction General Permit by preparing and implementing a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan or Water Pollution Control Plan to address all construction-related activities,

equipment, and materials that have the potential to impact water quality for the appropriate risk level. The Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan or the Water Pollution Control Plan will identify the sources of pollutants that may affect the quality of stormwater and include Best Management Practices to control the pollutants, such as sediment control, catch basin inlet protection, construction materials management, and non-stormwater Best Management Practices. All work must conform to the Construction Site Best Management Practices requirements specified in the latest edition of the Stormwater Quality Handbooks: Construction Site Best Management Practices Manual to control and minimize the impacts of construction and construction-related activities, materials, and pollutants on the watershed. These include but are not limited to temporary sediment control, temporary soil stabilization, scheduling, waste management, materials handling, and other non-stormwater Best Management Practices.

**WQ-20:** Design Pollution Prevention Best Management Practices will be implemented, such as preservation of existing vegetation, slope/surface protection systems (permanent soil stabilization), concentrated flow conveyance systems such as ditches, berms, dikes, and swales, overside drains, flared end sections, and outlet protection/velocity dissipation devices.

**WQ-21:** Caltrans-approved treatment Best Management Practices will be implemented consistent with the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for the State of California, Department of Transportation, Order Number 2022-0033-Division of Water Quality, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Number CAS000003, and any subsequent permits in effect at the time of construction. Treatment Best Management Practices may include biofiltration strips, biofiltration swales, infiltration basins, detention devices, dry weather flow diversion, Gross Solids Removal Devices, media filters, bioretention, Open Graded Friction Course, wet basins, and other Best Management Practices.

### **2.1.13 Noise**

**NOI-1:** Notify the public in advance of the construction schedule when construction noise and upcoming construction activities likely to produce an adverse noise environment are expected. This notice shall be given two weeks in advance. Notice should be published in local news media of the dates and duration of proposed construction activity. The District 5 Public Information Office posts notice of the proposed construction and potential community impacts after receiving notice from the resident engineer.

**NOI-2:** Shield loud pieces of stationary construction equipment if complaints are received.



**NOI-3:** Shield loud pieces of stationary construction equipment with sound barriers if complaints are received.

**NOI-4:** Locate portable generators, air compressors, etc., as far away from sensitive noise receptors as feasible.

**NOI-5:** Limit grouping major pieces of equipment operating in one area to the greatest extent feasible.

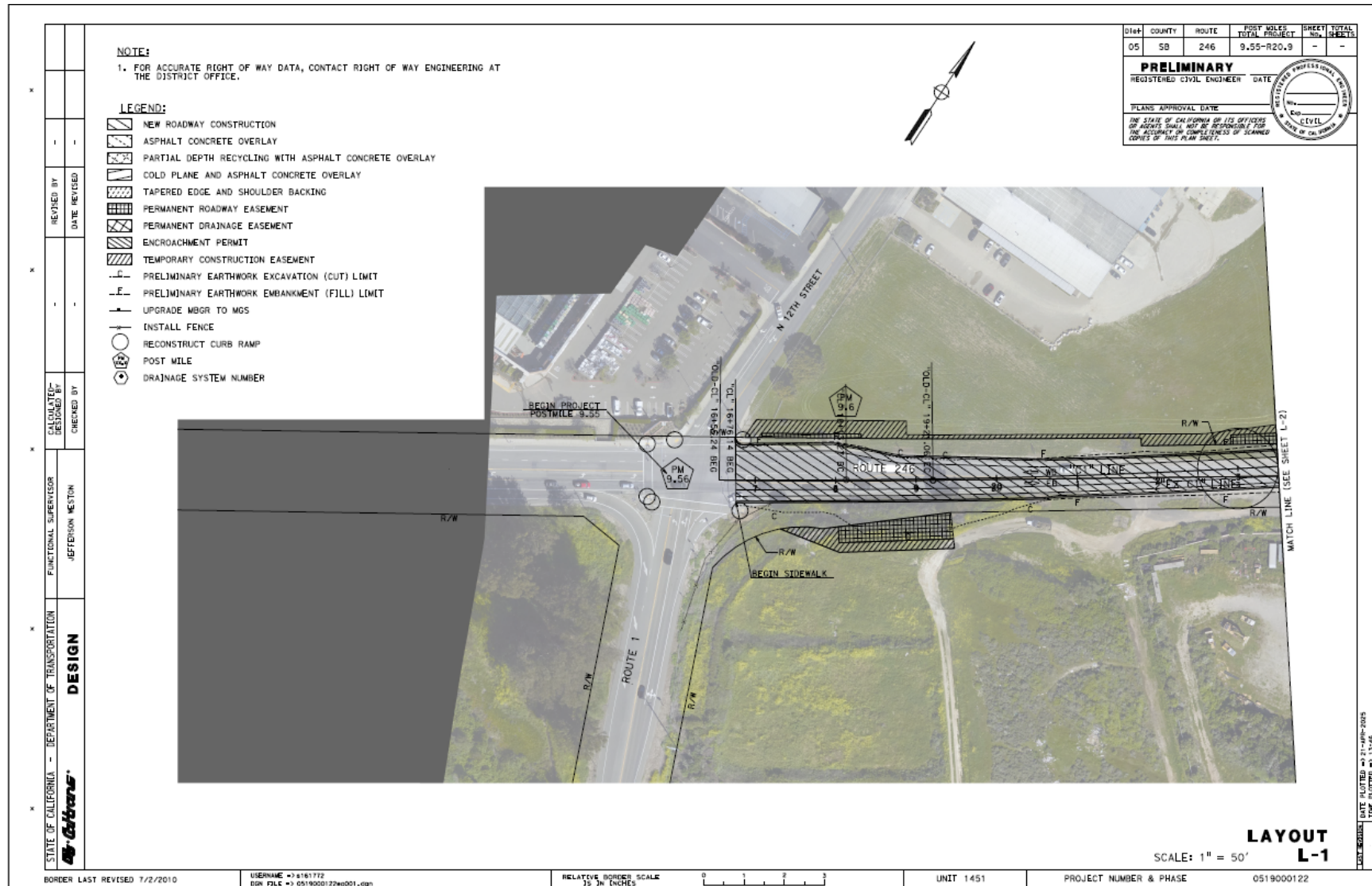
**NOI-6:** Use newer equipment that is quieter and ensure that all equipment items have the manufacturers' recommended noise abatement measures, such as mufflers, engine covers, and engine vibration isolators, intact and operational. Internal combustion engines used for any purpose on or related to the job shall be equipped with a muffler or baffle of a type recommended by the manufacturer.

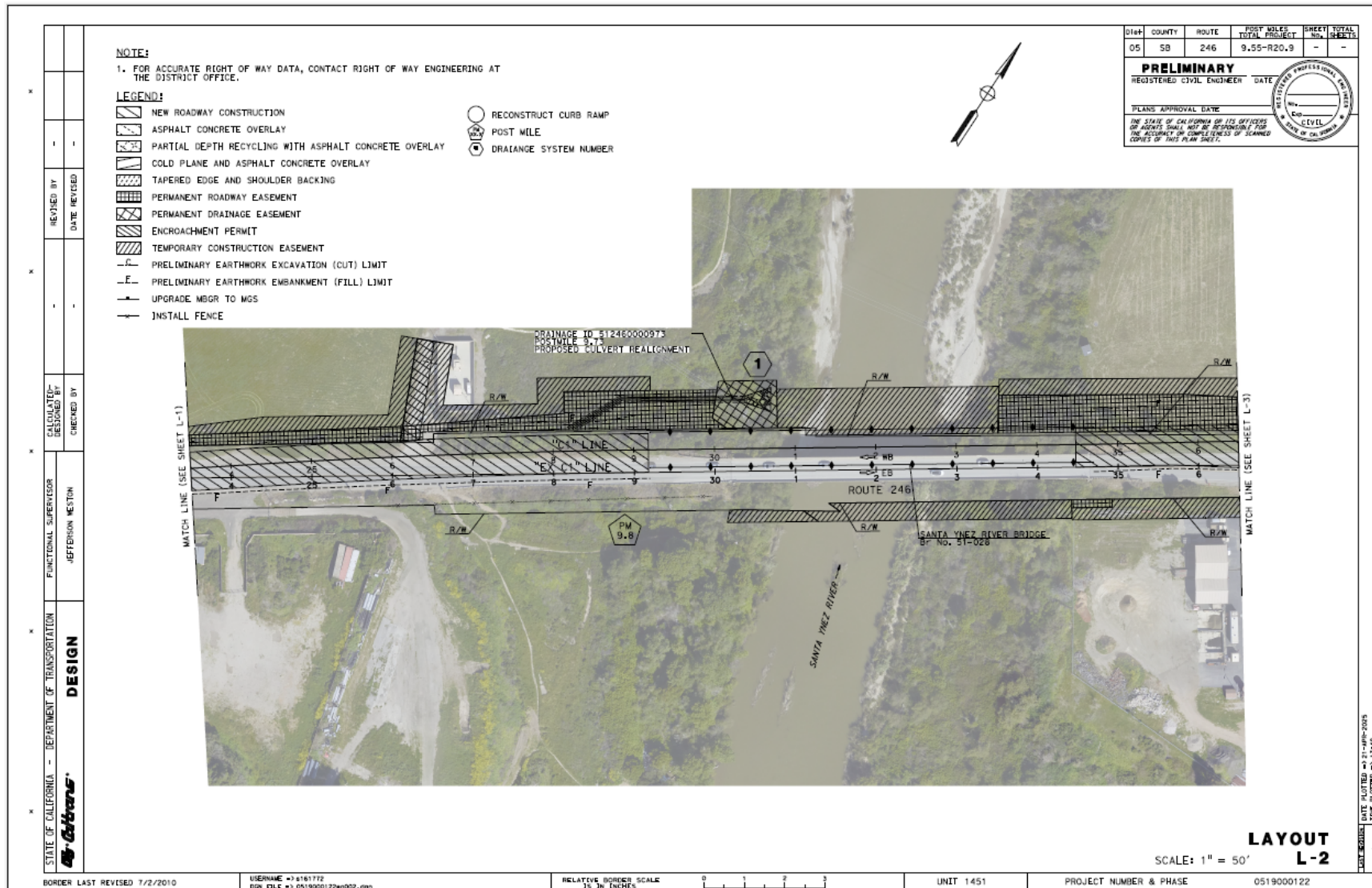
**NOI-7:** Consult district noise staff if complaints are received during the construction process, and their noise control plan and contractor shall conduct construction noise monitoring.



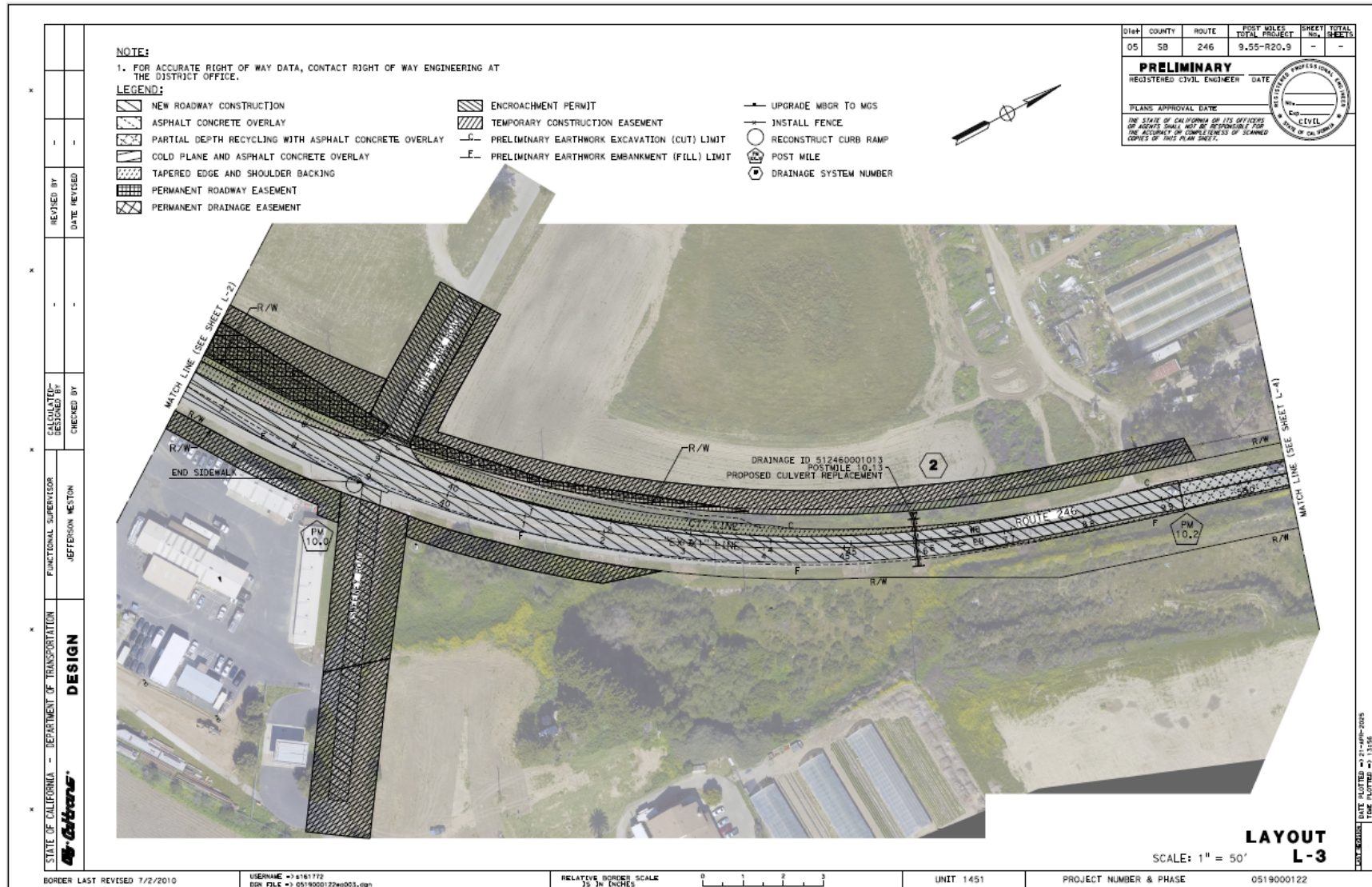
## **Appendix C** Project Design Maps and Visual Simulations

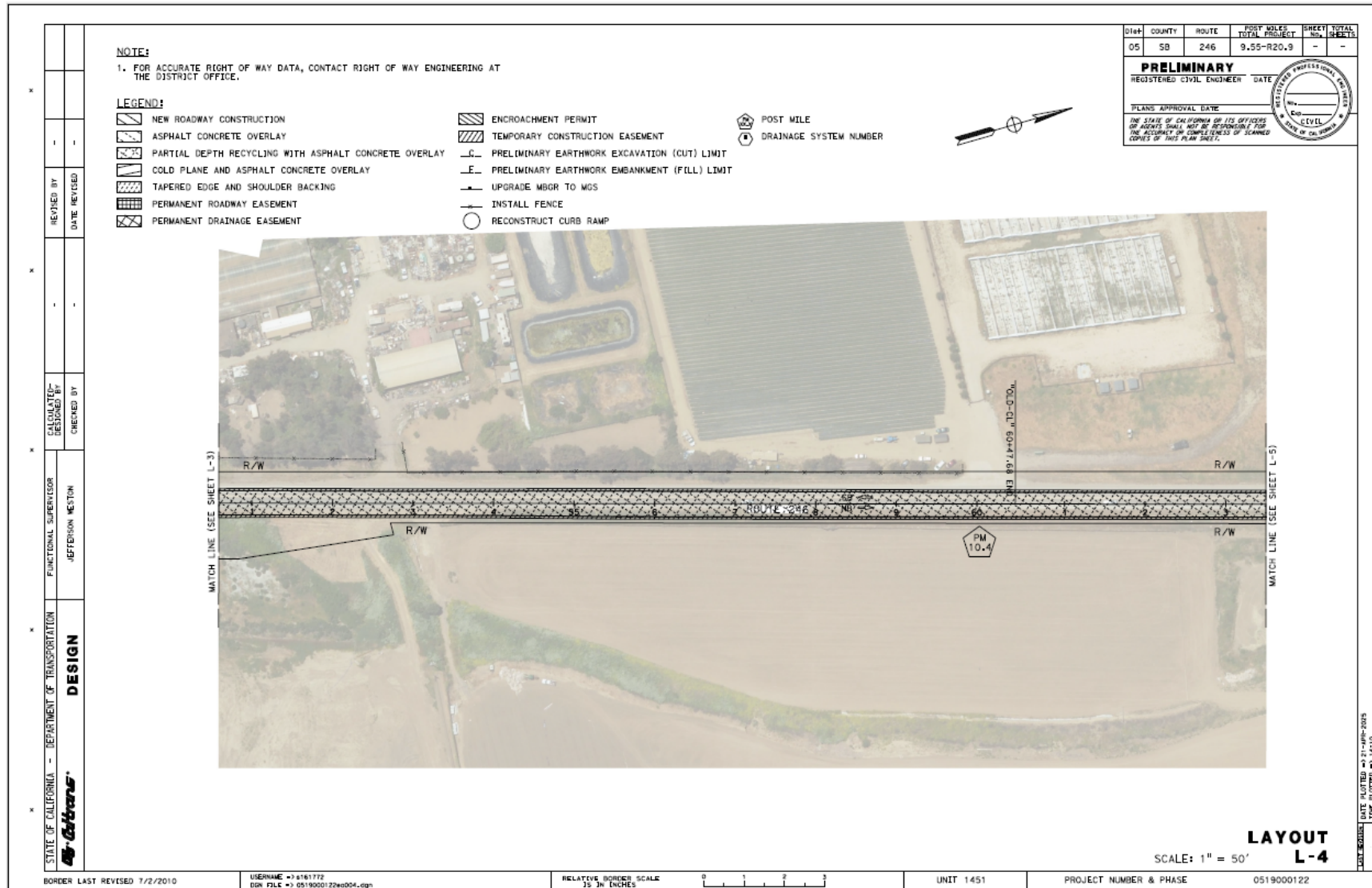
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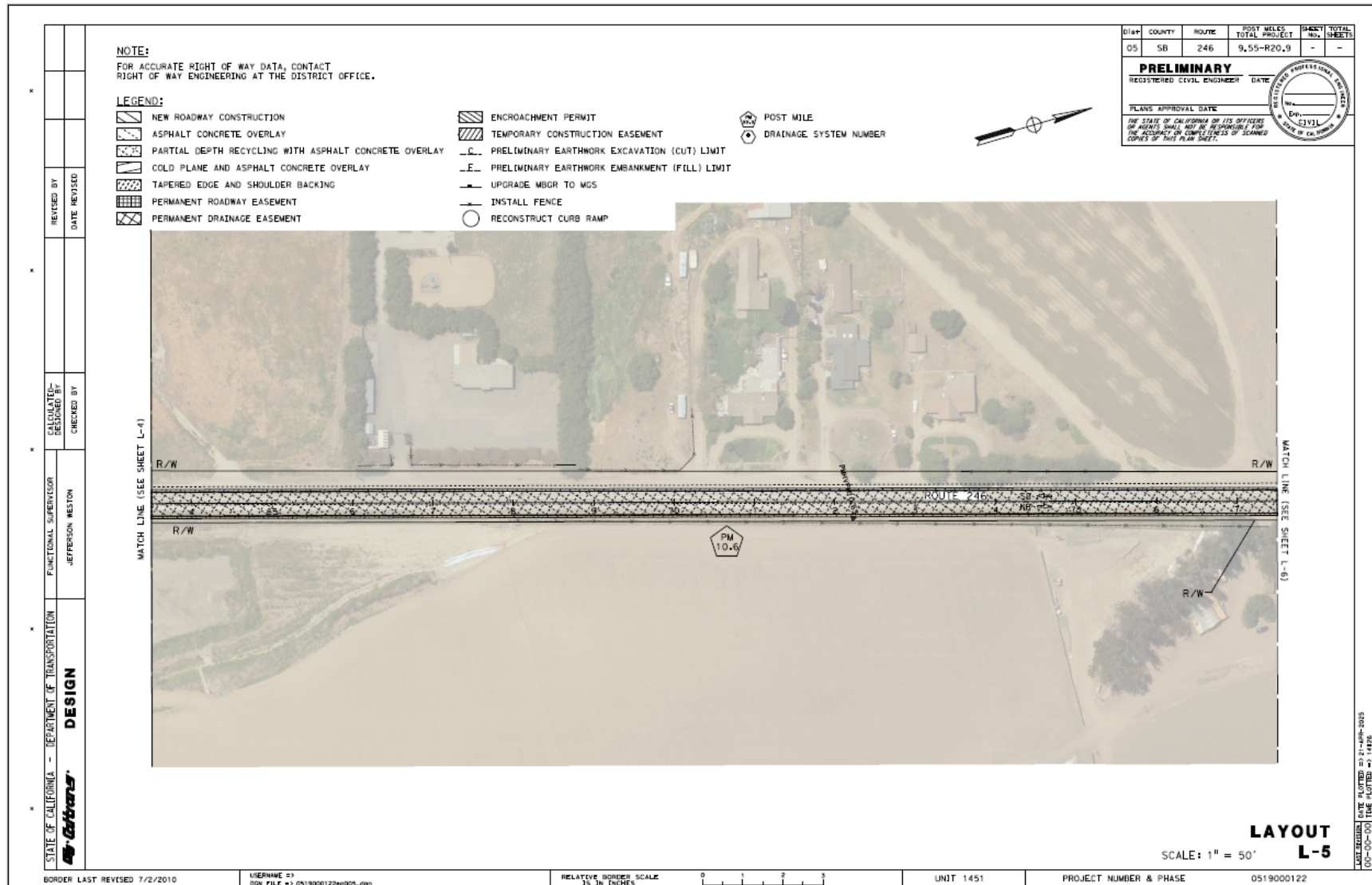




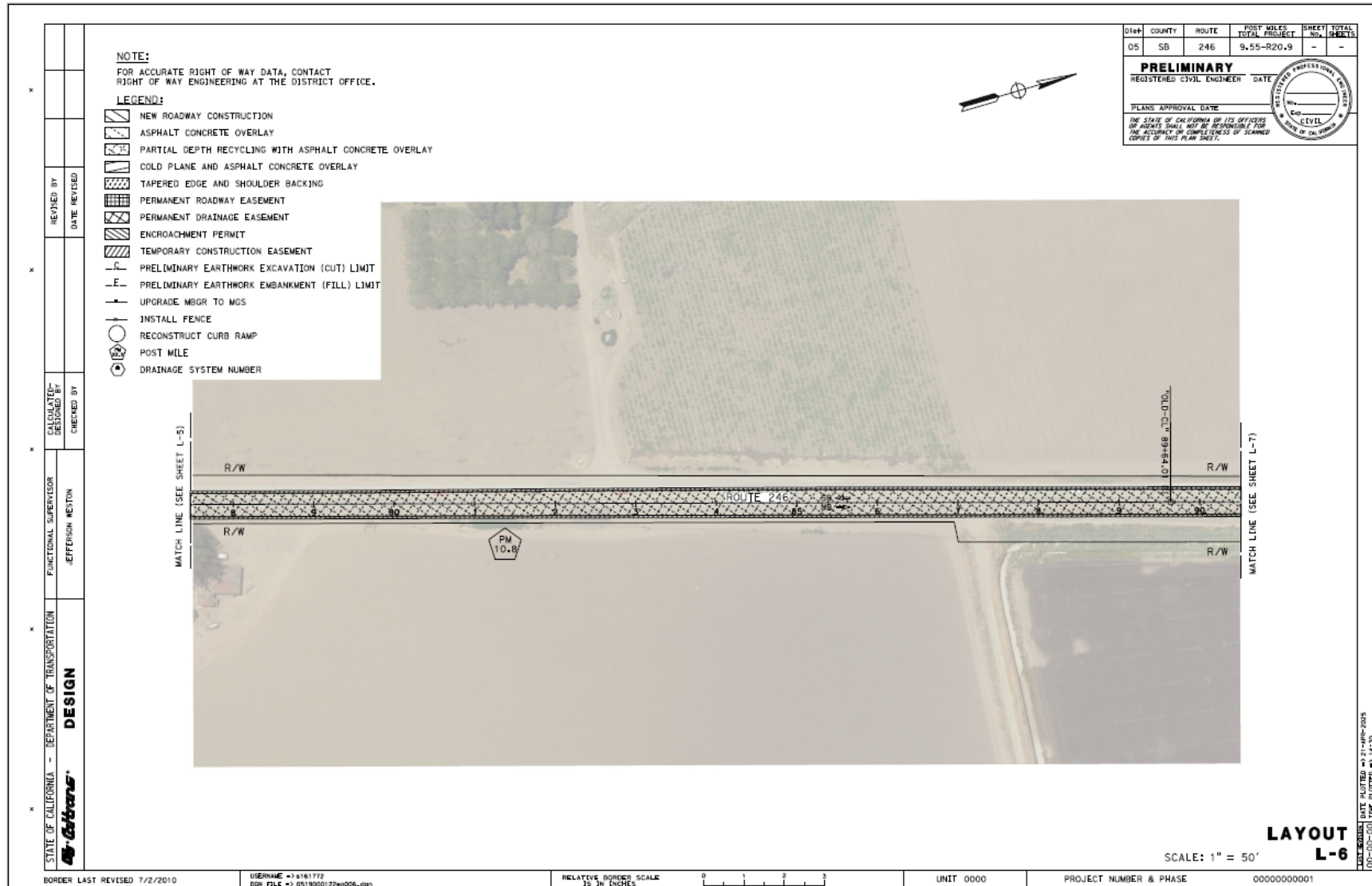


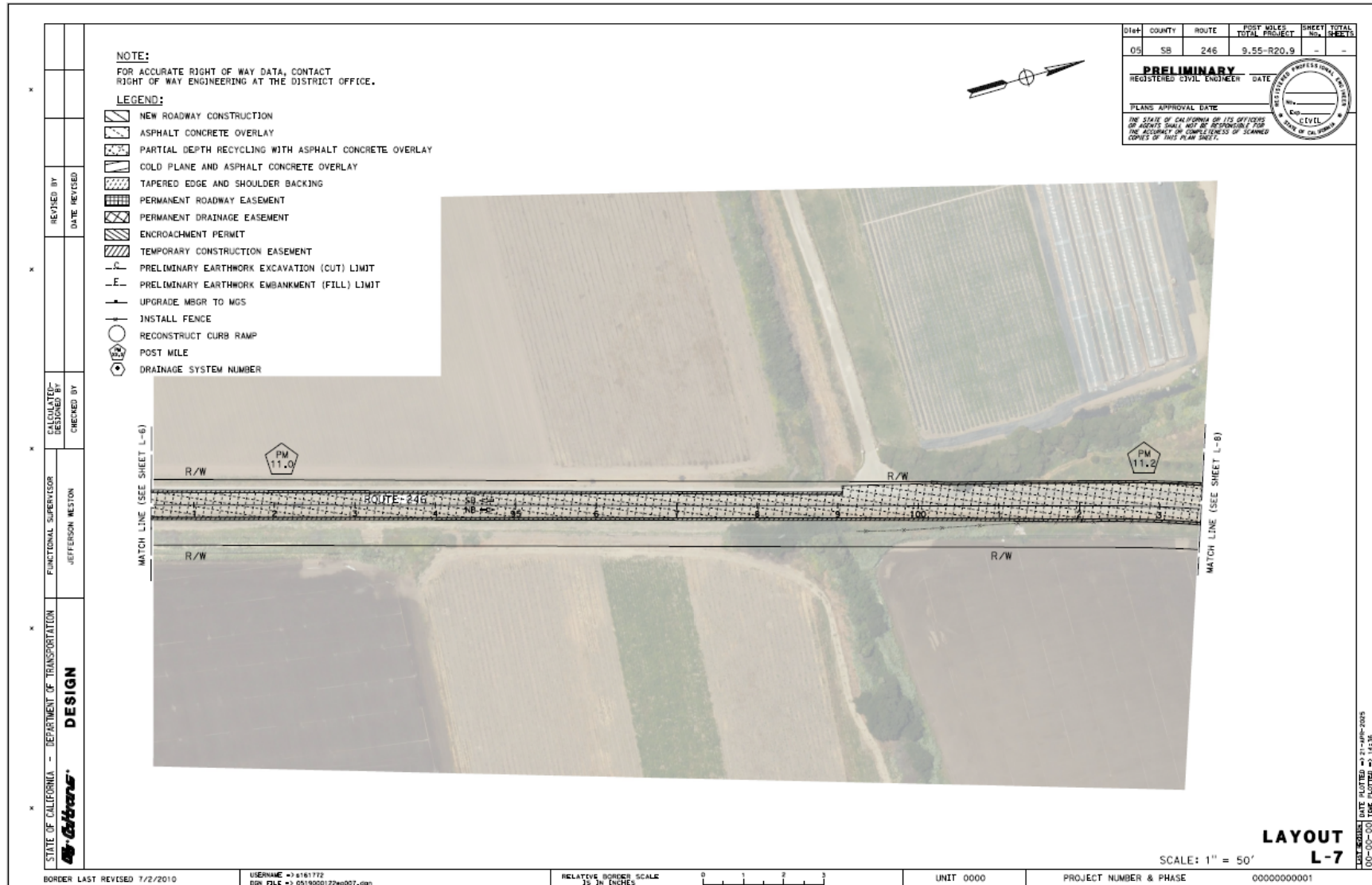


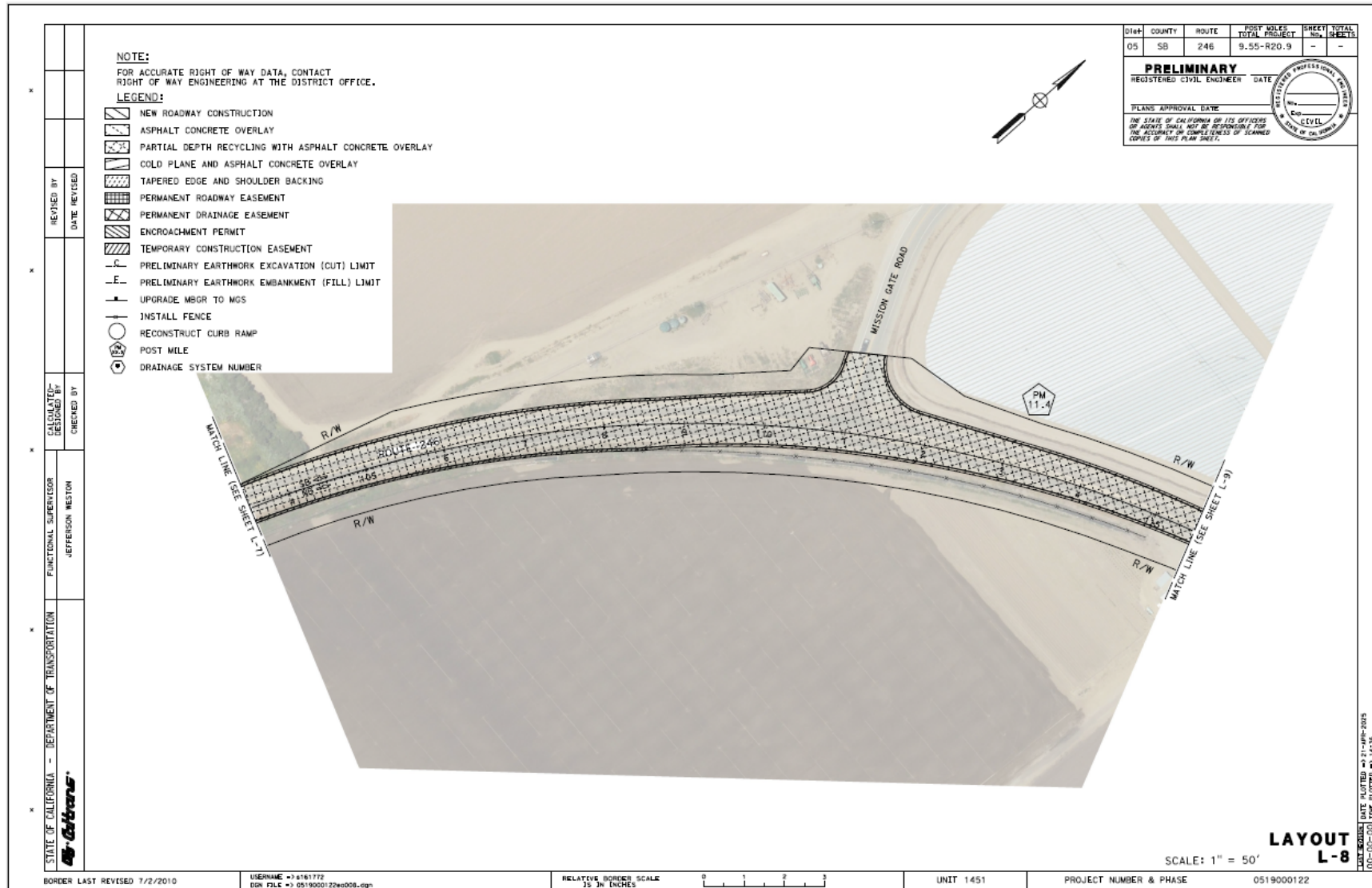




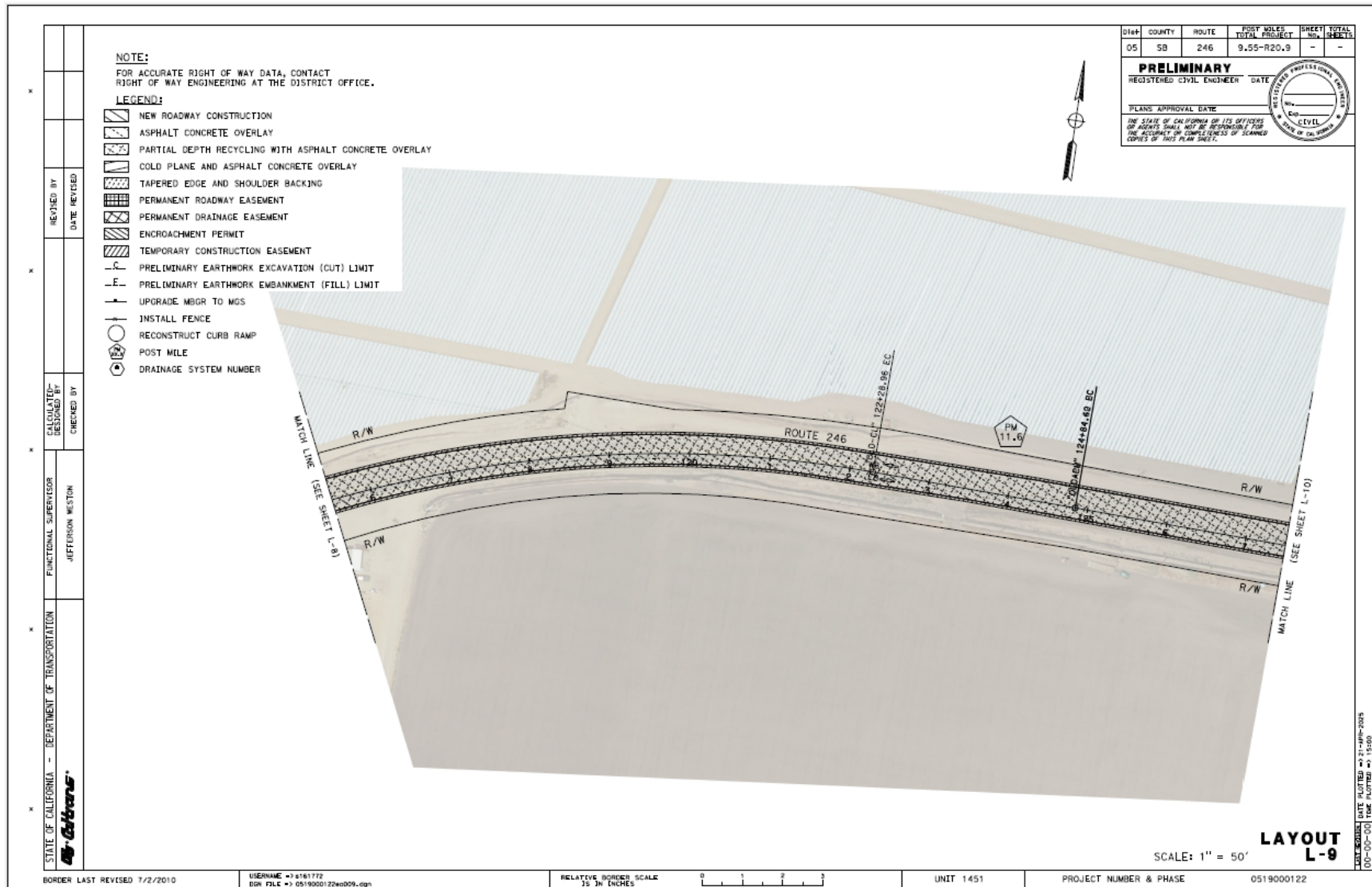


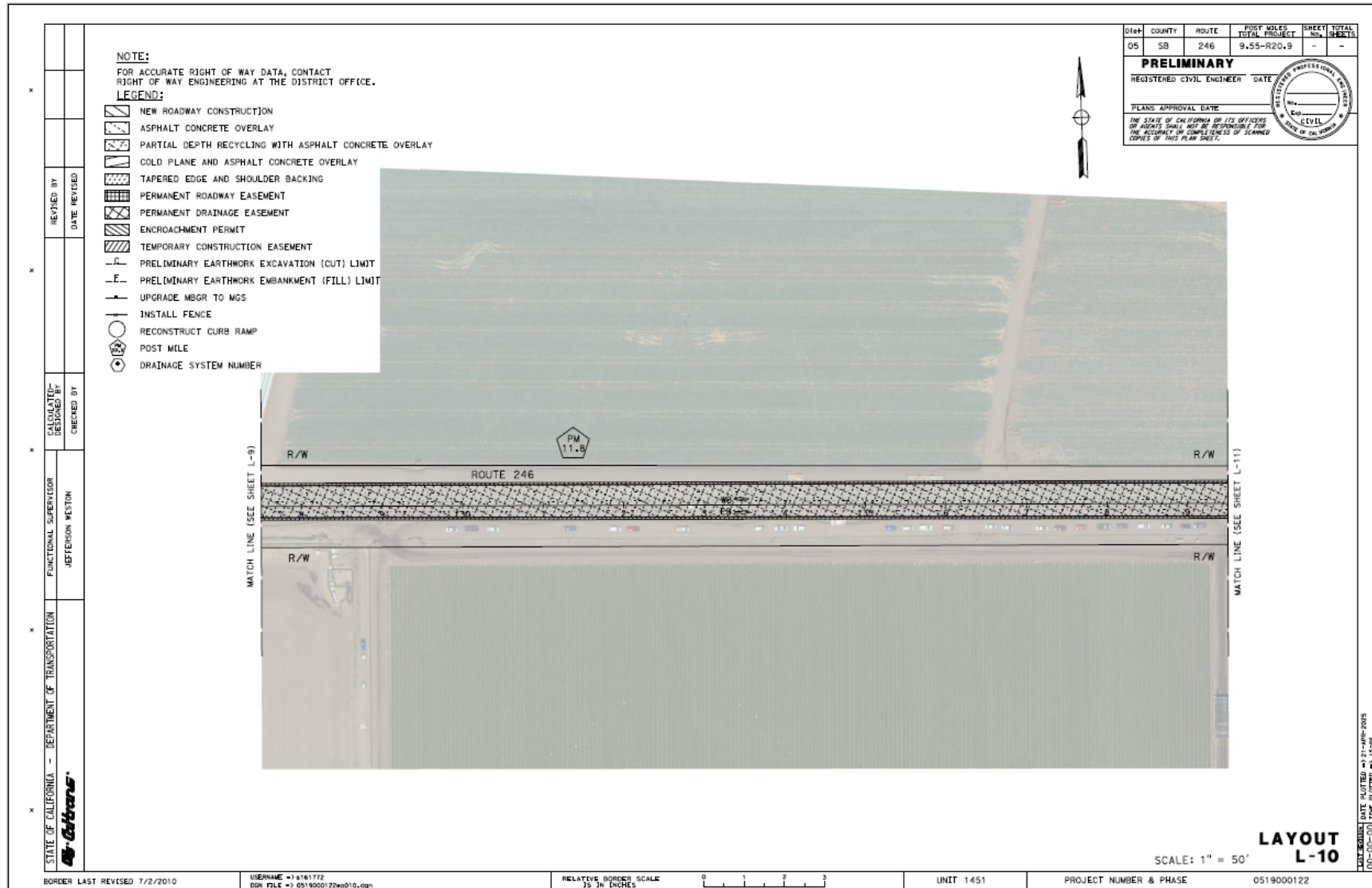


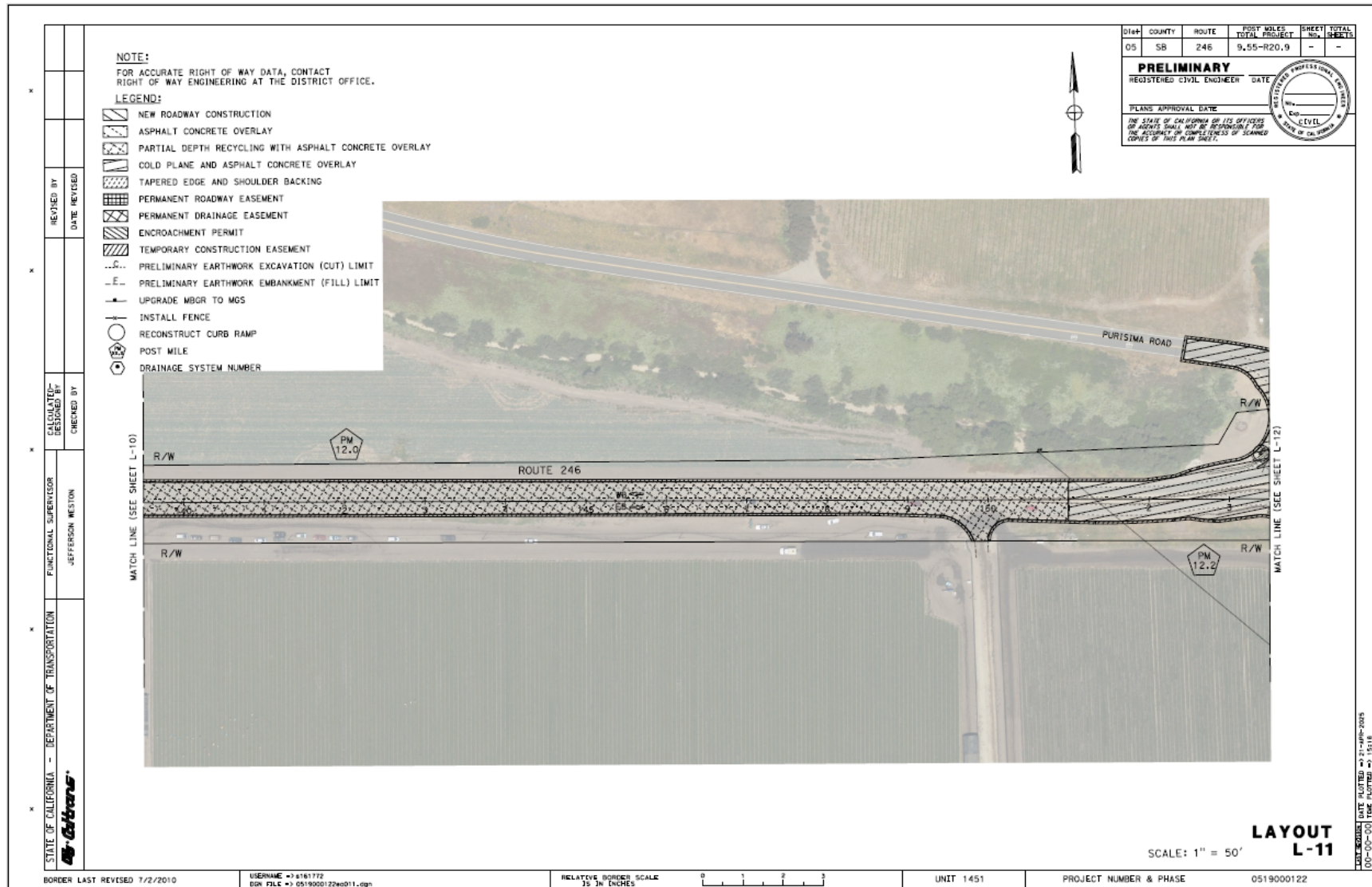




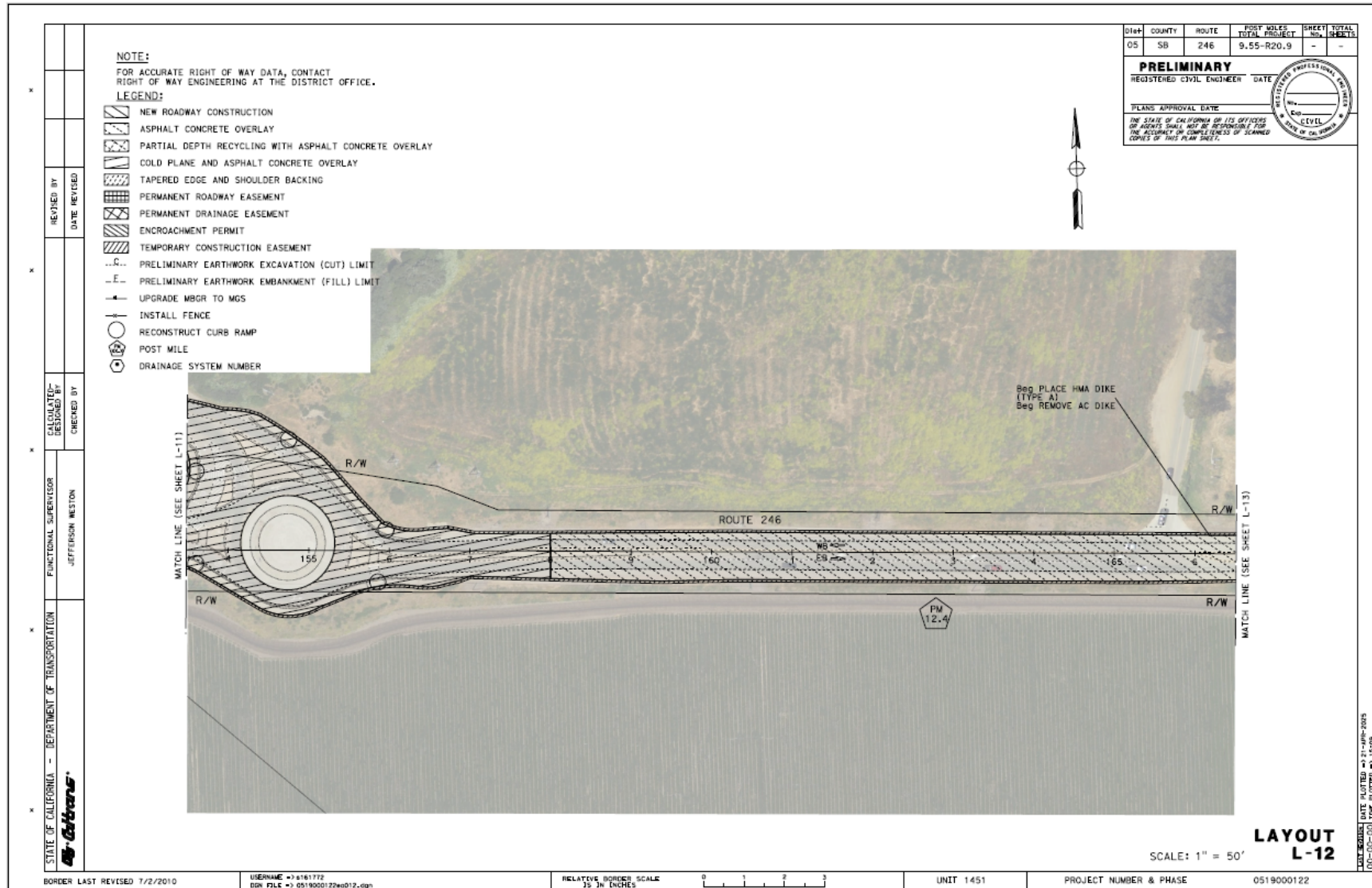


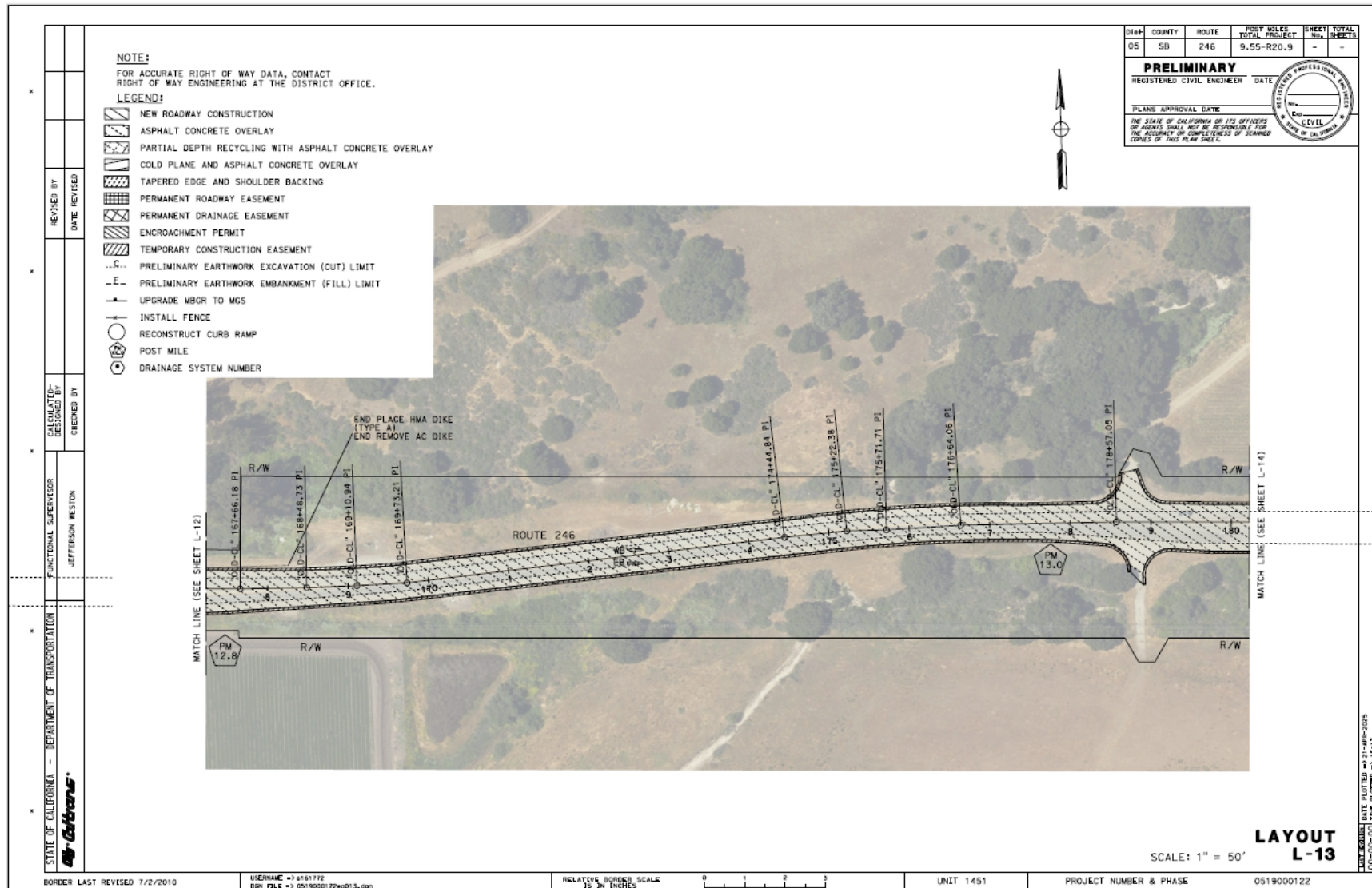




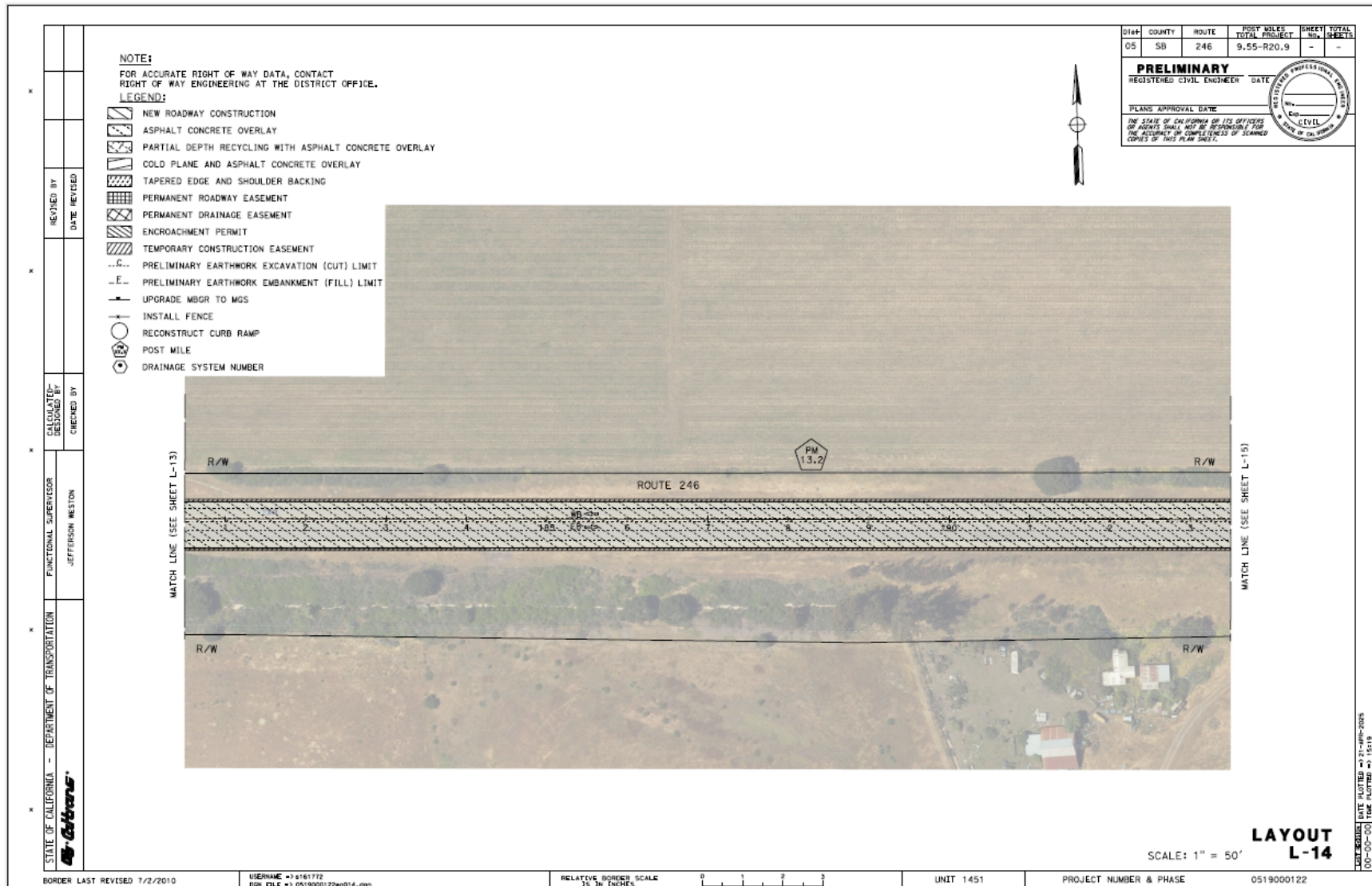


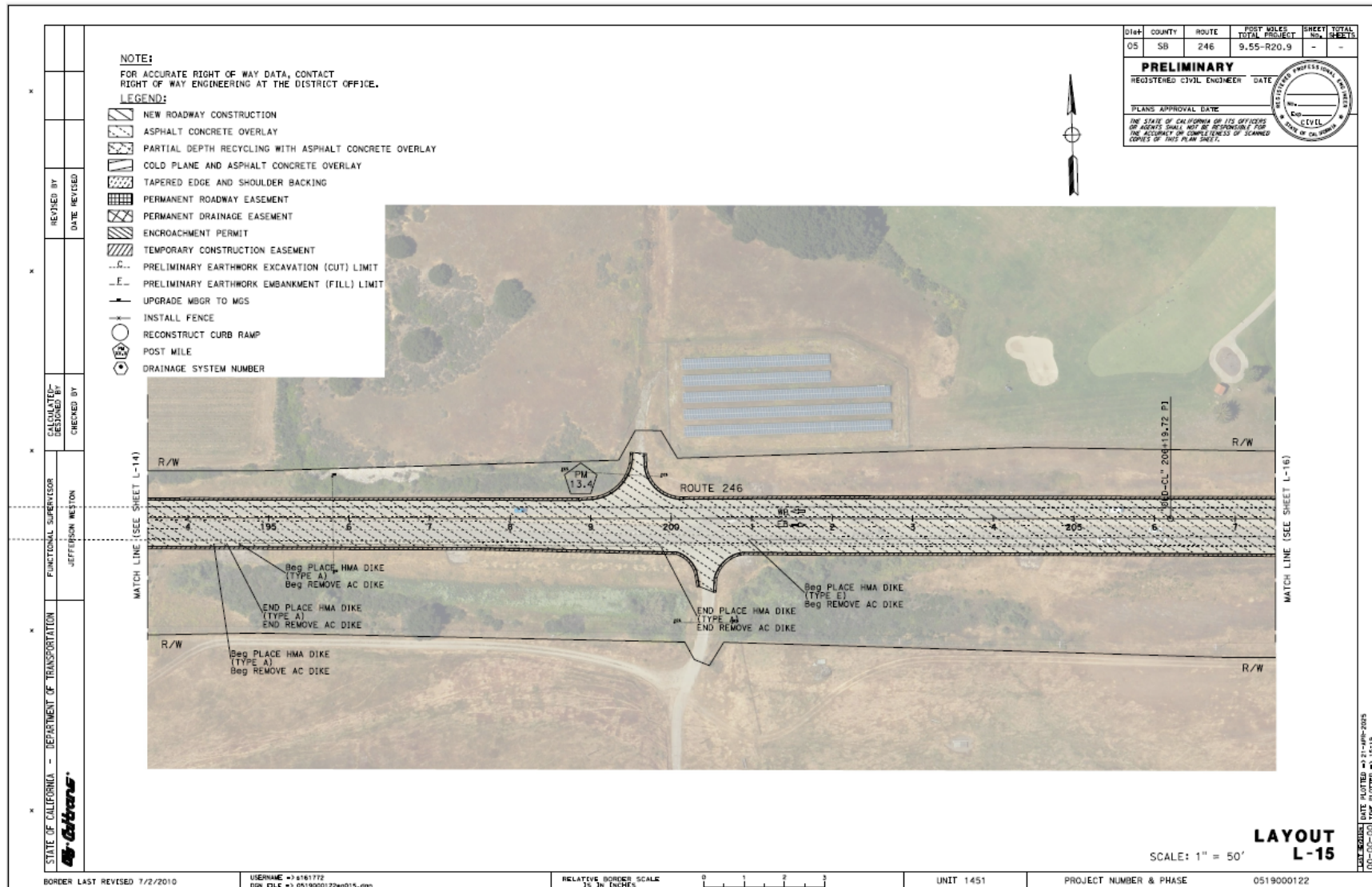




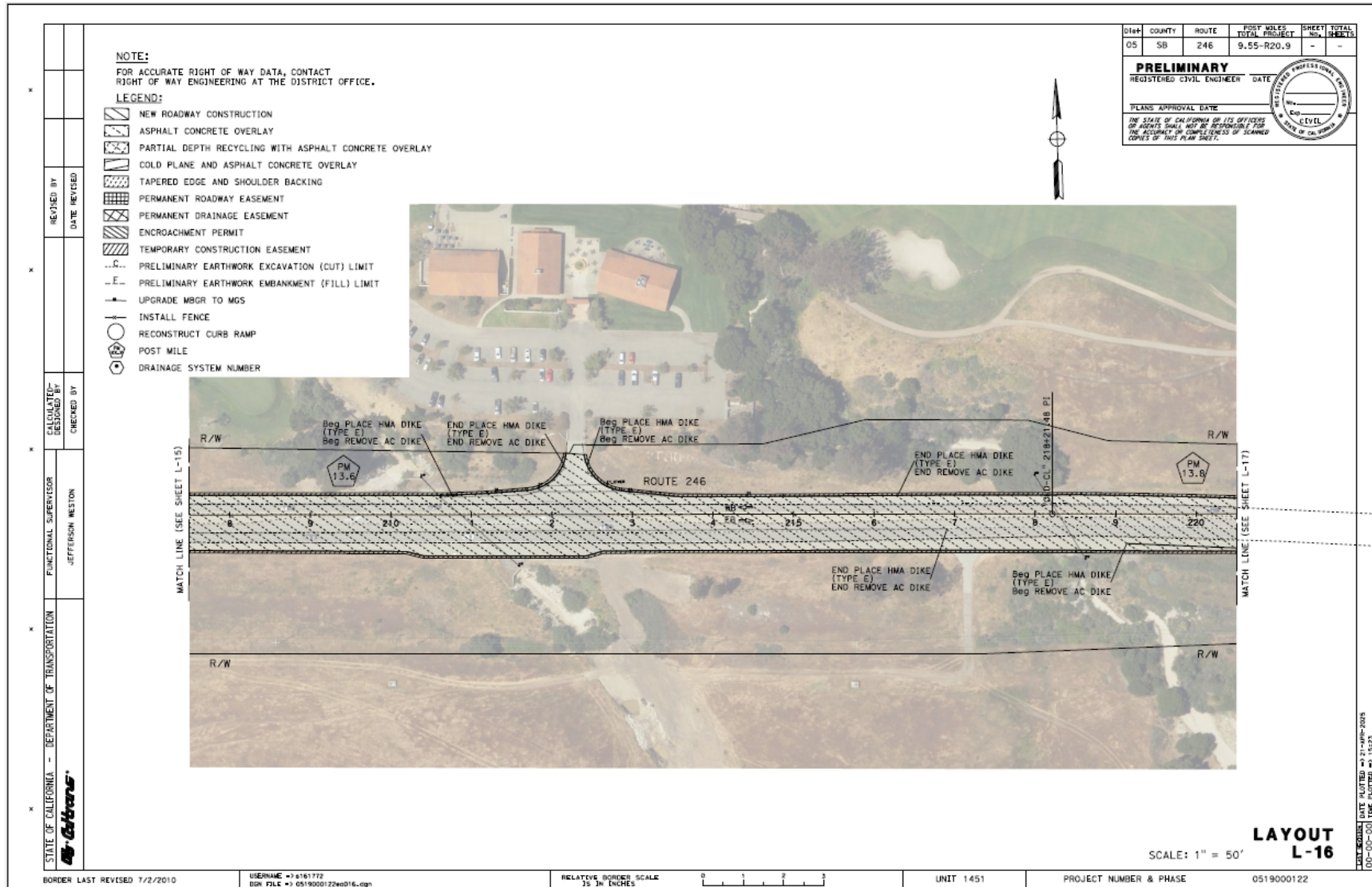


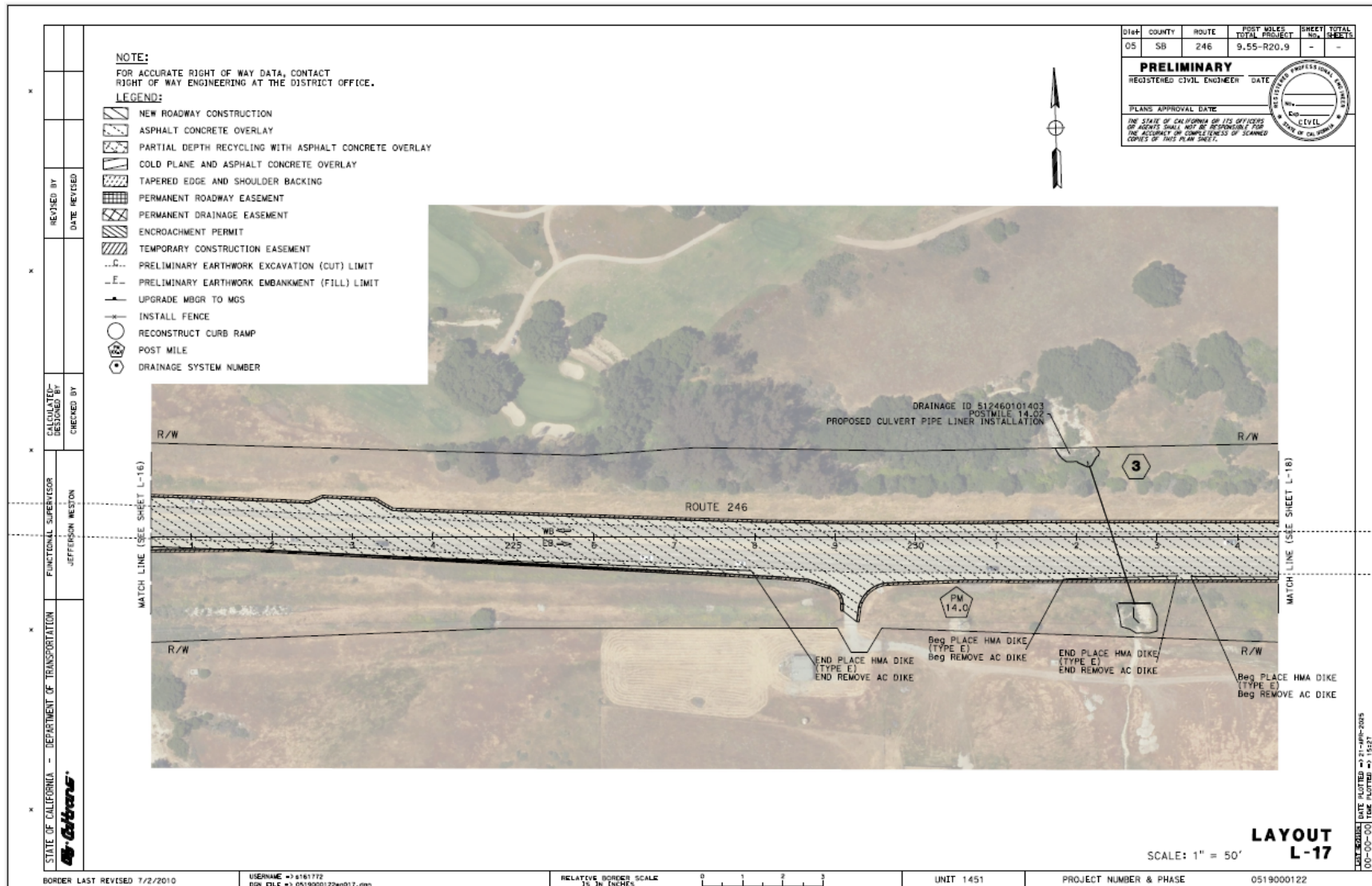


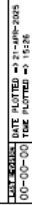




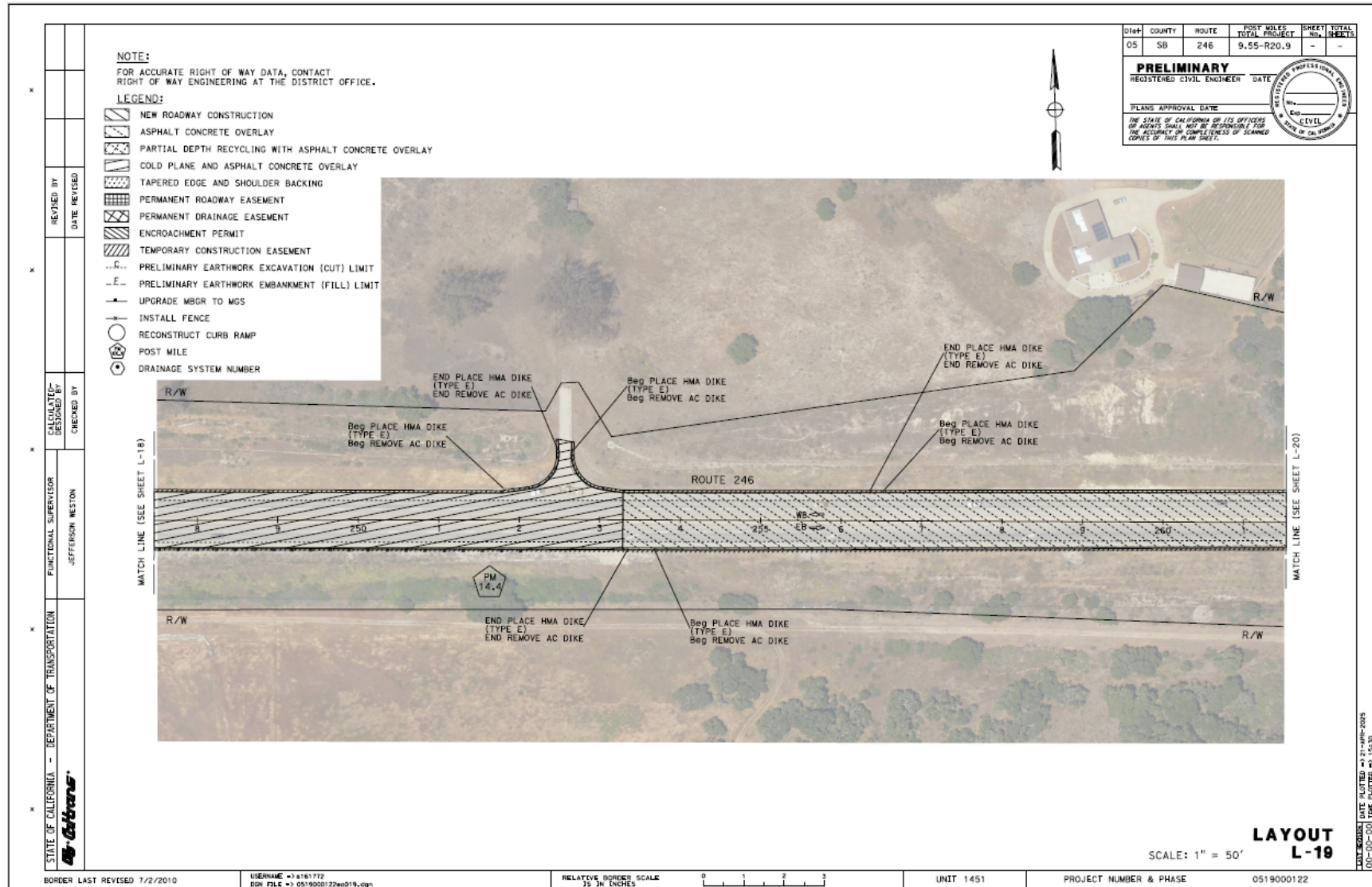


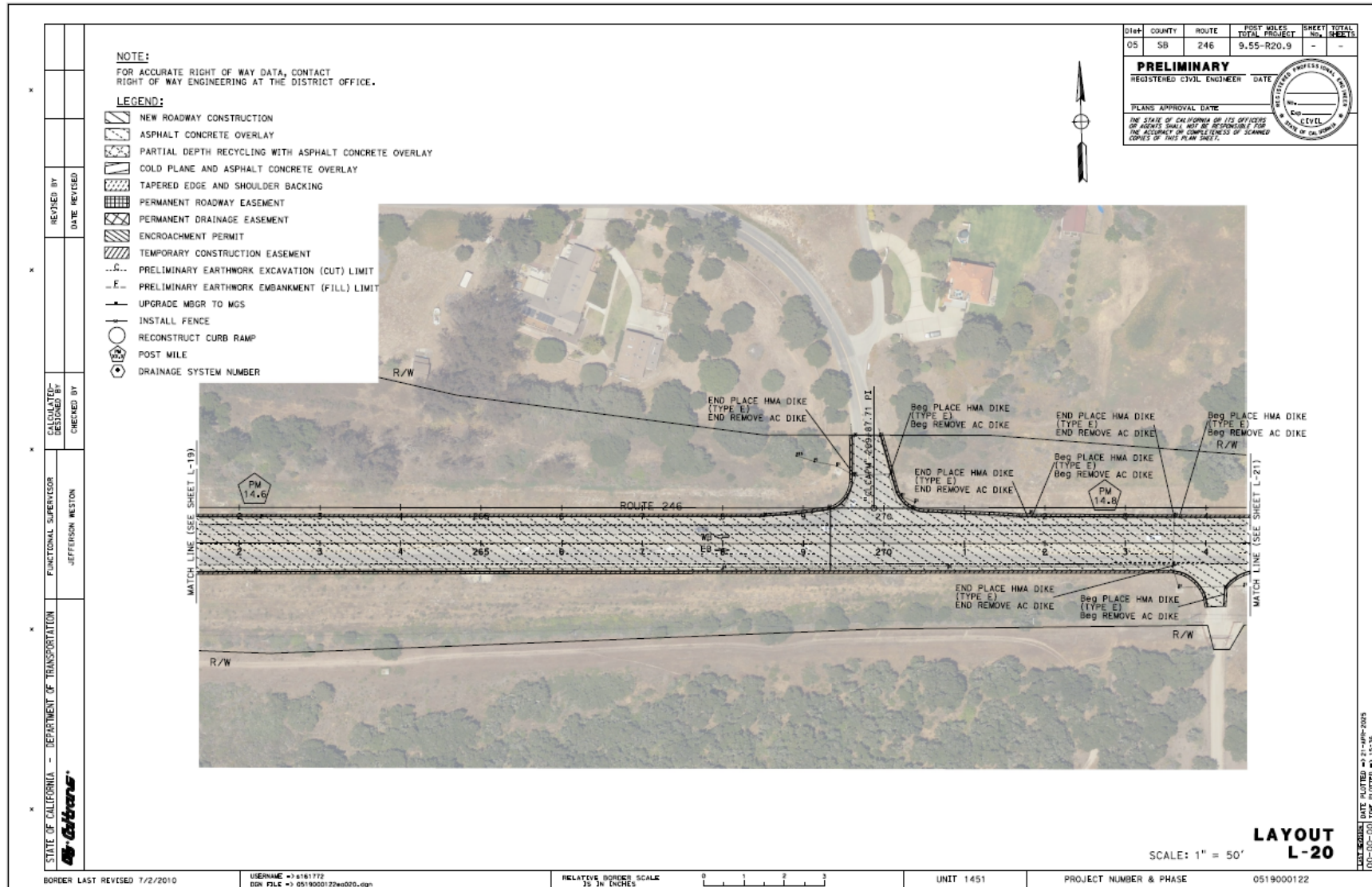




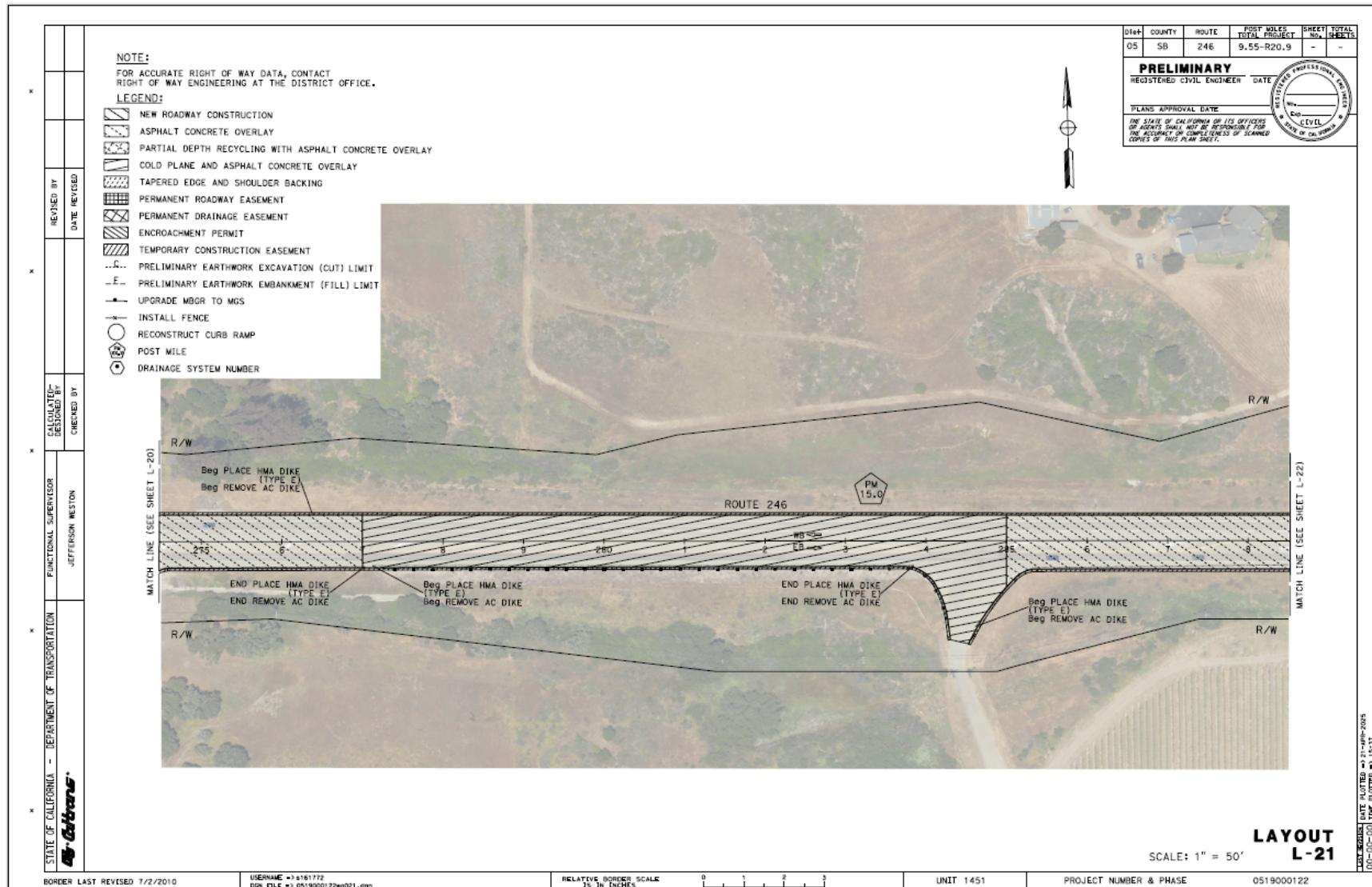




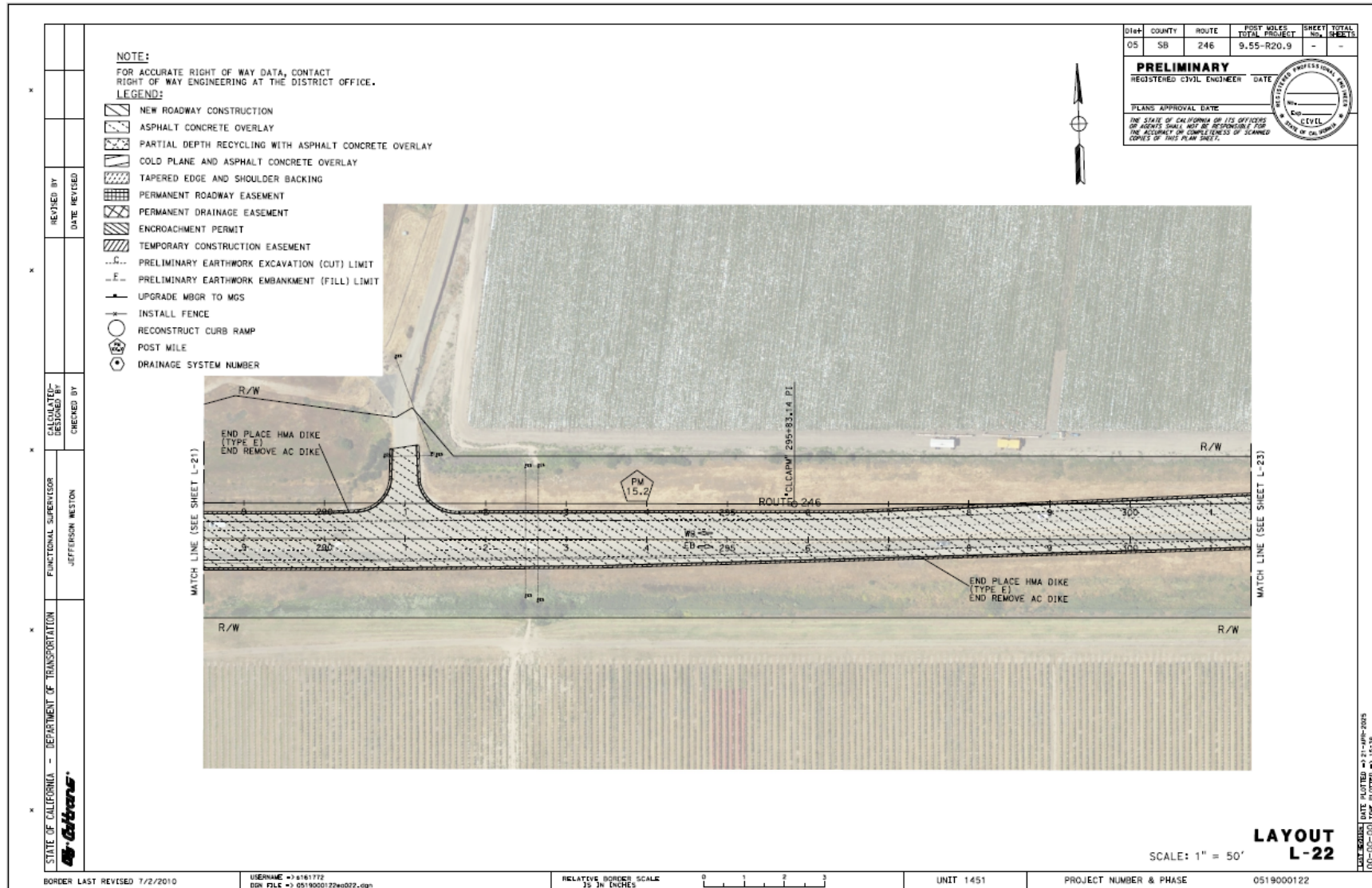


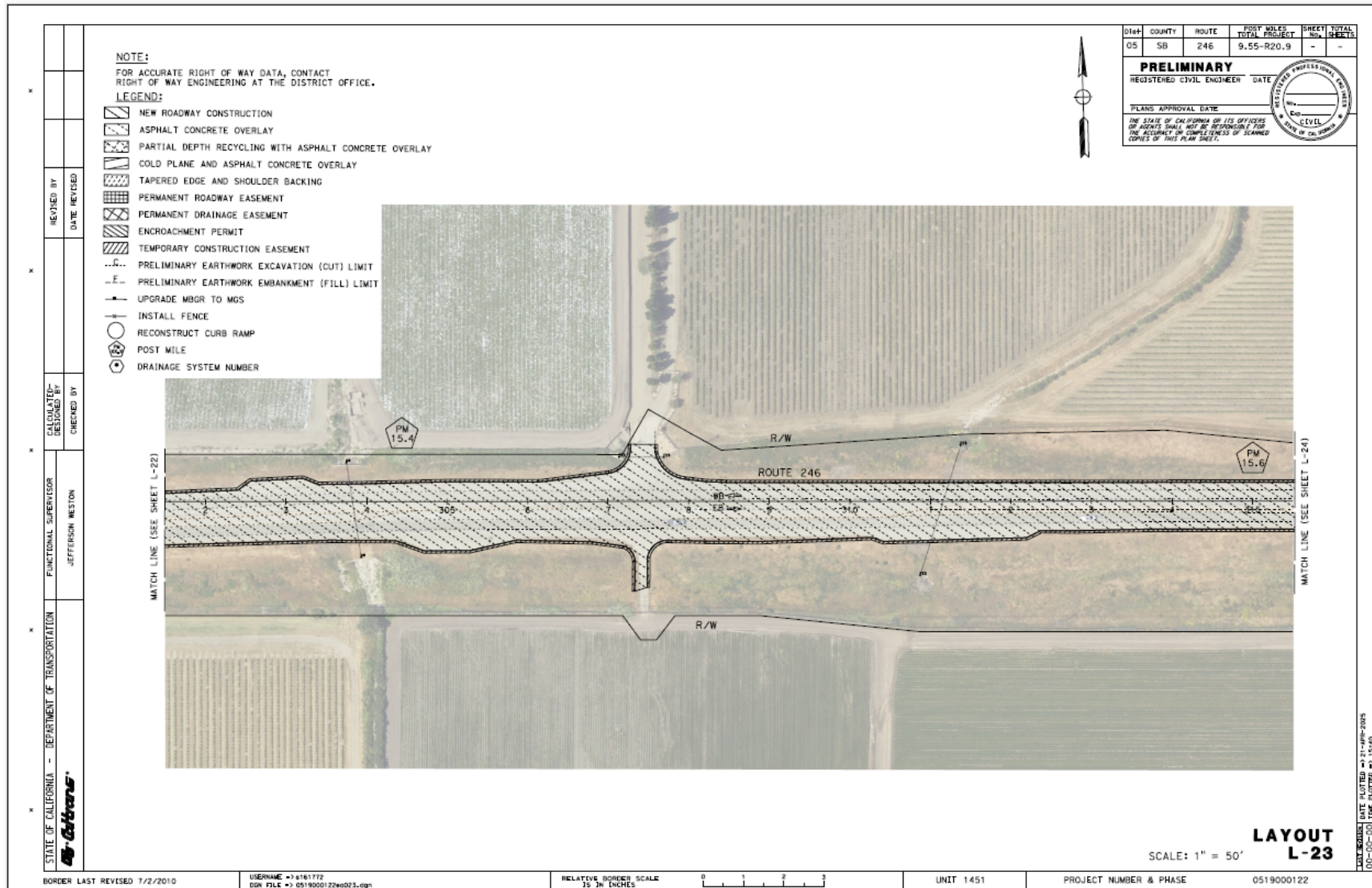




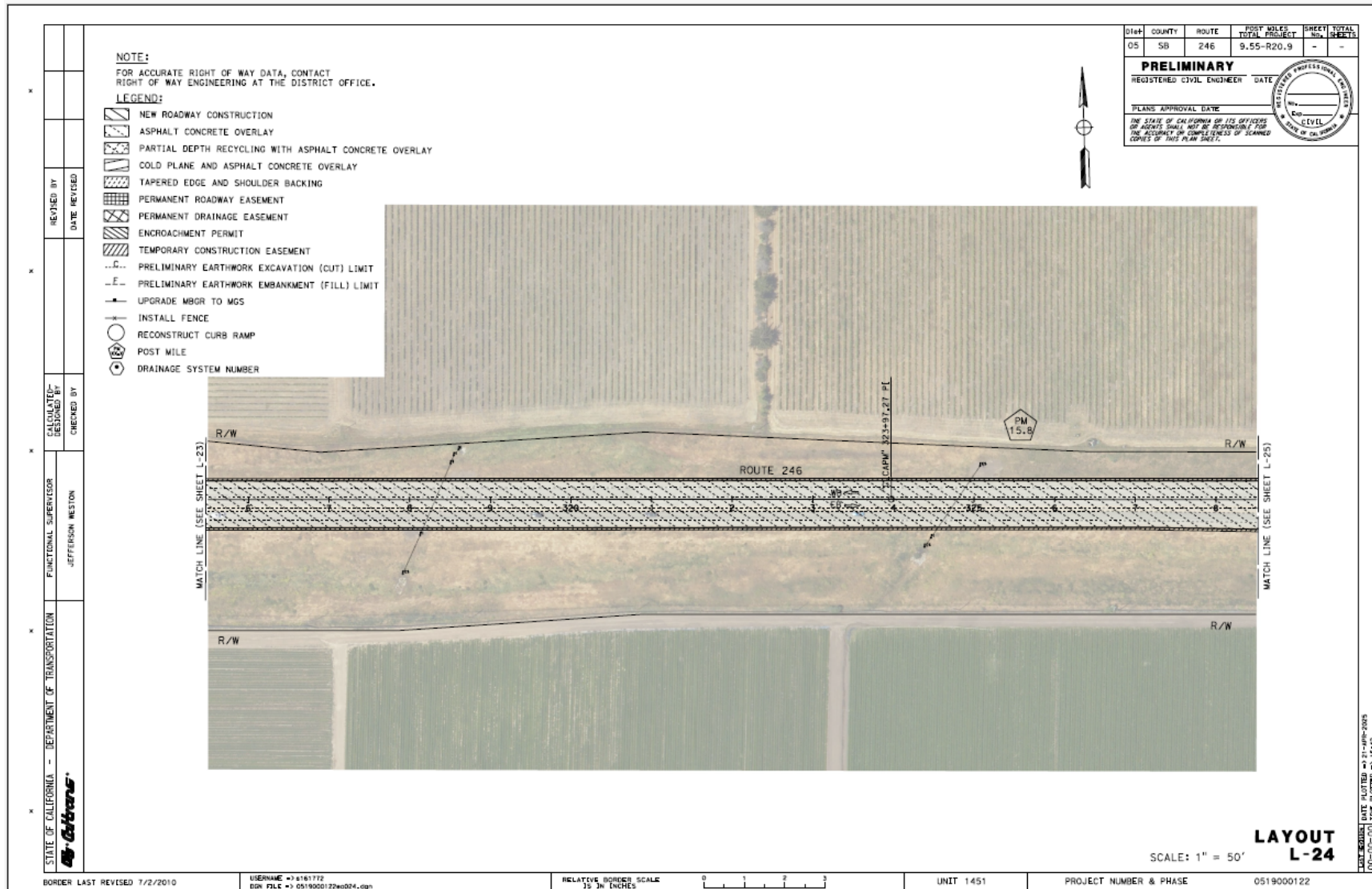


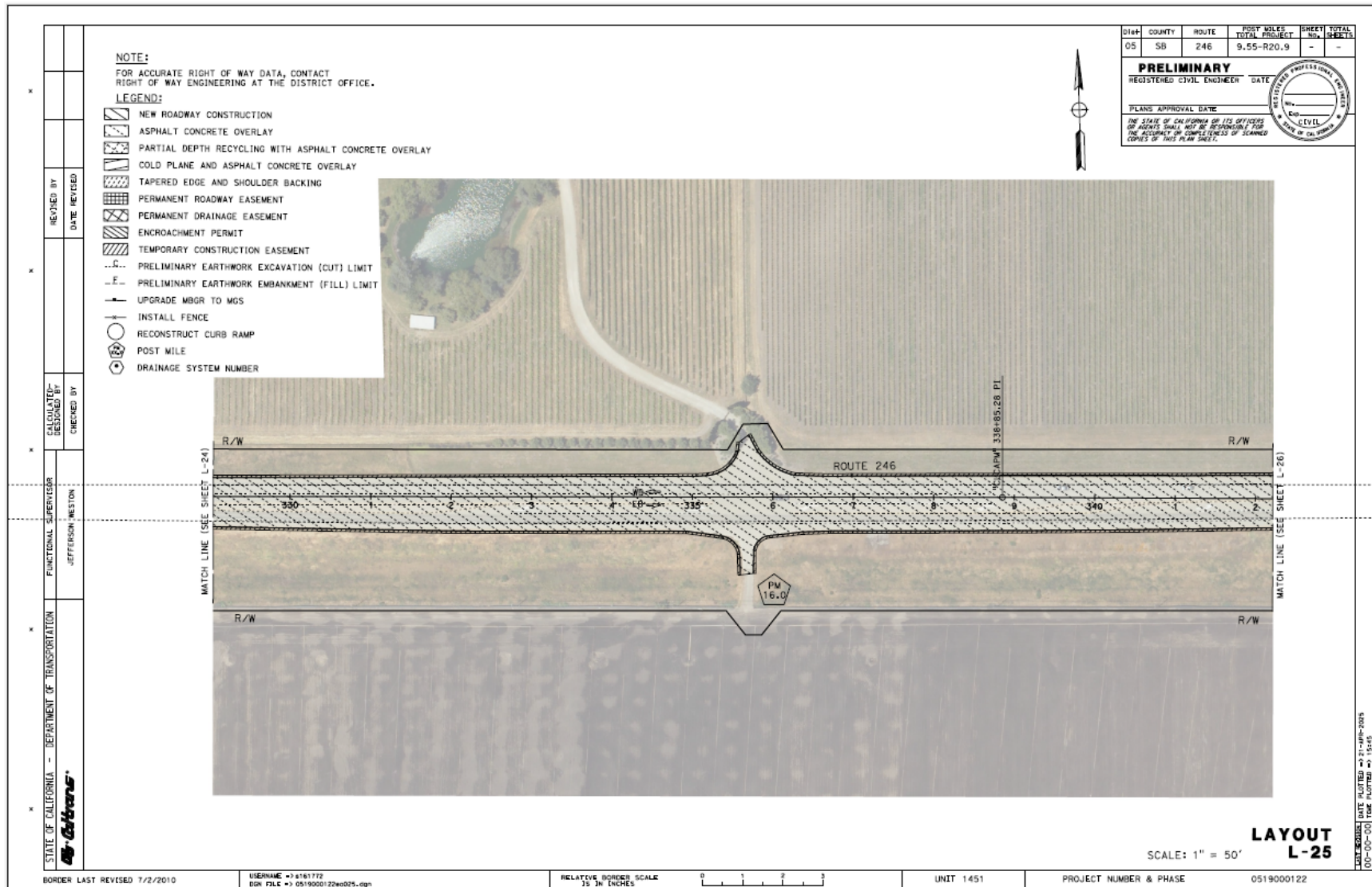




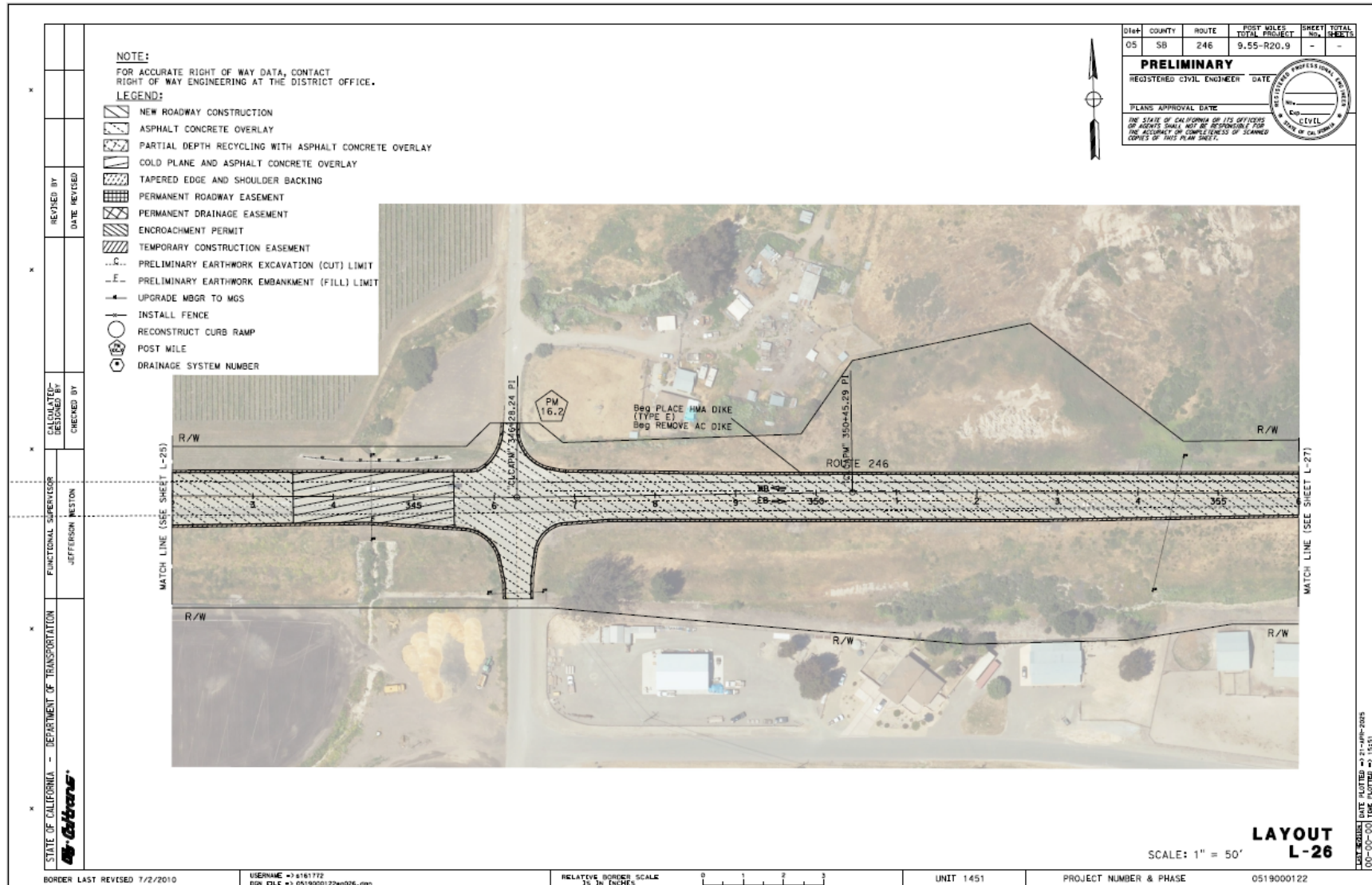


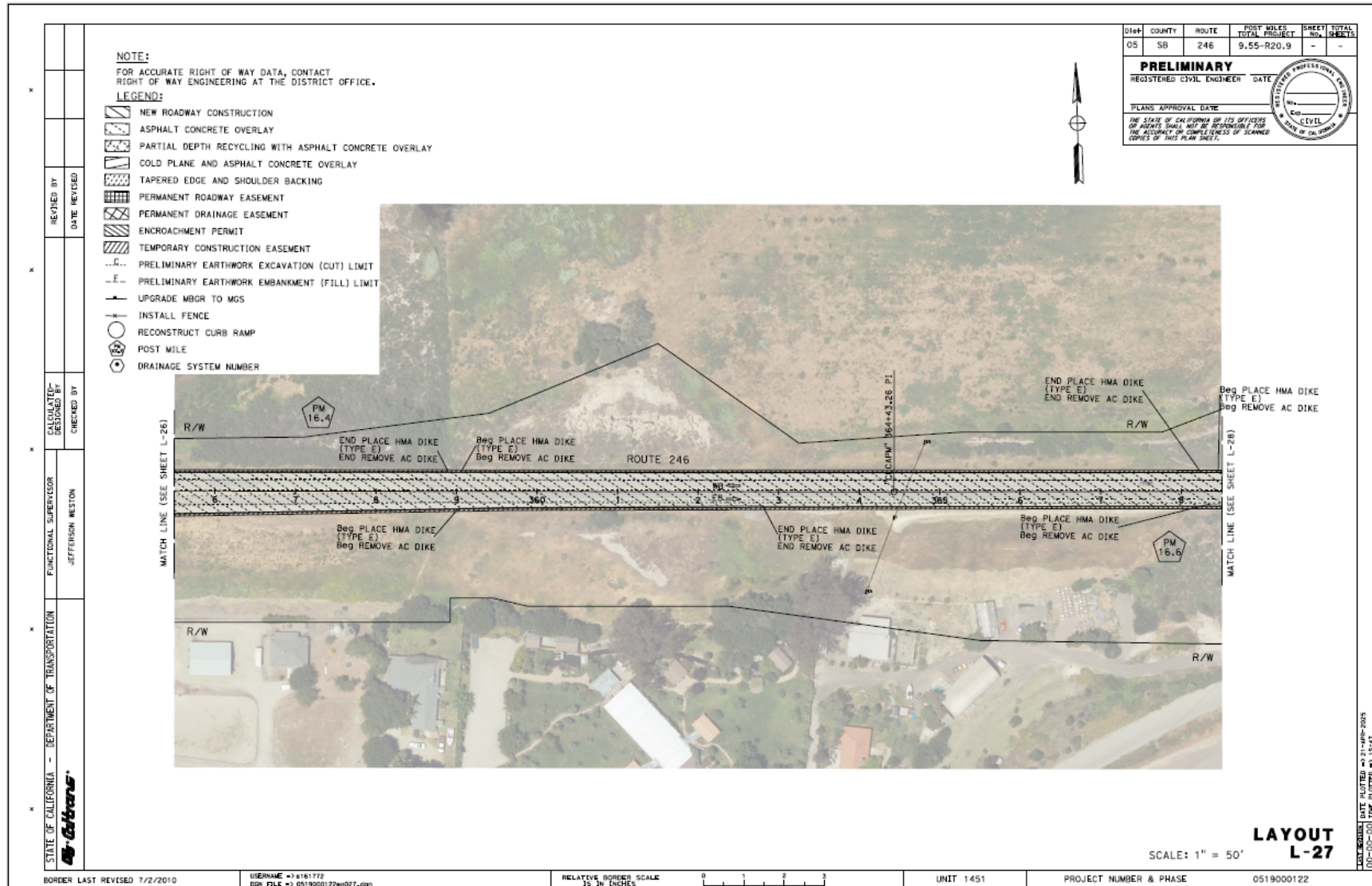




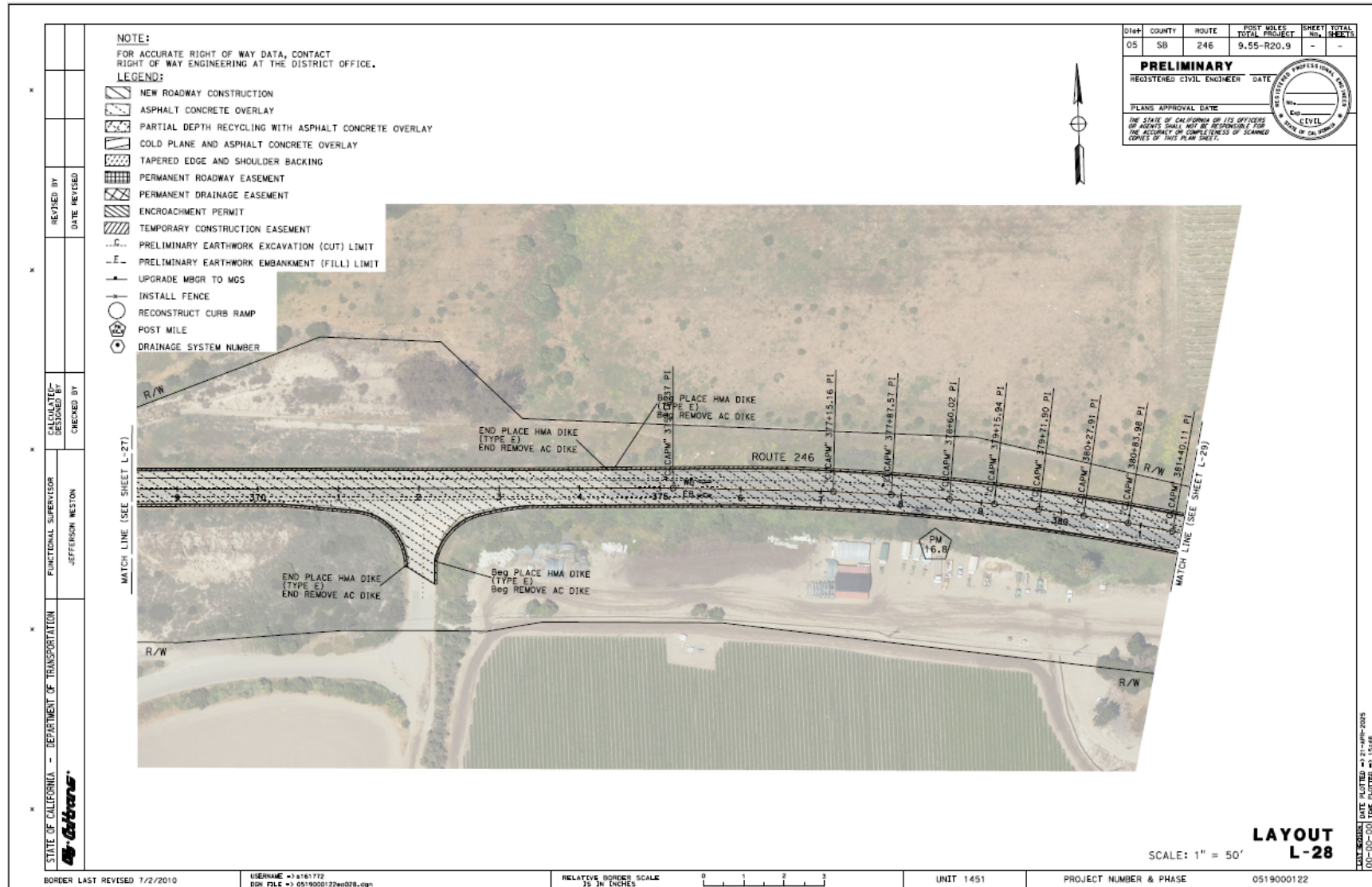


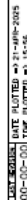




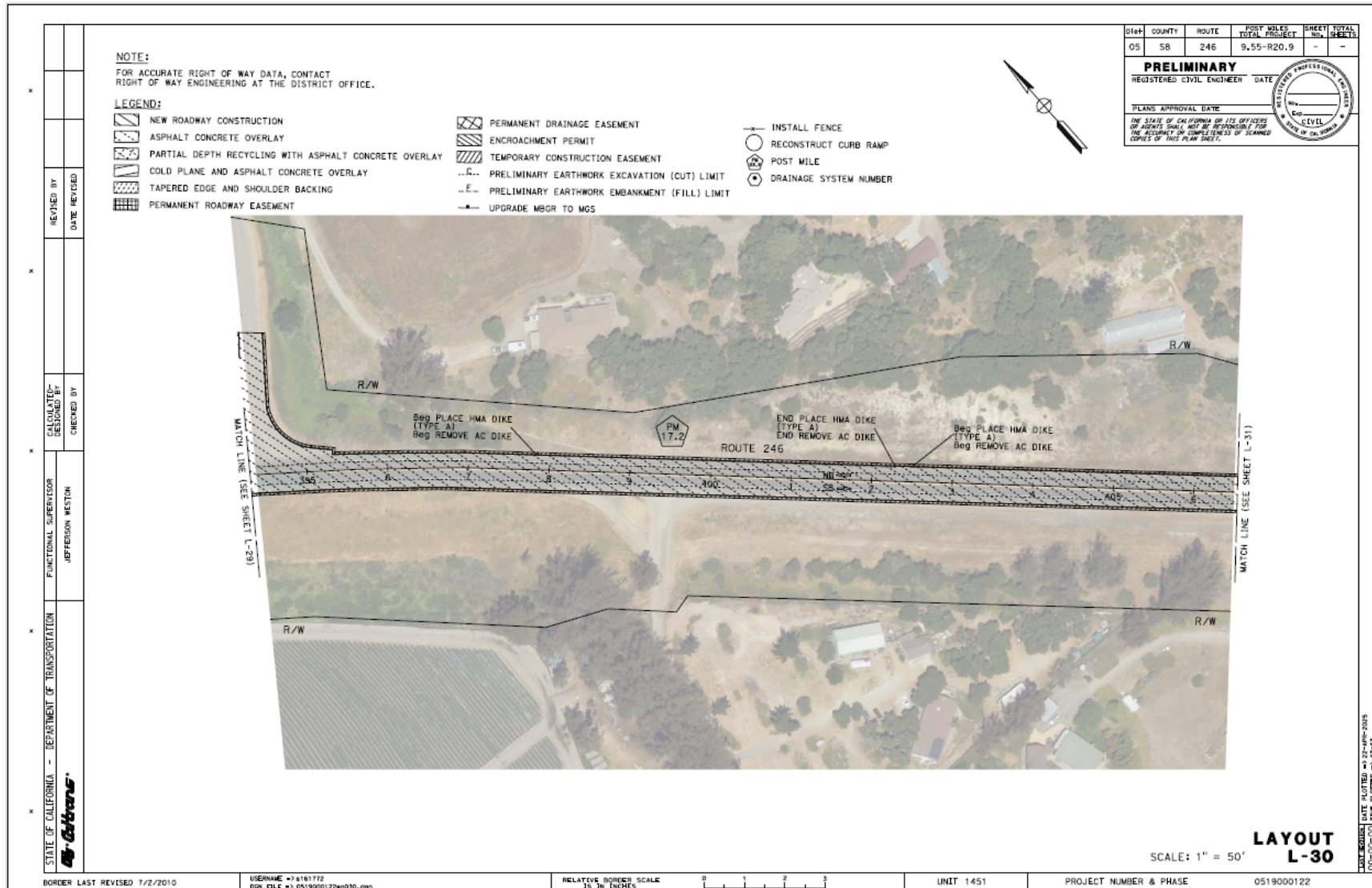


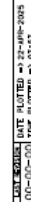




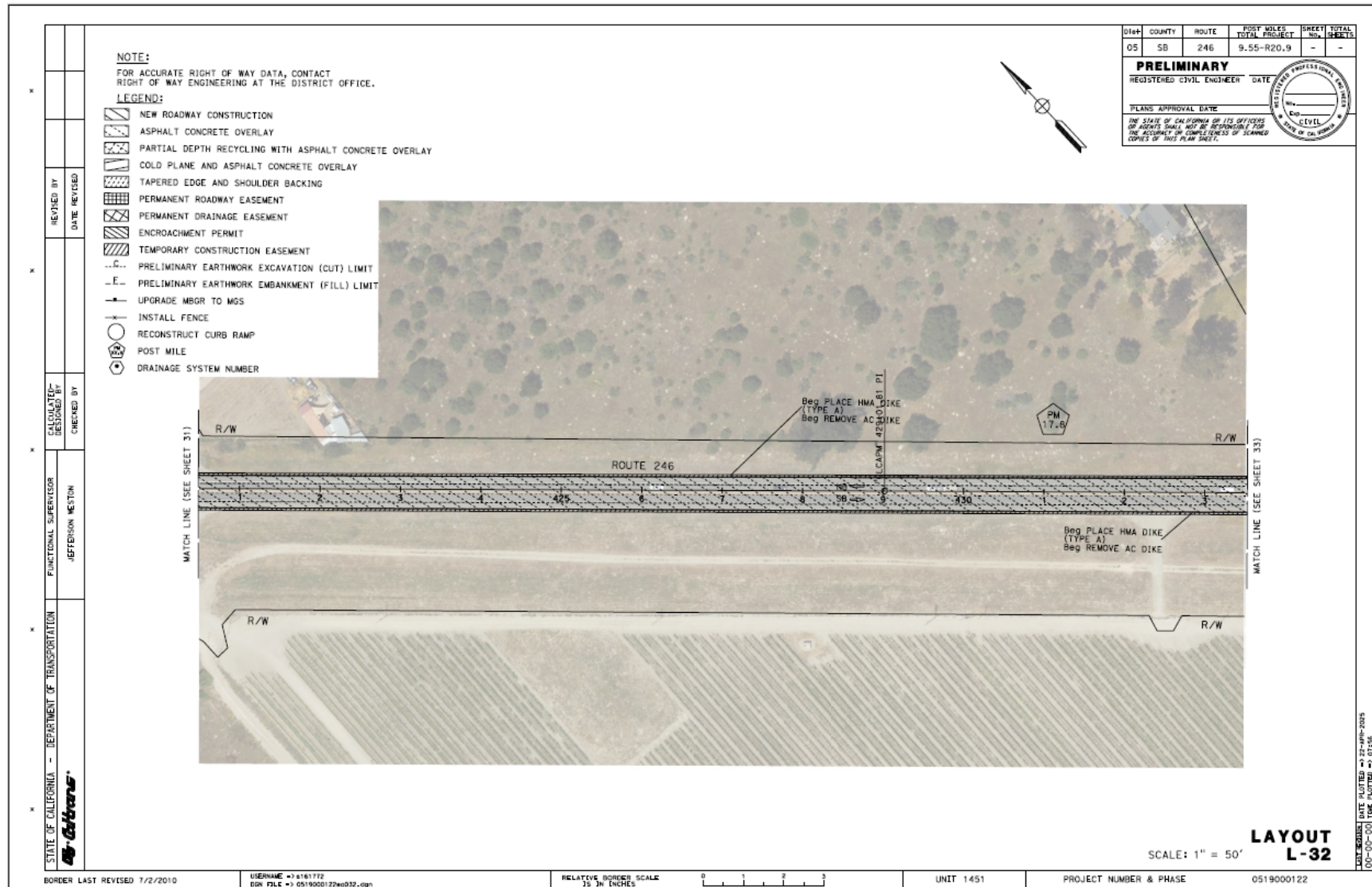


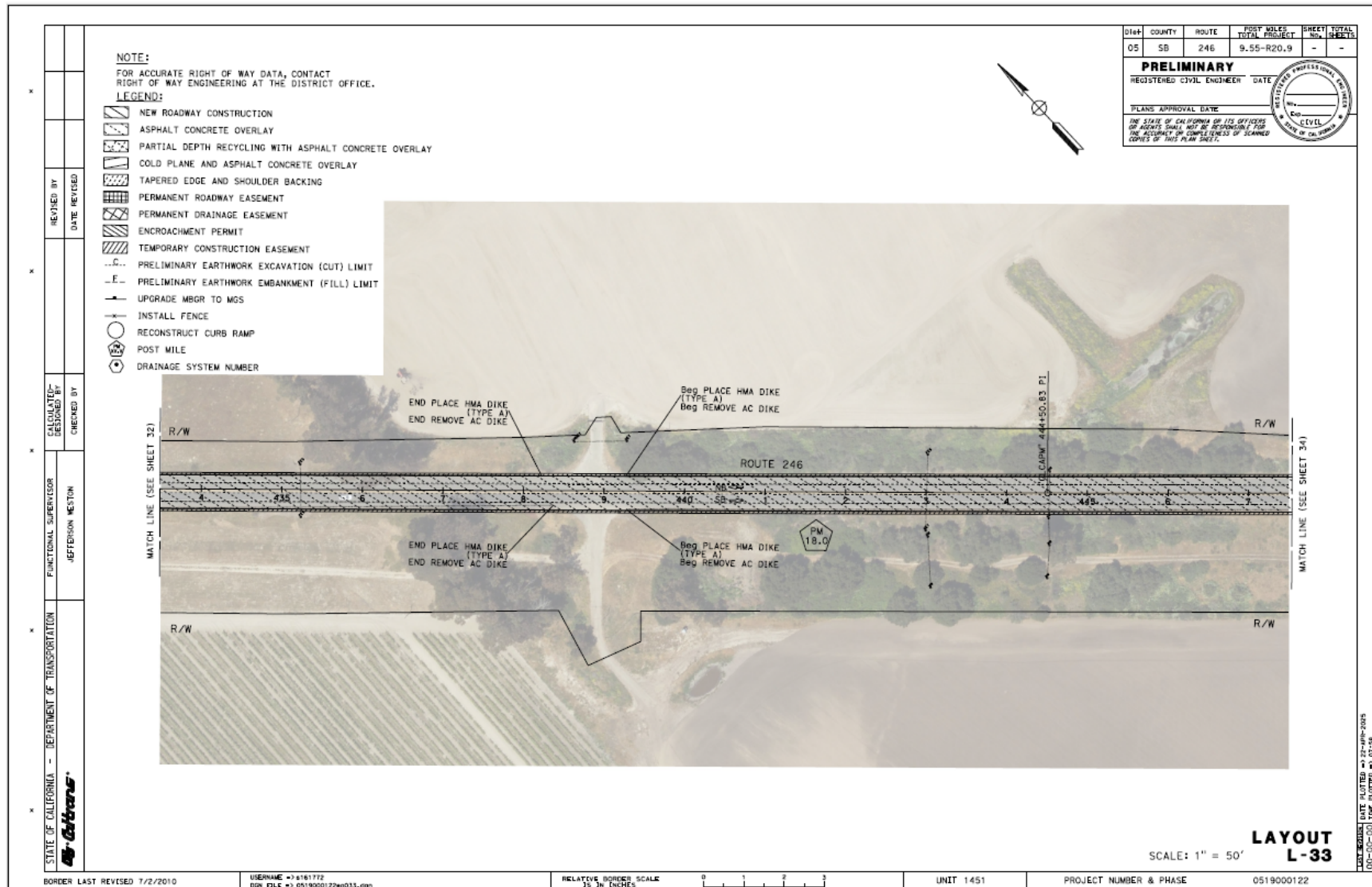






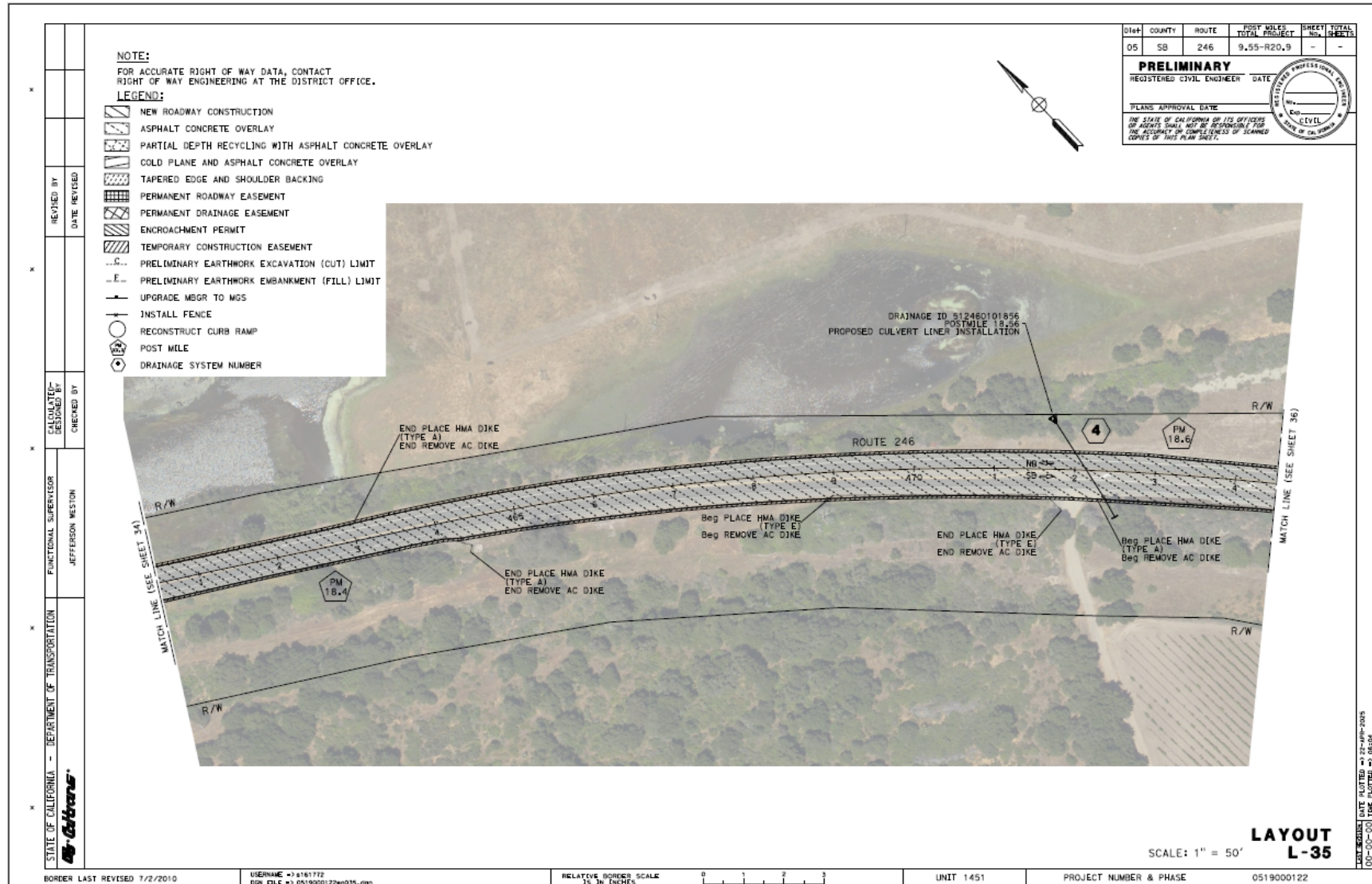


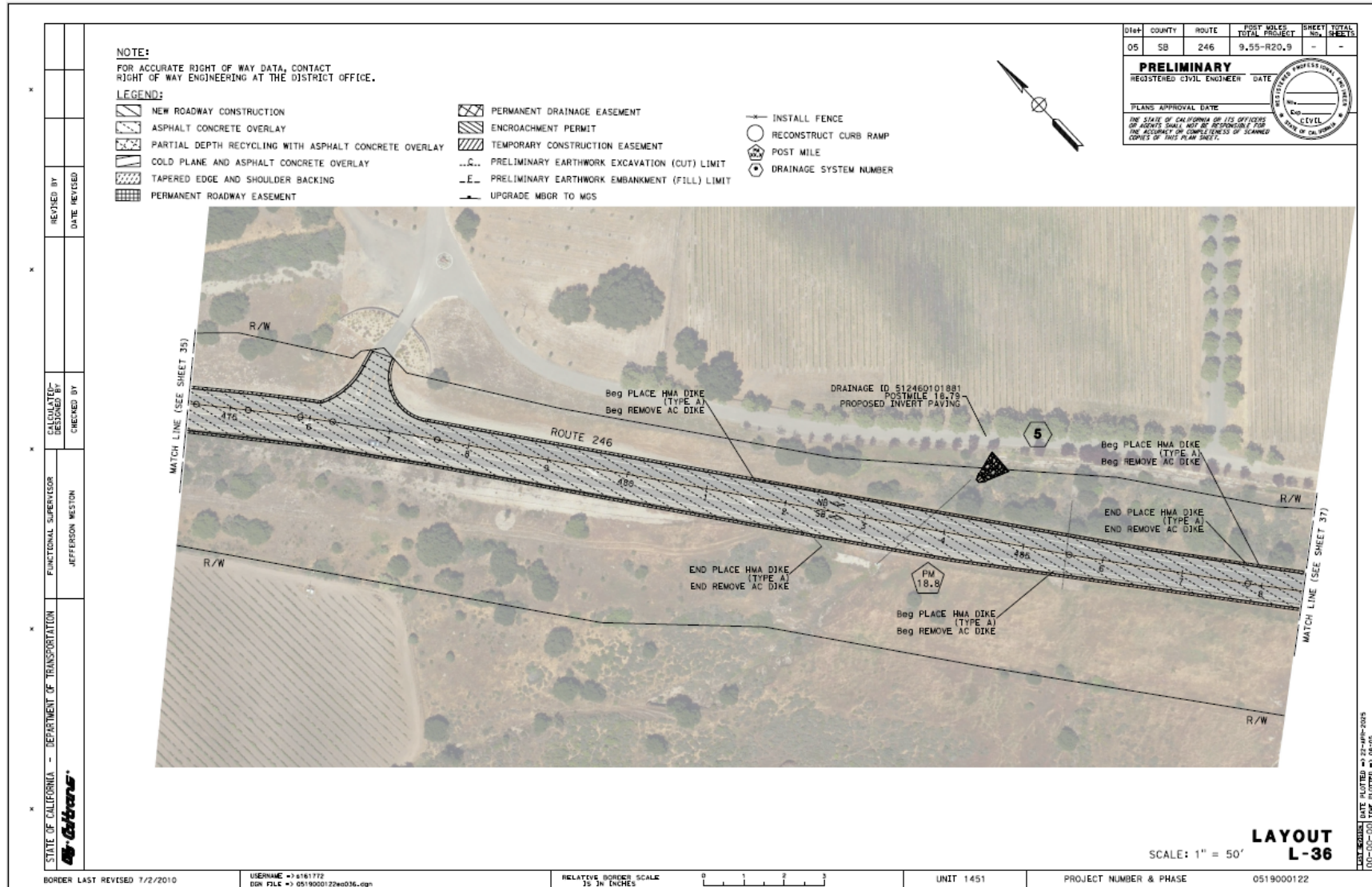




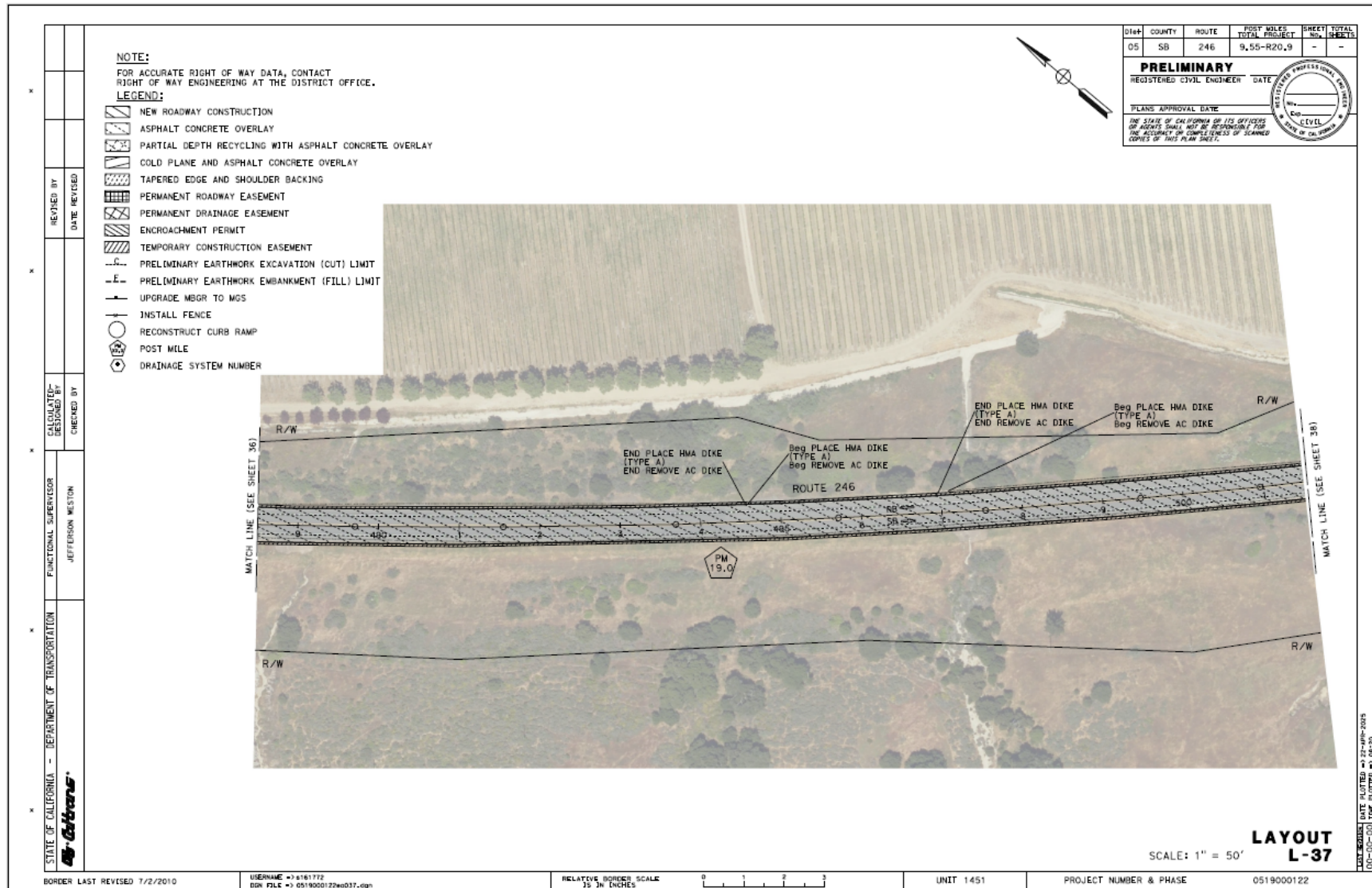






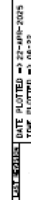


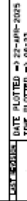




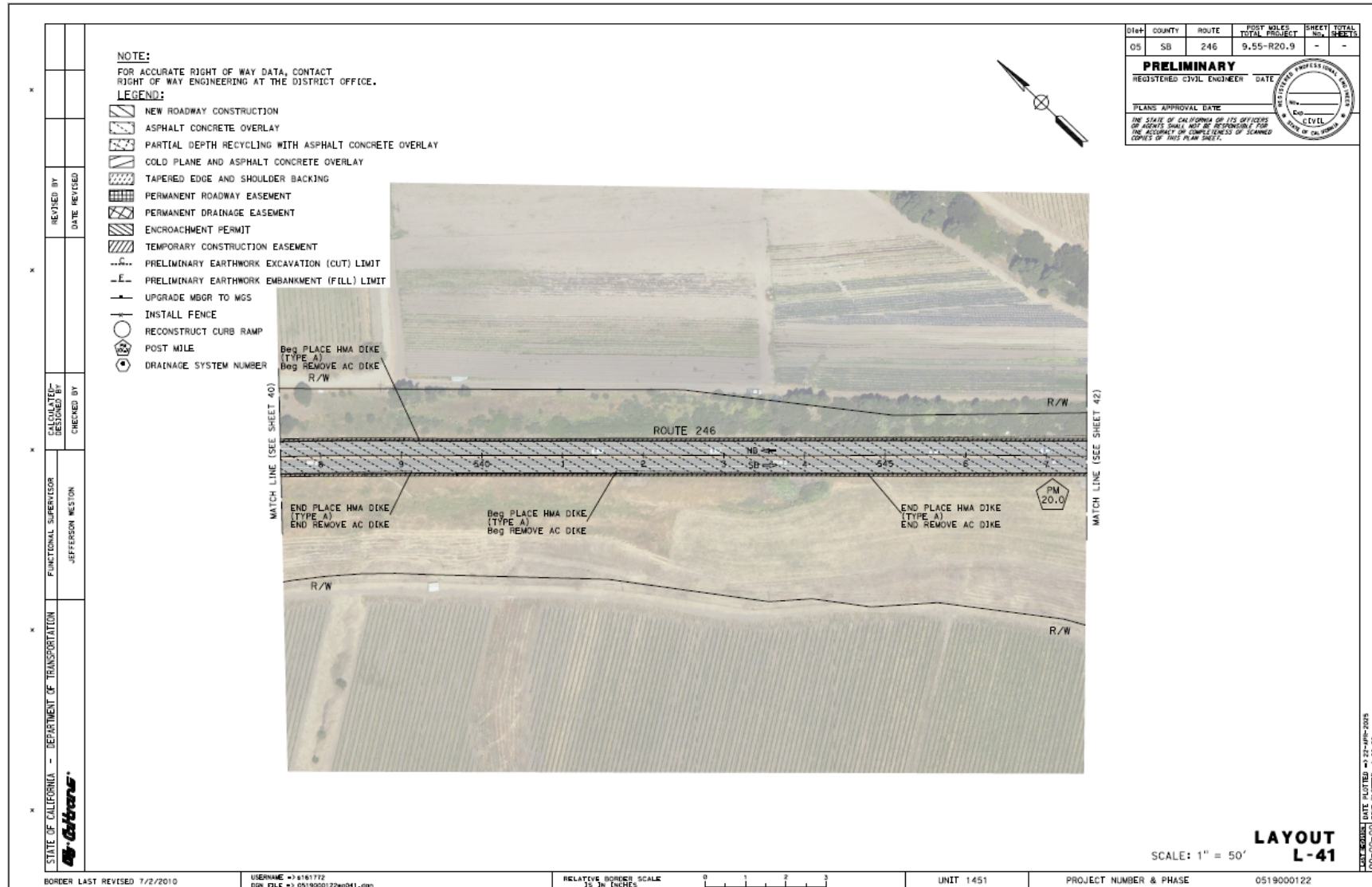












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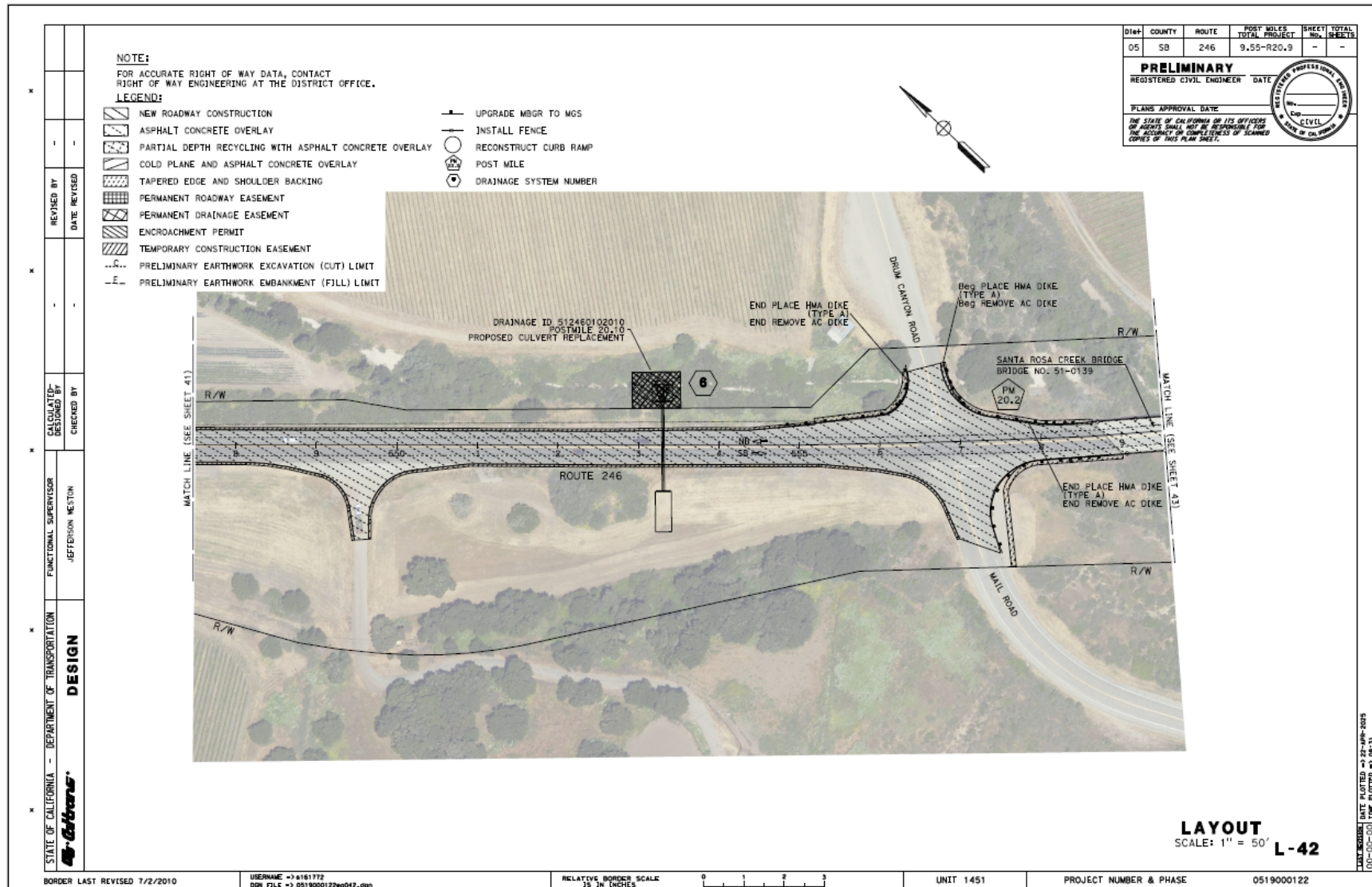
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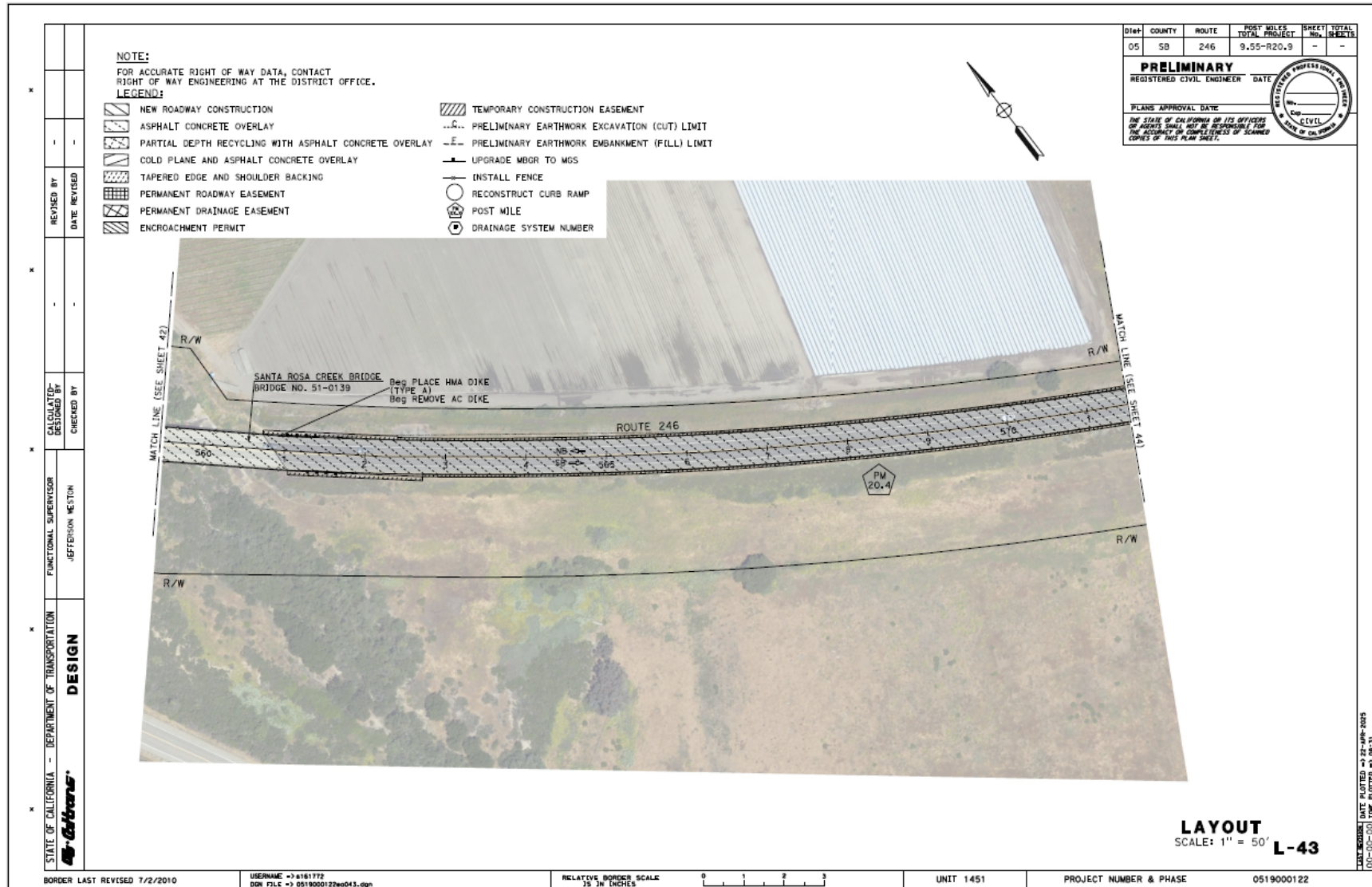
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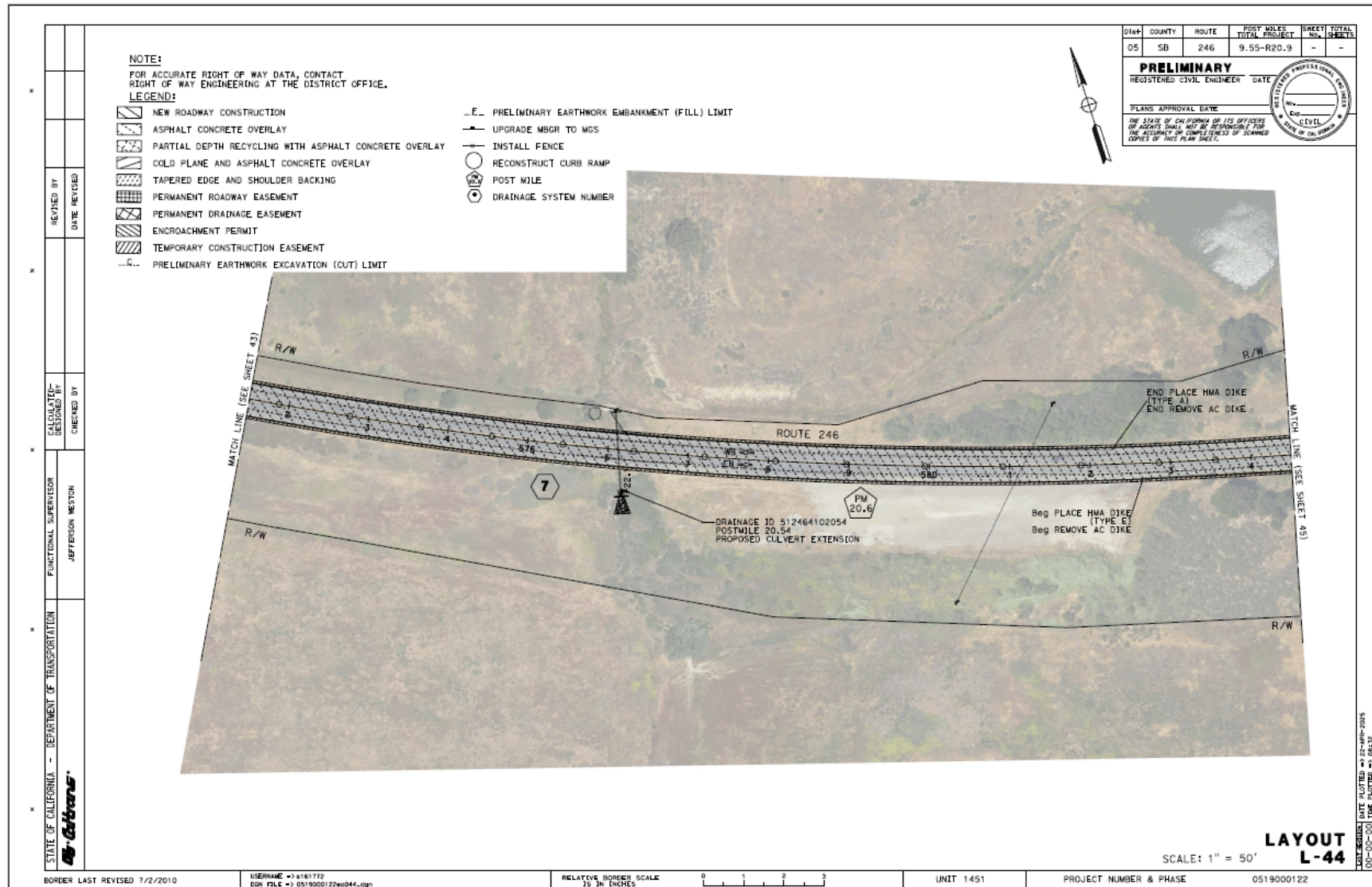
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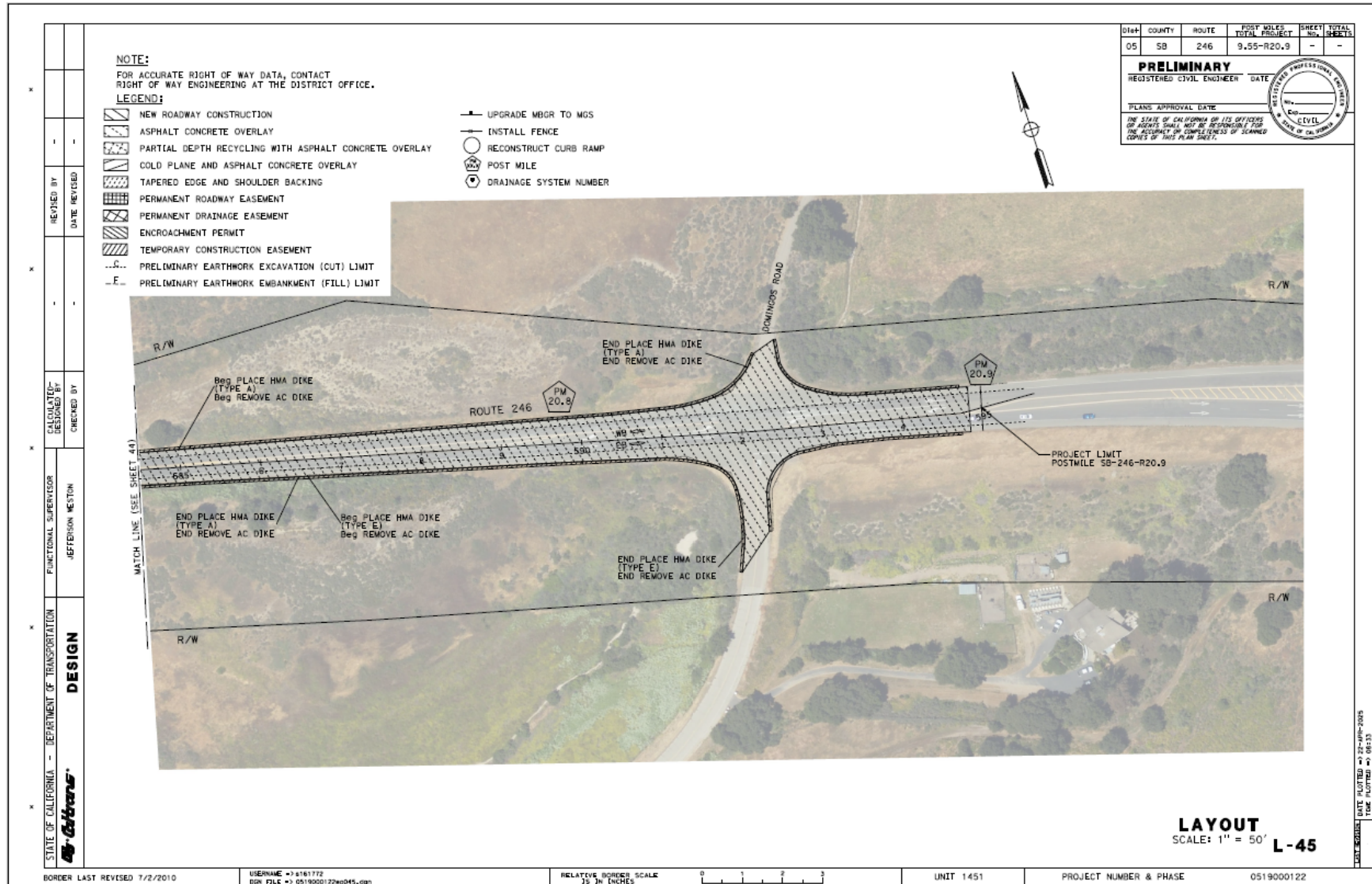
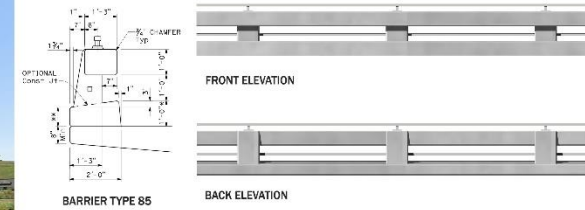




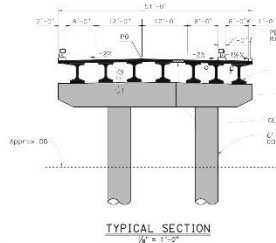
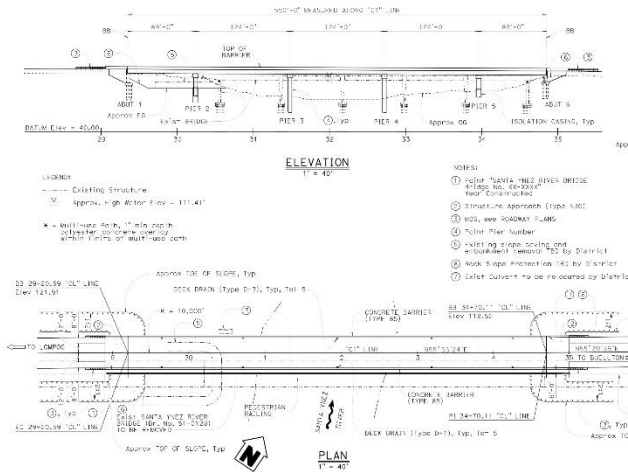
Figure 3-1. Bridge Design Option 1



DESIGN OPTION 1 PHOTO SIM



EXISTING BRIDGE BARRIER



PROJECT LOCATION

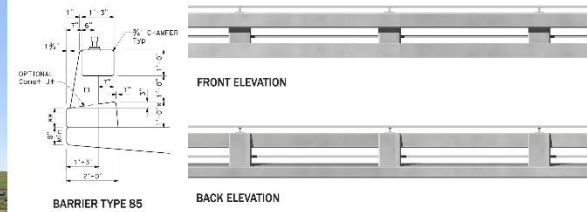


**ROBINSON BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**  
 Prepared by:  
 DESIGN OPTION 1 DES, Bridge Architecture and Aesthetics

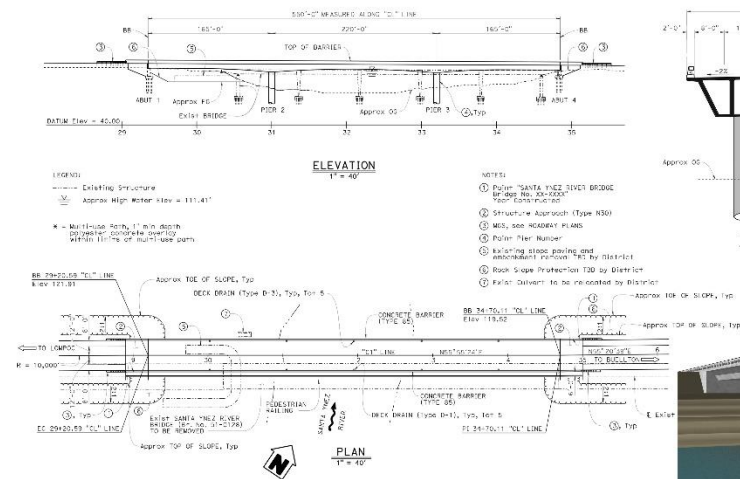
Figure 3-2. Bridge Design Option 2



DESIGN OPTION 2 PHOTO SIM



EXISTING BRIDGE BARRIER

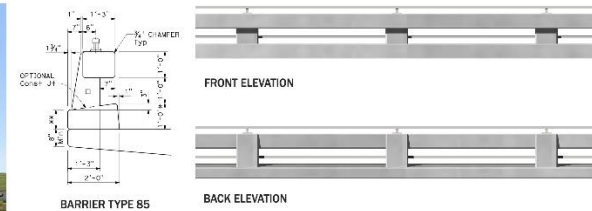


**ROBINSON BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**  
DESIGN OPTION 2 Prepared by:  
DES, Bridge Architecture and Aesthetics

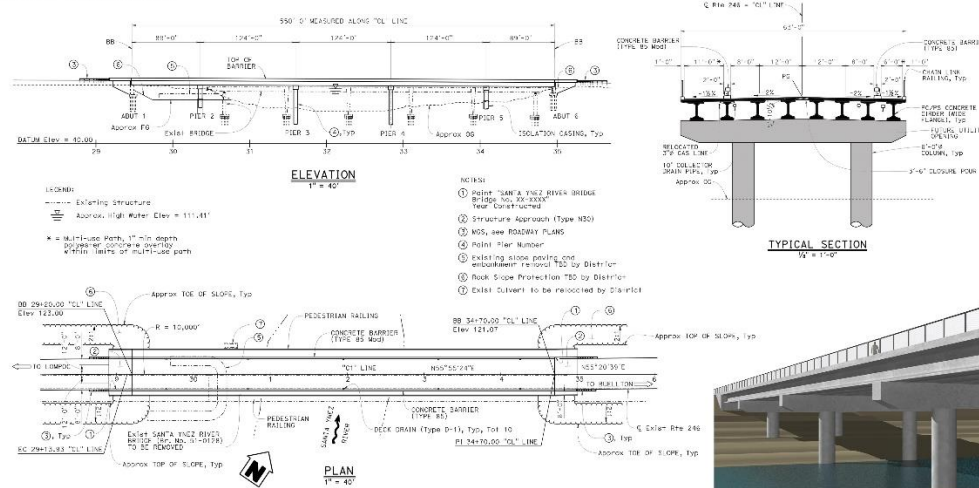
Figure 3-3. Design Option 3



DESIGN OPTION 3 PHOTO SIM



EXISTING BRIDGE BARRIER



PROJECT LOCATION



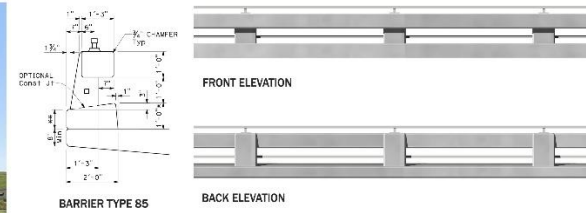
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DES, Bridge Architecture and Aesthetics



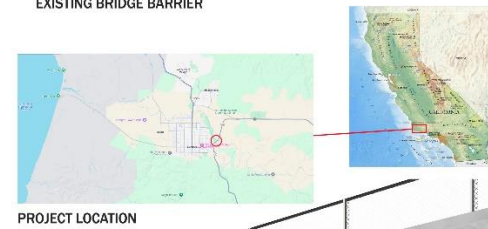
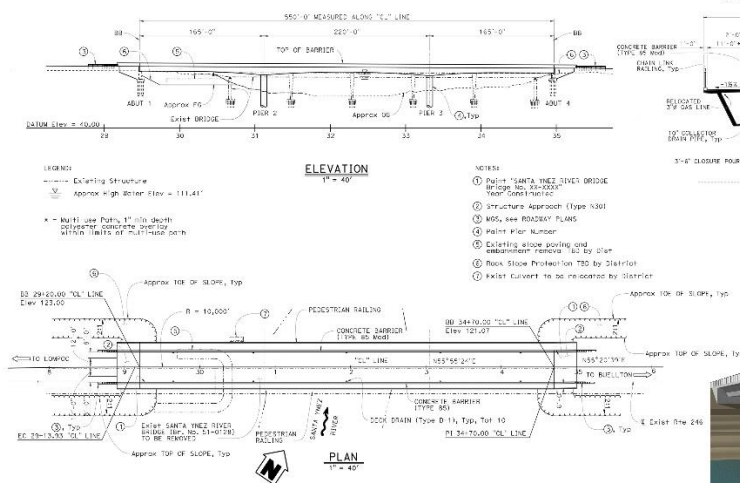
Figure 3-4. Bridge Design Option 4



DESIGN OPTION 4 PHOTO SIM



EXISTING BRIDGE BARRIER



**ROBINSON BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**  
 Prepared by:  
 DESIGN OPTION 4 DES, Bridge Architecture and Aesthetics

## Appendix D Biological Impact Areas

Detailed maps showing habitat impact areas listed in the tables below are included in Figure 1 of the Natural Environment Study. Acreages have been rounded up to the nearest hundredth of an acre.

**Table 3.1 Impacts to Sensitive Natural Communities and Critical Habitat from Design Option 1**

Natural Community/ Sensitive Feature	Temporary Impacts (Acres)	Temporary Impacts (Square Feet)	Permanent Impacts Gross (Acres)	Permanent Impacts Gross (Square Feet)	Permanent Impacts Net (Acres)	Permanent Impacts Net (Square Feet)
Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest	1.20	51,934	0.07	3,199	0.05 (0.02 restored)	2,317 (882 restored)
Southern California Steelhead critical habitat	0.60	26,252	0.003	112	none (0.008 restored)	none (327 restored)
Southwestern willow flycatcher critical habitat	2.20	95,710	0.24	10,402	0.13 (0.11 restored)	5,466 (4,936 restored)
Other waters/Streambed (USACE, RWQCB, CDFW jurisdiction)	0.65	28,444	0.008	367	Less than 0.001 (0.008 restored)	40 (327 restored)
Riparian (RWQCB, CDFW, jurisdiction)	1.44	62,577	0.09	4,107	0.07 (0.02 restored)	3,225 (882 restored)
Agriculture – cultivated crop rows	0.71	30,980	0.006	263	0.006	263

<b>Natural Community/ Sensitive Feature</b>	<b>Temporary Impacts (Acres)</b>	<b>Temporary Impacts (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Gross (Acres)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Gross (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Net (Acres)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Net (Square Feet)</b>
Coastal scrub – California sage	0.20	8,479	none	none	none	none
Coyote brush scrub	0.75	32,608	0.26	11,497	0.26	11,497
Developed	0.15	6,296	0.006	251	0.006	251
Nonnative grassland	1.40	61,556	0.007	326	0.007	326
Ornamental trees	0.05	2,066	Less than 0.001	38	Less than 0.001	38
Paved/gravel	0.49	21,173	0.14	6,067	0.14	6,067
Riverine – mulefat thickets	0.60	26,252	0.003	112	none (0.008 restored)	none (327 restored)
Ruderal	4.3	185,532	0.60	26,312	0.60	26,312

**Table 3.2 Impacts to Sensitive Natural Communities and Critical Habitat from Design Option 2**

<b>Natural Community/ Sensitive Feature</b>	<b>Temporary Impacts (Acres)</b>	<b>Temporary Impacts (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Gross (Acres)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Gross (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Net (Acres)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Net (Square Feet)</b>
Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest	1.20	51,866	0.07	3,239	0.05 (0.02 restored)	2,357 (882 restored)
Southern California Steelhead critical habitat	0.61	26,365	none	none	none (0.008 restored)	none (327 restored)
Southwestern willow flycatcher critical habitat	2.20	95,754	0.24	10,330	0.13 (0.11 restored)	5,394 (4,936 restored)
Other waters/Streambed (USACE, RWQCB, CDFW jurisdiction)	0.66	28,556	0.006	255	none (0.008 restored)	none (327 Restored)
Riparian (RWQCB, CDFW jurisdiction)	1.44	62,509	0.095	4,148	0.075 (0.02 restored)	3,266 (882 restored)
Emergent wetland (USACE, RWQCB, CDFW jurisdiction)	0.002	92	none	none	none	none
Agriculture – Cultivated Row crops	0.71	30,980	0.006	263	0.006	263



<b>Natural Community/ Sensitive Feature</b>	<b>Temporary Impacts (Acres)</b>	<b>Temporary Impacts (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Gross (Acres)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Gross (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Net (Acres)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Net (Square Feet)</b>
Coastal scrub – California sage	0.20	8,479	none	none	none	none
Coyote brush scrub	0.75	32,608	0.26	11,497	0.26	11,497
Developed	0.15	6,295	0.006	251	0.006	251
Nonnative grassland	1.40	61,556	0.007	326	0.007	326
Ornamental trees	0.005	2,066	Less than 0.001	38	Less than 0.001	38
Paved/gravel	0.49	21,173	0.14	6,038	0.14	6,038
Riverine – mulefat thickets	0.63	27,476	none	none	none	none
Ruderal	4.3	185,532	0.60	26,312	0.60	26,312

**Table 3.3 Impacts to Sensitive Natural Communities and Critical Habitat from Design Option 3**

Natural Community/ Sensitive Feature	Temporary Impacts (Acres)	Temporary Impacts (Square Feet)	Permanent Impacts Gross (Acres)	Permanent Impacts Gross (Square Feet)	Permanent Impacts Net (Acres)	Permanent Impacts Net (Square Feet)
Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest	1.30	56,683	0.07	3,106	0.05 (0.02 restored)	2,224 (882 restored)
Southern California Steelhead critical habitat	0.64	27,774	0.002	102	none (0.008 restored)	none (327 restored)
Southwestern willow flycatcher critical habitat	2.45	106,869	0.19	8,133	0.12 (0.07 restored)	5,257 (2,876 restored)
Other waters/Streambed (USACE, RWQCB, CDFW jurisdiction)	0.69	29,982	0.008	357	less than 0.001 (0.008 restored)	30 (327 restored)
Riparian (RWQCB, CDFW jurisdiction)	1.55	67,607	0.09	4,014	0.07 (0.02 restored)	3,132 (882 restored)
Emergent wetland (USACE, RWQCB, CDFW jurisdiction)	0.002	92	none	none	none	none
Agriculture – Cultivated/Row Crops	0.73	31,592	Less than 0.001	18	Less than 0.001	18
Coastal scrub – California sage	0.20	8,901	none	none	none	none
Coyote brush scrub	0.90	39,035	0.15	6,335	0.15	6,335
Developed	0.18	7,623	0.006	251	0.006	251
Nonnative grassland	1.40	6,536	none	none	none	none
Ornamental trees	0.05	2,066	Less than 0.001	38	Less than 0.001	38

<b>Natural Community/ Sensitive Feature</b>	<b>Temporary Impacts (Acres)</b>	<b>Temporary Impacts (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Gross (Acres)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Gross (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Net (Acres)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Net (Square Feet)</b>
Paved/gravel	0.55	24,077	0.16	6,863	0.16	6,863
Riverine – mulefat thickets	0.66	28,882	0.003	113	none (0.008 restored)	none (327 restored)
Ruderal	4.70	202,856	0.52	22,696	0.52	22,696

**Table 3.4 Impacts to Sensitive Natural Communities and Critical Habitat from Design Option 4**

Natural Community / Sensitive Feature	Temporary Impacts (Acres)	Temporary Impacts (Square Feet)	Permanent Impacts Gross (Acres)	Permanent Impacts Gross (Square Feet)	Permanent Impacts Net (Acres)	Permanent Impacts Net (Square Feet)
Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest	1.30	56,625	0.07	3,136	0.05 (0.02 restored)	2,254 (882 restored)
Southern California Steelhead critical habitat	0.64	27,876	none	none	none (0.008 restored)	none (327 restored)
Southwestern willow flycatcher critical habitat	2.45	106,913	0.19	8,061	0.12 (0.07 restored)	5,185 (2,876 restored)
Other waters/Streambed (USACE, RWQCB, CDFW jurisdiction)	0.69	30,084	0.006	255	none (0.008 restored)	none (327 restored)
Riparian (RWQCB, CDFW jurisdiction)	1.55	67,549	0.09	4,045	0.07 (0.02 restored)	3,163 (882 restored)
Emergent wetland (USACE, RWQCB, CDFW jurisdiction)	0.002	92	none	none	none	none
Agriculture – Cultivated/Row Crops	0.73	31,592	Less than 0.001	18	Less than 0.001	18
Coastal scrub – California sage	0.20	8,901	none	none	none	none
Coyote brush scrub	0.90	39,035	0.15	6,335	0.15	6,335
Developed	0.18	7,623	0.006	251	0.006	251
Nonnative grassland	1.40	60,536	none	none	none	none
Ornamental trees	0.05	2,066	Less than 0.001	38	Less than 0.001	38
Paved/gravel	0.55	24,077	0.16	6,835	0.16	6,835
Riverine – mulefat thickets	0.67	28,994	none	none	none (0.008 restored)	none (327 restored)
Ruderal	4.70	202,856	0.52	22,696	0.52	22,696

**Table 3.5 Features with Identical Impacts Across All 4 Design Options**

<b>Natural Community / Sensitive Feature</b>	<b>Temporary Impacts (Acres)</b>	<b>Temporary Impacts (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Gross (Acres)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Gross (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Net (Acres)</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts Net (Square Feet)</b>
California tiger salamander (Santa Barbara County) critical habitat	1.62	70,834	none	none	none	none
Streambank (RWQCB, CDFW jurisdiction)	0.04	1,804	none	none	none	none
Freshwater pond (RWQCB, CDFW jurisdiction)	none	none	none	none	none	none
Vineyard	none	none	none	none	none	none
Coast live oak woodland	0.62	26,926	none	none	none	none
Coastal scrub – mixed	0.04	1,686	none	none	none	none
Eucalyptus	none	none	none	none	none	none
Landscaped	none	none	none	none	none	none
Rural residential	none	none	none	none	none	none
Willow scrub	0.10	4,313	none	none	none	none

## **Appendix E** 4(f) Concurrence Letter

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State of California  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

California State Transportation Agency

## Memorandum

To: CHRISTIE ALARCON  
City of Lompoc

Date: March 7, 2025  
File: 05-1m360

From: LAURA RICCARDELLI  
Environmental Scientist  
Caltrans District 5  
Division of Environmental Analysis

Subject: **State Route 246 CAPM AND ROBINSON BRIDGE PROJECT; SECTION 4(F) DE MINIMIS CONCURRENCE REQUEST**

### Project Description and Background

This project is on State Route 246 in Santa Barbara County in and near the city of Lompoc, from State Route 1 to 0.047 mile east of the Domingos Road intersection. The project proposes to replace the Santa Ynez River Bridge (Bridge Number 51-0128) at post mile 9.8, preserve 21.7 lane miles of flexible Class 2 pavement using Capital Preventive Maintenance strategies, place 0.20 foot of Rubberized Hot Mix Asphalt overlay, rehabilitate culverts, upgrade sign panels, upgrade existing curb ramps to be Americans with Disabilities Act compliant, and upgrade guardrails to Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware standards.

The purpose of this project is to preserve and extend the life of the existing pavement, rehabilitate pavement and culverts, upgrade guardrails to Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware standards, upgrade sign panels, and replace the Santa Ynez River Bridge to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and flooding.

The project is located in along City of Lompoc's River Park and would require acquisition of 39,424 square feet (.910 acres) of temporary construction easement, 36,279 square feet (.833 acres) of permeant roadway easement, 4,492 (.103 acres) square feet of permeant drainage easement, and 5,728 square feet (.131 acres) by encroachment permit. The project will also require a temporary detour of the River Park entrance road (Sweeny Road) to River Park for approximately 2 years starting around spring 2029. The areas anticipated to be acquired are summarized below. Figures of these locations are provided in Attachment 2.

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May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
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**Table 1. Temporary and Permanent Property Acquisitions**

APN	Size (Square feet)	Description
099-141-030	10,236	Temporary Construction Easement -This easement is for rebuilding the driveway to the City pumping station.
	13,048	Permanent Roadway Easement -this easement will allow the next expanded bridge to reconnect to Highway 246.
099-141-006	4,492	Permanent Drainage Easement -This easement is for the new realigned culvert to outlet into the river to the north of its original position.
099-141-018	15,970	Temporary Construction Easement
	13,218	Temporary Construction Easement -This easement allows for the construction of the new bridge
	23,231	Permanent Roadway Easement -This easement is for the expanded bridge to have space to connect to the current 246 alignment.
Public Roadway	5,728	Encroachment Permit -this section of Sweeny Road will be rerouted to allow full access to River Park during and after construction.

As a publicly owned public park and recreational area, this area would be considered a Section 4(f) property, and therefore require a Section 4(f) analysis by the lead agency of this project. Caltrans seeks concurrence on a *de minimis* impact finding from the City of Lompoc, the agency with jurisdiction over the 4(f) property. This letter outlines the anticipated temporary and permanent impacts of the project to the 4(f) resource and summarizes Caltrans' findings that the project would have a minimal impact on the resource.

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**Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966**

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, codified in federal law at 49 U.S. Code 303, declares that "it is the policy of the United States Government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites."

Section 4(f) specifies that the Secretary [of Transportation] may approve a transportation program or project...requiring the use of publicly owned land of a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, State, or local significance, or land of an historic site of national, State, or local significance (as determined by the federal, state, or local officials having jurisdiction over the park, area, refuge, or site) only if:

- there is no prudent and feasible alternative to using that land; and
- the program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site resulting from the use.

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act, a federal transportation reauthorization bill signed into law in 2005, simplified the procedures for projects that would have *de minimis* impacts on Section 4(f) properties. An analysis is not required, and the Section 4(f) evaluation is complete once it is determined that the use of a Section 4(f) property would result in *de minimis* impacts.

The definition of a *de minimis* impact, as set forth in 23 Code of Federal Regulation Section 774.17, specifies that ... "For parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges, a *de minimis* impact is one that will not adversely affect the features, attributes, or activities qualifying the property for protection under Section 4(f)."

Responsibility for compliance with Section 4(f) has been assigned to Caltrans pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 326 and 327, including determinations and approval of Section 4(f) evaluations, as well as coordination with those agencies that have jurisdiction over a Section 4(f) resource that may be affected by a project action.

**Summary of the Section 4(f) Resource and Temporary Impacts from the project.**

River Park is a 45-acre city park, located along the Santa Ynez River in Santa Barbara County. The park's main attraction is the five group barbecue areas and picnic areas that are North of Highway 246. The park also has 35 RV hook up campsites, volleyball courts, horseshoe areas, and grassy lawns. The park

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maintains the man-made Kiwanis Lake which attracts a variety of wildlife to the park.

In total, the project would require 39,424 square feet (.910 acres) of temporary construction easement in River Park, which will be required to build the new expanded Robinson Bridge. The construction will require grading and earth work. Once the construction is complete the areas that have been disturbed will be replanted to have the least environmental impact possible. Further, 36,279 square feet (.833 acres) of permeant roadway easement will be required for the entrance and exit road to the new expanded bridge. This area will be paved with asphalt. This will not impact the River Park activities as this area of the park has no recreational activities associated with its use. This area has very dense brush and small willow trees. The project will also require 4,492 (.103 acres) square feet of permeant drainage easement within the River Park. This easement is on the western bank on the Santa Ynez River and not within an active recreational area. All the project easements are approximately a quarter of a mile from the closest camping area and main recreational areas within River Park. Temporary construction noise will be minimized to the extent feasible to help lessen sound traveling to people recreating in River Park.

The project will also require a 5,728 square foot (.131 acres) encroachment permit along the entrance of Sweeny Road from Highway 246. The road will be rerouted during the entire construction period of 2 years. A project specific Traffic Management Plan will be prepared, which will ensure that access to the city park is not impeded. This plan includes elements such as:

- Avoiding night work to further lessen any impacts to Park visitors.
- A Public Awareness Campaign to notify the public of the upcoming construction schedule and allow for prior planning.
- At least 1 through traffic lane (not to be less than 11 feet in width) being provided for use by both directions of travel (reversing control).
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations.

#### **Summary of Caltrans De Minimis Findings**

Caltrans believes the proposed project would have a minimal impact to the adjacent State Parks Land near and that this impact would not be considered adverse. The Section 4(f) determination is based on the following:

- The project has been designed to avoid and minimize environmental impacts as much as feasible.
- Access to River Park by the public would be maintained at all times and a Traffic Management Plan will be prepared during the project's next phase.

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- The property easements will not impact the key activities, features and attributes of the recreational area.

**Public Involvement and Coordination with Agencies with Jurisdiction.**


- On November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Laura Riccardelli reached out to Craig Dierling at the City of Lompoc to inform him that that 4(f) concurrence letter would be coming to the City of Lompoc in the next few months and offered a time to answer any questions if they came up.
- On November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Christie Alarcon the Lompoc Community Development Director Informed Laura Riccardelli that she would be the contact for further 4(f) concurrence.
- Caltrans shall continue to coordinate with the City of Lompoc as the project's design becomes more refined in the project's next phase.
- Prior to beginning construction of this project, Caltrans Public Information Officers will ensure that the public is made aware of construction activities in advance so that any potential delays can be planned for.

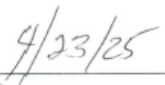
Caltrans *de minimis* impact finding requires concurrence from the agency with jurisdiction over the 4(f) property. Caltrans kindly requests City of Lompoc to provide a signature below as a sign of concurrence or provide a separate written response at your earliest convenience. Unless stated otherwise, your concurrence with Caltrans' Section 4(f) documentation includes concurrence with all Section 4(f) analysis and determinations for which concurrence from your agency is required.

Sincerely,

Laura Riccardelli  
Environmental Scientist  
(805) 319-0163

**CONCURRENCE WITH SECTION 4(F) DE MINIMIS FINDING BY CALIFORNIA LOMPOC CITY PARKS REPRESENTATIVE:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name  
Title  
Area

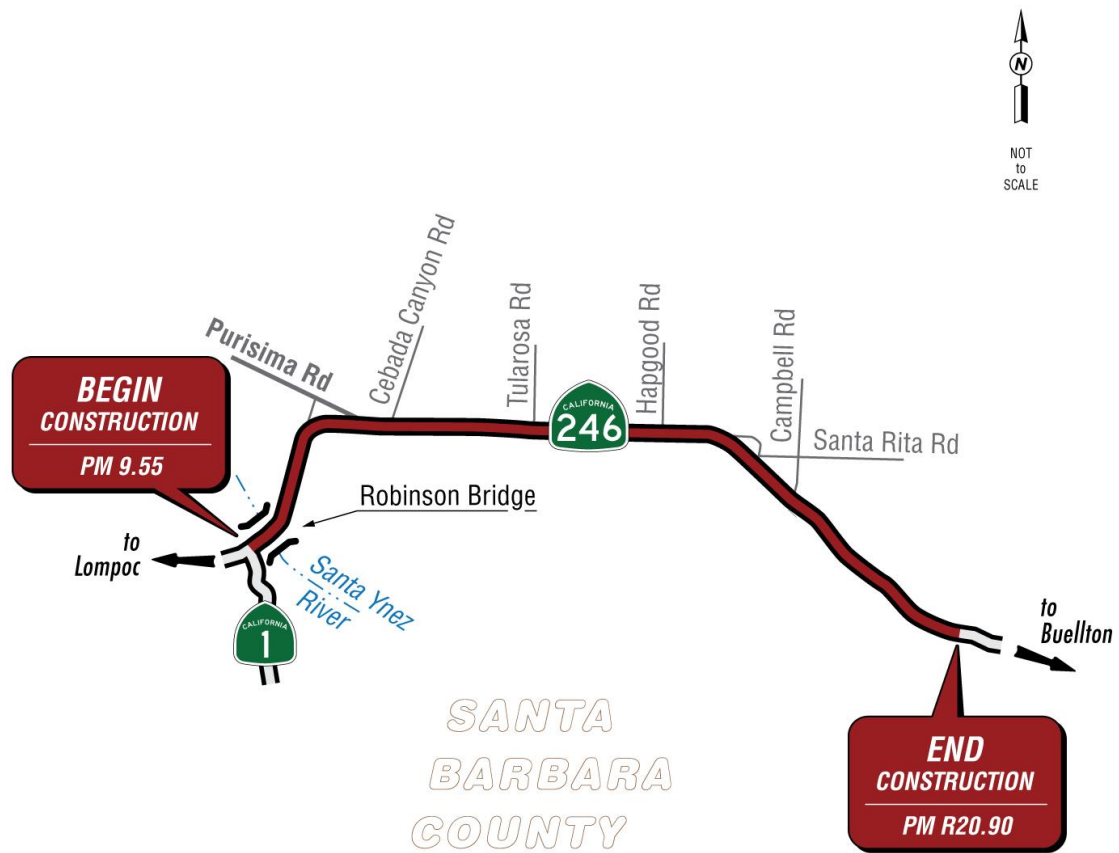
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Attachments

1. Project Location Map
2. Location of Construction Easements Required



4(f) Letter Attachment 1. Project Location Map



## River Park Property in the City of Lompoc



4(f) Letter Attachment 2. Location of Required Construction Easements





## **List of Technical Studies Bound Separately (Volume 2)**

Air and Noise Quality and Water Quality Assessment Report

Natural Environment Study

Climate Change Report

Preliminary Geotechnical Design Report

Floodplain Evaluation Report Summary

Stormwater Data Report

Location Hydraulic Study

Historical Property Survey Report (*confidential, not for public distribution*)

- Archaeological Survey Report

Hazardous Waste Reports

- Initial Site Assessment

Paleontological Reports

- Paleontological Identification Report

Visual Impact Assessment

To obtain a copy of one or more of these technical studies/reports or the Initial Study, please send your request to:

Lucas Marsalek  
District 5 Environmental Division  
California Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93402

Or send your request via email to: [Lucas.marsalek@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Lucas.marsalek@dot.ca.gov)

Or call: (805) 458-5408

Please provide the following information in your request:

Route 246 CAPM and Robinson Bridge  
State Route 246 in Santa Barbara County from post miles 9.55 to R20.90  
05-SB-246-9.55-R20.90  
0519000122