HOPE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

DRAFT INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

SEPTEMBER 2025

PREPARED FOR:

City of Porterville
291 N. Main Street
Porterville, CA 93257

PREPARED BY:

PROVOST&PRITCHARD
CONSULTING GROUP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 Introduction 1-1
1.1 Regulatory Information 1-1
1.2 Document Format 1-1
Chapter 2 Project Description 2-1
2.1 Project Background 2-1
2.1.1 Project Title 2-1
2.1.2 Lead Agency Name and Address 2-1
2.1.3 Contact Person and Phone Number 2-1
2.1.4 Project Location 2-1
2.1.5 Description of Project 2-1
2.1.6 Site and Surrounding Land Uses and Setting 2-1
2.1.7 Other Public Agencies Whose Approval May Be Required 2-1
2.1.8 Consultation with California Native American Tribes 2-1
Chapter 3 Determination 3-1
3.1 Potential Environmental Impacts 3-1
3.2 Determination 3-2
Chapter 4 Environmental Impact Analysis 4-3
4.1 Aesthetics 4-3
4.1.1 Baseline Conditions 4-3
4.1.2 Applicable Regulations 4-3
4.1.3 Impact Analysis 4-4
4.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources 4-6
4.2.1 Baseline Conditions 4-6
4.2.2 Applicable Regulations 4-7
4.2.3 Impact Analysis 4-10
4.3 Air Quality 4-12
4.3.1 Baseline Conditions 4-12
4.3.2 Methodology 4-12
4.3.3 Applicable Regulations 4-13
4.3.4 Impact Analysis 4-19
4.4 Biological Resources 4-21
4.4.1 Baseline Conditions 4-22

4.4.2 Applicable Regulations 4-23
4.4.3 Impact Analysis 4-25
4.4.4 Mitigation 4-33
4.5 Cultural Resources 4-35
4.5.1 Baseline Conditions 4-35
4.5.2 Applicable Regulations 4-36
4.5.3 Impact Analysis 4-38
4.5.4 Mitigation 4-39
4.6 Energy 4-40
4.6.1 Baseline Conditions 4-40
4.6.2 Applicable Regulations 4-40
4.6.3 Impact Analysis 4-41
4.7 Geology and Soils 4-42
4.7.1 Baseline Conditions 4-42
4.7.2 Applicable Regulations 4-44
4.7.3 Impact Analysis 4-46
4.7.4 Mitigation 4-48
4.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions 4-49
4.8.1 Baseline Conditions 4-49
4.8.2 Applicable Regulations 4-50
4.8.3 Impact Analysis 4-54
4.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials 4-56
4.9.1 Baseline Conditions 4-56
4.9.2 Applicable Regulations 4-57
4.9.3 Impact Analysis 4-61
4.10 Hydrology and Water Quality 4-64
4.10.1 Baseline Conditions 4-64
4.10.2 Applicable Regulations 4-65
4.10.3 Impact Analysis 4-70
4.11 Land Use and Planning 4-72
4.11.1 Baseline Conditions 4-72
4.11.2 Applicable Regulations 4-72
4.11.3 Impact Analysis 4-73
4.12 Mineral Resources 4-74
4.12.1 Baseline Conditions 4-74

4.12.2 Applicable Regulations 4-74
4.12.3 Impact Analysis 4-75
4.13 Noise 4-76
4.13.1 Baseline Conditions 4-76
4.13.2 Applicable Regulations 4-76
4.13.3 Impact Analysis 4-78
4.14 Population and Housing 4-80
4.14.1 Baseline Conditions 4-80
4.14.2 Applicable Regulations 4-80
4.14.3 Impact Analysis 4-81
4.15 Public Services 4-82
4.15.1 Baseline Conditions 4-82
4.15.2 Applicable Regulations 4-83
4.15.3 Impact Analysis 4-84
4.16 Recreation 4-85
4.16.1 Baseline Conditions 4-85
4.16.2 Applicable Regulations 4-85
4.16.3 Impact Analysis 4-85
4.17 Transportation 4-87
4.17.1 Baseline Conditions 4-87
4.17.2 Applicable Regulations 4-87
4.17.3 Impact Analysis 4-88
4.18 Tribal Cultural Resources 4-90
4.18.1 Baseline Conditions 4-90
4.18.2 Applicable Regulations 4-91
4.18.3 Impact Assessment 4-92
4.19 Utilities and Service Systems 4-94
4.19.1 Baseline Conditions 4-94
4.19.2 Applicable Regulations 4-95
4.19.3 Impact Analysis 4-97
4.20 Wildfire 4-99
4.20.1 Baseline Conditions 4-99
4.20.2 Applicable Regulations 4-100
4.20.3 Impact Analysis 4-101
4.21 CEQA Mandatory Findings of Significance 4-102

4.21.1 Statement of Findings 4-102
Chapter 5 Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program 5-1
Chapter 6 References 6-1

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: CalEEMod Output Files A-1
Appendix B: Biological Evaluation B-1
Appendix C: Cultural Resource C-1

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2-1: Regional Location 2-1
Figure 2-2: Aerial Map 2-1
Figure 2-3: Topo Quad 2-2
Figure 2-4: General Plan Land Use Designation Map 2-3
Figure 2-5: Zone District Map 2-4
Figure 4-1: FMMP Map 4-9
Figure 4-2: FEMA Flood Zones 4-69

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2-1: Existing Uses, General Plan Designation, & Zone Districts of Surrounding Properties 2-1
Table 4-1: Aesthetics Impacts 4-3
Table 4-2: Agriculture and Forest Impacts 4-6
Table 4-3: Air Quality Impacts 4-12
Table 4-4: Air Quality Thresholds of Significance – Criteria Pollutants 4-16
Table 4-5: Summary of Ambient Air Quality Standards & Attainment Designation 4-17
Table 4-6: Unmitigated Short-Term Construction-Generated Emissions of Criteria Air Pollutants 4-19
Table 4-7: Biological Resources Impacts 4-21
Table 4-8: List of Special Status Plants with Potential to Occur on the Project Site and/or in the Vicinity. 4-26
Table 4-9: List of Special Status Animals with Potential to Occur on the Project Site and/or in the Vicinity. 4-29
Table 4-10: Cultural Resources Impacts 4-35
Table 4-11: Energy Impacts 4-40
Table 4-12: Geology and Soils Impacts 4-42
Table 4-13: Project Site Soils 4-44
Table 4-14: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impacts 4-49
Table 4-15. Unmitigated Short-Term Construction-Generated GHG Emissions 4-54
Table 4-16: Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impacts 4-56
Table 4-17: Hydrology and Water Quality Impacts 4-64

Table 4-18: Land Use and Planning Impacts....4-72
Table 4-19: Mineral Resources Impacts....4-74
Table 4-20: Noise Impacts....4-76
Table 4-21: Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments....4-77
Table 4-22: Typical Construction Noise Levels....4-79
Table 4-23: Population and Housing Impacts....4-80
Table 4-24: Public Services....4-82
Table 4-25: Recreation Impacts....4-85
Table 4-26: Transportation Impacts....4-87
Table 4-27: Tribal Cultural Resources Impacts....4-90
Table 4-28: Utilities and Service Systems Impacts....4-94
Table 4-29: Wildfire Impacts....4-99
Table 4-30: CEQA Mandatory Findings of Significance....4-102
Table 5-1: Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program....5-2

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AB ..... Assembly Bill
AHERA ..... Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act
AHPA ..... Archeological and Historic Preservation Act
BAAQMD ..... Bay Area Air Quality Management District
BMP ..... Best Management Practices
BPS ..... Best Performance Standards
CAA ..... Clean Air Act
CAAQS ..... California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CalARP ..... California Accidental Release Program
CalEEMod ..... California Emissions Estimator Model
CalEPA ..... California Environmental Protection Agency
CAL FIRE ..... California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Cal/OSHA ..... California Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Caltrans ..... California Department of Transportation
CARB ..... California Air Resources Board
CCAA ..... California Clean Air Act
CCR ..... California Code of Regulations
CDFW ..... California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA ..... California Environmental Quality Act
CERCLA ..... Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CESA ..... California Endangered Species Act
CFCs ..... Chlorofluorocarbons
CH_4 ..... Methane
CHRIS ..... California Historical Resources Information System
City ..... City of Porterville
CNPS ..... California Native Plant Society
CO ..... Carbon Monoxide
CO_2 ..... Carbon Dioxide
County ..... Tulare County
CRHR ..... California Register of Historical Resources
CUPA ..... Certified Unified Program Agency

CWA ..... Clean Water Act
dBA ..... A-weighted decibels
DOC ..... California Department of Conservation
DTSC ..... Department of Toxic Substances Control
EIR ..... Environmental Impact Report
EPCRA ..... Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act
ESA ..... Endangered Species Act
FEMA ..... Federal Emergency Management Agency
FGC ..... California Fish and Game Code
FHWA ..... Federal Highway Administration
FMMP ..... Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FPPA ..... Farmland Protection Policy Act
GC ..... California Government Code
GPCD ..... Gallons per capita per day
GHG ..... Greenhouse Gas
GWP ..... Global Warming Potential
HFCs ..... Hydrofluorocarbons
IPaC ..... Information for Planning and Consultation System
IS ..... Initial Study
IS/MND ..... Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
km ..... kilometers
LF ..... linear feet
MBTA ..... Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MMRP ..... Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
MND ..... Mitigated Negative Declaration
NAAQS ..... National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC ..... Native American Heritage Commission
ND ..... Negative Declaration
NEHRP ..... National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program
N_2O ..... Nitrous Oxide
NO_2 ..... Nitrogen Dioxide
NO_X ..... Nitrogen Oxides
NHPA ..... National Historic Preservation Act

NPDES ..... National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPPA ..... Native Plant Protection Act
NRCS ..... Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP ..... National Register of Historic Places
NSF ..... National Science Foundation
NWI ..... National Wetlands Inventory
NWP ..... Nationwide Permit
O_3 ..... Ozone
OHP ..... California Office of Historic Preservation
OSHA ..... Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Pb ..... Lead
PFCs ..... Perfluorocarbons
PM_{10} ..... Particulate matter 10 microns in size
$PM_{2.5}$ ..... Particulate matter 2.5 microns in size
ppb ..... Parts per billion
ppm ..... Parts per million
PRC ..... California Public Resources Code
Project ..... Hope Elementary School Water System Improvements Project
RCRA ..... Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
ROG ..... Reactive Organic Gases
ROW ..... Right-of-way
RWQCB ..... Regional Water Quality Control Board
SF_6 ..... Sulfur Hexafluoride
SIP ..... State Implementation Plan
SJVAB ..... San Joaquin Valley Air Basin
SJVAPCD ..... San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
SO_2 ..... Sulfur Dioxide
SOI ..... Sphere of Influence
SSJVIC ..... Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center
SR ..... State Route
SRA ..... State Responsibility Area
SWPPP ..... Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB ..... State Water Resources Control Board

TAC ..... Toxic Air Contaminants
TCR ..... Tribal Cultural Resource
TPY ..... Tons per year
UDB ..... Urban Development Boundary
USACE ..... United States Army Corps of Engineers
USC ..... United States Code
USDA ..... United States Department of Agriculture
USEPA ..... United States Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS ..... United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS ..... United States Geological Survey
UST ..... Underground Storage Tank
UWMP ..... Urban Water Management Plan
WOTUS ..... Waters of the United States
$\mu g/m^3$ ..... Micrograms per cubic meter

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group (Provost & Pritchard) has prepared this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) on behalf of the City of Porterville (City or Lead Agency) to address the environmental effects of the Hope Elementary School Water System Improvements Project (Project). This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21000, et seq. The City is the CEQA lead agency for this Project.

The site and the Project are described in detail in Chapter 2 Project Description.

1.1 REGULATORY INFORMATION

An Initial Study (IS) is a document prepared by a lead agency to determine whether a project may have a significant effect on the environment. In accordance with California Code of Regulations Title 14 (Chapter 3, Section 15000, et seq.) -- also known as the CEQA Guidelines--Section 15064 (a)(1) states that an environmental impact report (EIR) must be prepared if there is substantial evidence in light of the whole record that the Project under review may have a significant effect on the environment and should be further analyzed to determine mitigation measures or project alternatives that might avoid or reduce project impacts to less than significant levels. A negative declaration (ND) may be prepared instead if the lead agency finds that there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole record that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. An ND is a written statement describing the reasons why a proposed Project, not otherwise exempt from CEQA, would not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, why it would not require the preparation of an EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15371). According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, a ND or *mitigated* ND shall be prepared for a project subject to CEQA when either:

a. The IS shows there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed Project may have a significant effect on the environment, or
b. The IS identified potentially significant effects, but:
    1. Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by or agreed to by the applicant before the proposed MND and IS is released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur is prepared, and
    2. There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed Project as *revised* may have a significant effect on the environment.

1.2 DOCUMENT FORMAT

This IS/MND contains six chapters. Chapter 1 Introduction, provides an overview of the Project and the CEQA process. Chapter 2 Project Description, provides a detailed description of proposed Project components and objectives. Chapter 3 Determination, the Lead Agency's determination based upon this initial evaluation. Chapter 4 Environmental Impact Analysis presents the CEQA checklist and environmental analysis for all impact areas, mandatory findings of significance, and feasible mitigation measures. If the Project does not have the potential to significantly impact a given issue area, the relevant section provides a brief discussion of the reasons why no impacts are expected. If the Project could have a potentially significant impact on a resource, the issue area discussion provides a description of potential impacts, and appropriate mitigation measures and/or permit requirements that would reduce those impacts to a less

than significant level. Chapter 5 Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program (MMRP), provides the proposed mitigation measures, implementation timelines, and the entity/agency responsible for ensuring implementation. Chapter 6 References details the documents and reports this document relies upon to provide its analysis.

The California Emissions Estimator Modeling (CalEEMod) Output Files, Biological Evaluation, and the Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment are provided as technical Appendix A, Appendix B, and Appendix C, respectively, at the end of this document.

CHAPTER 2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

2.1.1 Project Title

Hope Elementary School Water System Improvements Project

2.1.2 Lead Agency Name and Address

City of Porterville
291 N. Main Street
Porterville, CA 93257

2.1.3 Contact Person and Phone Number

Lead Agency Contact

Claudia Calderon
Community Development Director
(559) 782-7460

CEQA Consultant

Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group
Wyatt Czeshinski, Environmental Project Manager
(559) 449-2700

2.1.4 Project Location

The Project is located partly in an unincorporated area of Tulare County and portions of the City of Porterville, approximately 220 miles southeast of Sacramento and 45 miles North of Bakersfield (see Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2). Hope Elementary School is located on Assessor's Parcel Number 303-060-009.

2.1.5 Description of Project

Hope Elementary School, located east of the intersection of South Indiana Street and West Teapot Dome Avenue and south of the City, is served by a single active well that is in exceedance of acceptable maximum contaminant levels for nitrate. As a result, Hope Elementary School now seeks to consolidate with the City's existing water system. To do this, new water mains connecting the school to the City's water system would be constructed along South Indiana Steet and West Teapot Dome Avenue. Additionally, a 4-inch water meter and backflow preventer would be installed at the school site, providing the school with the ability to use the new water main for domestic water use, irrigation, and fire flow. A water tank existing on-site would be removed and the existing well would be destroyed. In total the Project would:

- Construct approximately 6,550 linear feet (LF) of 12-inch water main along South Indiana Street from West Teapot Dome Avenue to West Scranton Avenue, connecting to City facilities in West Scranton Avenue;
- Construct approximately 5,300 LF of 12-inch water main along West Teapot Dome Avenue to from the frontage of Hope Elementary School to Newcomb Street, connecting to City facilities in Newcomb Street;
- Install 23 1-inch water services and meters for future connections to residents along South Indiana Street and West Teapot Dome Avenue;
- Horizontal Directional Drilling for approximately 1,345 LF of 12-inch water main under State Route (SR) 65 along Project alignment in route to Newcomb Street;
- Install a 4-inch service connection at Hope Elementary School;
- Install a 4-inch backflow preventer at Hope Elementary School;
- Install a 4-inch water meter and box at Hope Elementary School;
- Remove an existing water tank at Hope Elementary School;
- Result in destruction/abandonment of the existing well at Hope Elementary School;
- Install fire hydrants at least every 500 feet along proposed water main alignment, except where no structure is present; and
- Result in approximately 1,100 LF of dead end main along West Teapot Dome Avenue from South Indiana Avenue to Hope Elementary School. Dead end mains are those which are not connected to another part of the water system.

Construction Schedule

Construction of the Project is anticipated to be completed within eight months. Generally, construction would occur during the hours of 7am to 5pm, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Post-construction activities would include site system testing, commissioning, and site clean-up. Construction would require a small amount of temporary staging and some storage areas for materials and equipment. Material staging and storage would be located at the well site, and in the road right-of-way (ROW) along the Project alignment.

Operation and Maintenance

The Project would connect the school to the City's water system. As a result, City staff would provide necessary maintenance. Operation of the water system would be passive in nature and would consist of standard routine maintenance and inspections. Pipelines would only require routine inspections and maintenance activities on an as-needed basis.

2.1.6 Site and Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

The surroundings uses, General Plan Designation, and zoning surrounding the Hope Elementary School site is shown in the table below.

Table 2-1: Existing Uses, General Plan Designation, & Zone Districts of Surrounding Properties

Direction	Existing Use	General Plan Designation	Zone District
NORTH	Orchard	Rural Residential	AE-20 (County)
EAST	Orchard/Rural Residence	Agriculture Rural Conservation	AE-10 (County)
SOUTH	Orchard	Agriculture Rural Conservation	AE-10 (County)
WEST	Orchard	Agriculture Rural Conservation	AE-20 (County)

2.1.7 Other Public Agencies Whose Approval May Be Required

- Tulare County
- Tulare County Local Agency Formation Commission
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD)

2.1.8 Consultation with California Native American Tribes

PRC Section 21080.3.1, et seq. (codification of Assembly Bill [AB] 52, 2013-14)) requires that a lead agency, within 14 days of determining that it will undertake a project, must notify in writing any California Native American Tribe traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project if that Tribe has previously requested notification about projects in that geographic area. The notice must briefly describe the project and inquire whether the Tribe wishes to initiate request formal consultation. Tribes have 30 days from receipt of notification to request formal consultation. The lead agency then has 30 days to initiate the consultation, which then continues until the parties come to an agreement regarding necessary mitigation or agree that no mitigation is needed, or one or both parties determine that negotiation occurred in good faith, but no agreement will be made.

The City has received written correspondence from the Santa Rosa Rancheria Yokut Tribe and the Tule River Indian Tribe pursuant to PRC Section 21080.3.1 requesting notification of projects in the area. Letters were sent to each of these tribes notifying them of the Project. These letters are discussed in further detail in Section 4.18.

Figure 2-1: Regional Location

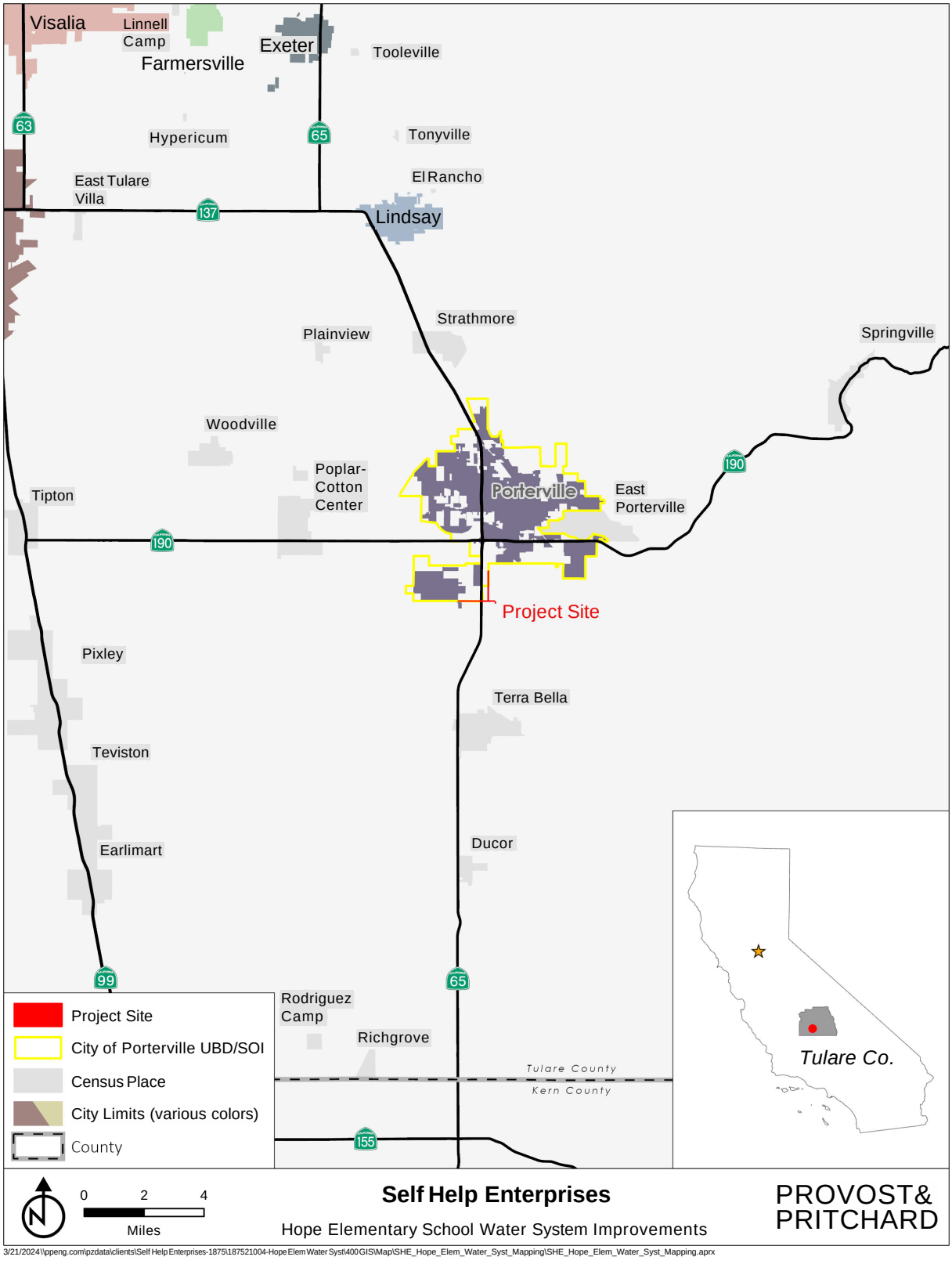


Figure 2-2: Aerial Map

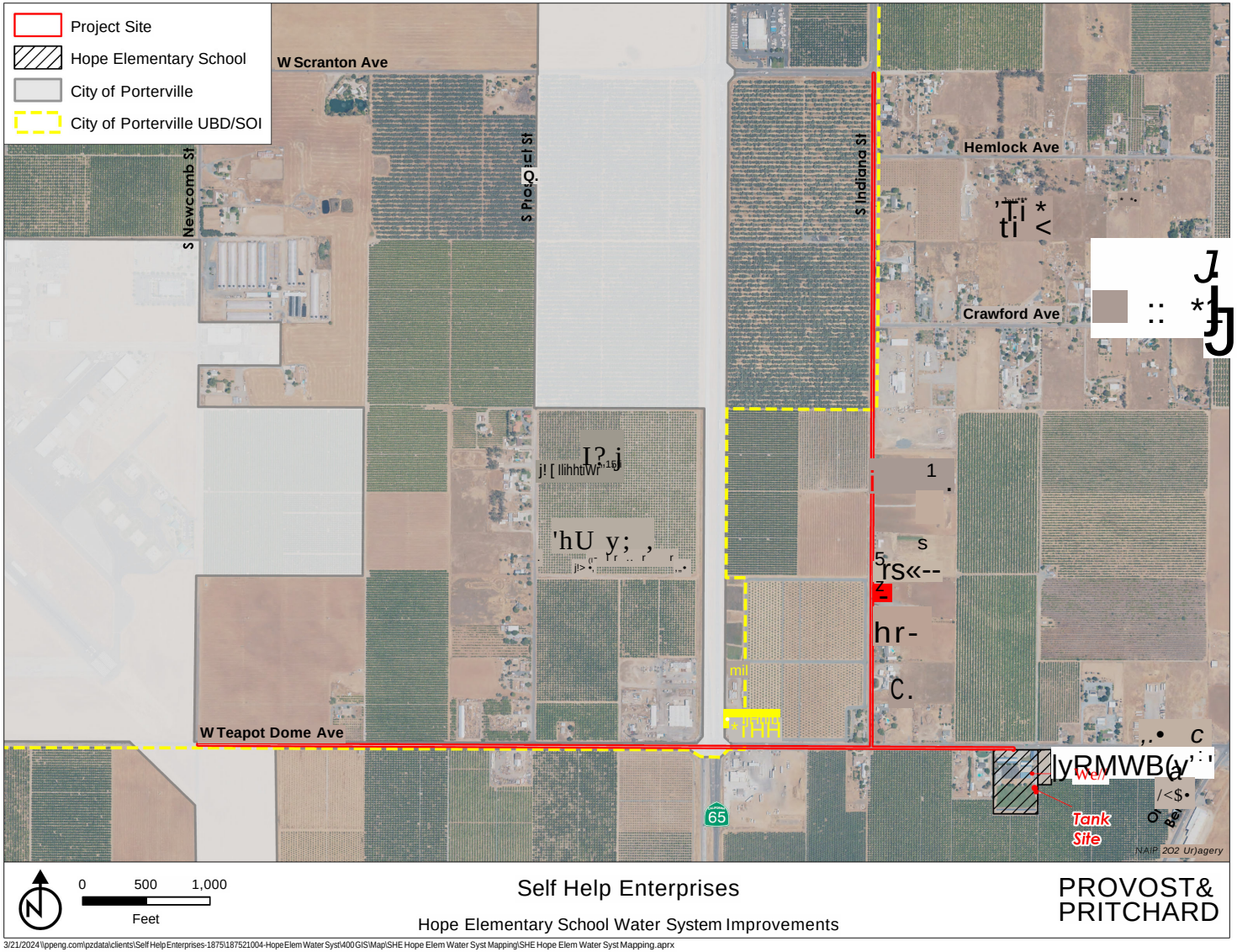


Figure 2-3: Topo Quad

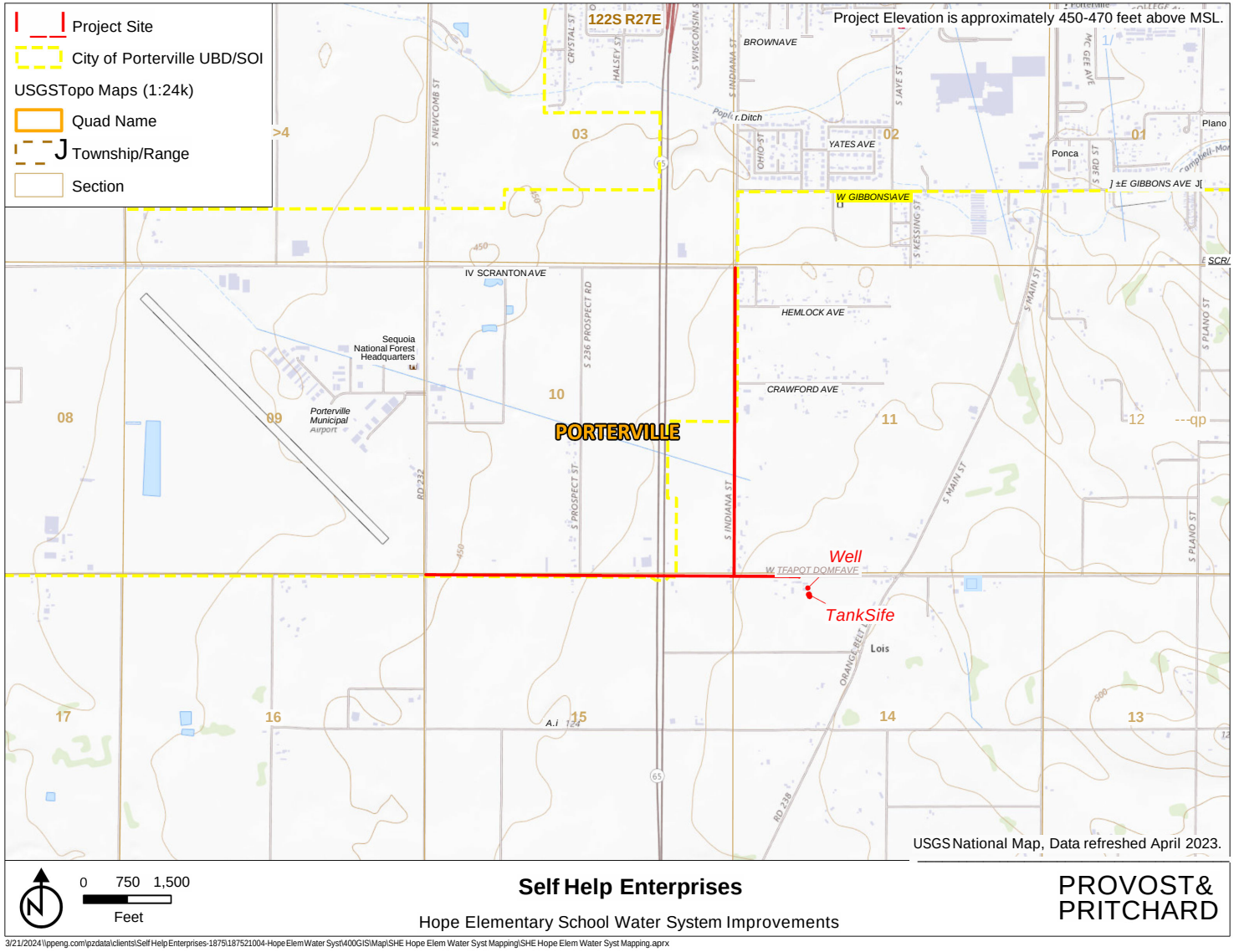


Figure 2-4: General Plan Land Use Designation Map

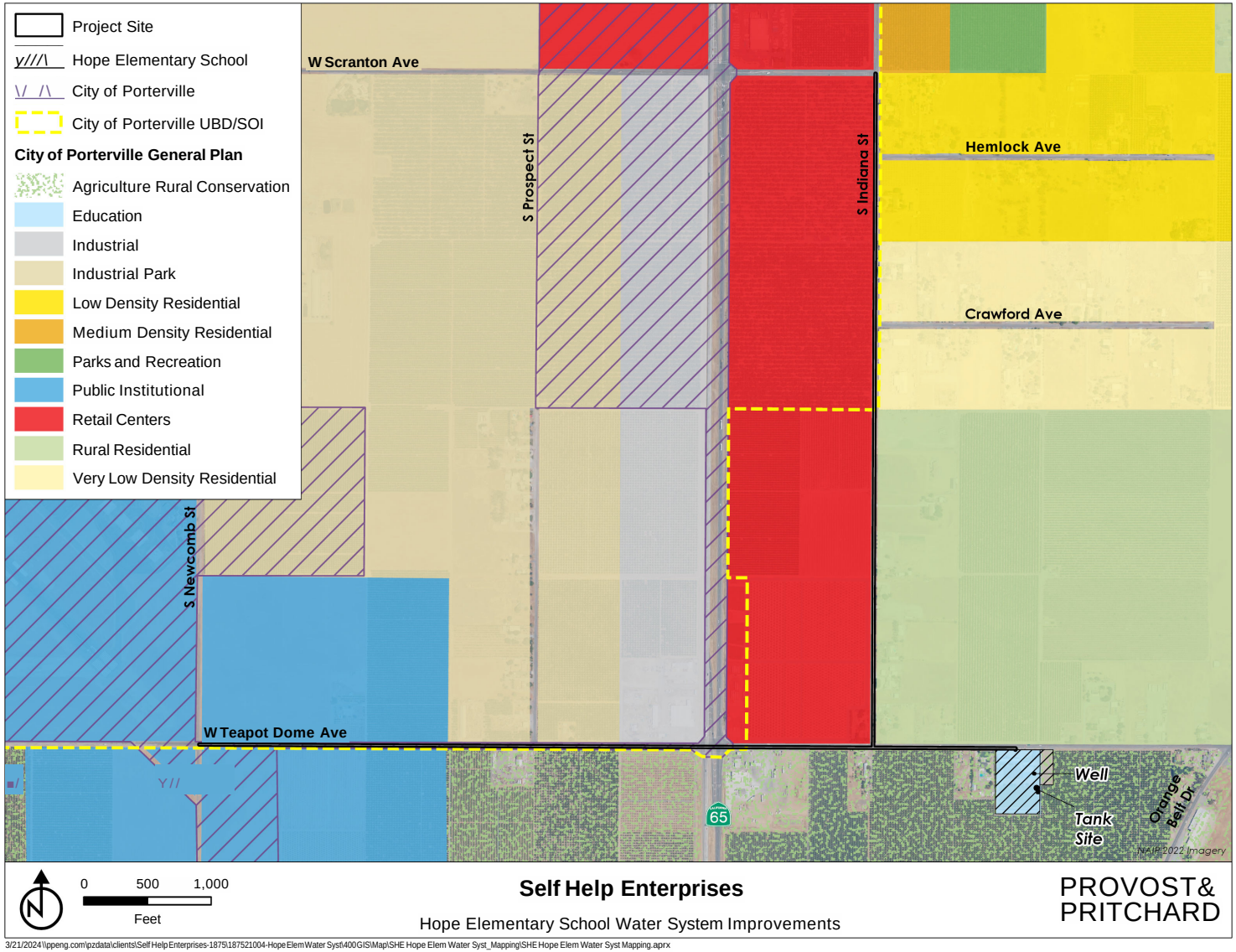
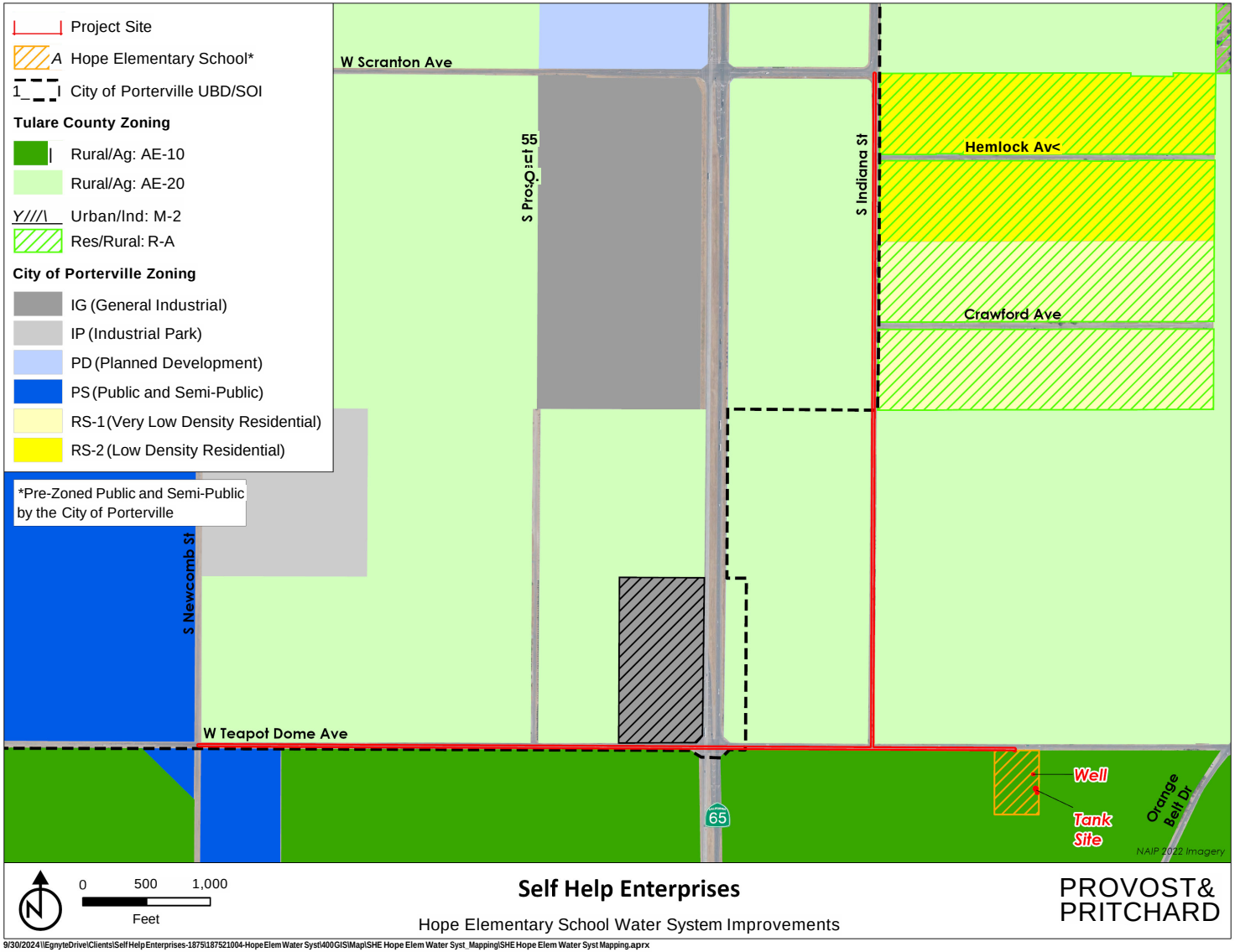


Figure 2-5: Zone District Map



CHAPTER 3 DETERMINATION

3.1 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

As indicated by the discussions of existing and baseline conditions, and impact analyses that follow in this Chapter, environmental factors not checked below would have no impacts or less than significant impacts resulting from the project. Environmental factors that are. checked below would have potentially significant impacts resulting from the project. Mitigation measures are recommended for each of the potentially significant impacts that would reduce the impact to less than significant.

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

The analyses of environmental impacts in Chapter 4 Impact Analysis result in an impact statement, which shall have the following meanings.

Potentially Significant Impact. This category is applicable if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant, and no feasible mitigation measures can be identified to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. This category applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce an effect from a "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measure(s), and briefly explain how they would reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from earlier analyses may be cross-referenced).

Less than Significant Impact. This category is identified when the proposed Project would result in impacts below the threshold of significance, and no mitigation measures are required.

No Impact. This category applies when a project would not create an impact in the specific environmental issue area. "No Impact" answers do not require a detailed explanation if they are adequately supported by the information sources cited by the lead agency, which show that the impact does not apply to the specific project (e.g. the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g. the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

3.2 DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation (to be completed by the Lead Agency):

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

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

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

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

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

Claudia Calderon — 10/4/2024

Signature — Date

(f7 Claudia Calderon, Community Development Director

Printed Name/Position

CHAPTER 4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

4.1 AESTHETICS

Table 4-1: Aesthetics Impacts

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.1.1 Baseline Conditions

The Project site is located partly within the city limits and Urban Development Boundary (UDB)/Sphere of Influence (SOI) of the City of Porterville. Portions of the Project, including Hope Elementary School, are located to the south and east of the Porterville city limits and the UDB/SOI. Lands in the Project vicinity consist of relatively flat, irrigated farmland, residential homes, and urban uses. Agricultural practices in the vicinity consist of row crops, groves, and field crops. Additionally, there are paved roadways, canals, and other infrastructure typical of rural-urban land uses. The Project would be located along and within rural right-of-way (South Indiana Avenue and West Teapot Dome Ave).

4.1.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

Federal regulations relating to aesthetics include: Organic Administration Act (1897), Multiple Use – Sustained Yield Act (1960), Wilderness Act (1964), Federal Lands Policy and Management Act (1976), Wild

and Scenic Rivers Act. The Project is not subject to any of these regulations since there are no federally designated lands or rivers in the vicinity.

State

California Scenic Highway Program

The Scenic Highway Program, created by the Legislature in 1963, allows county and city governments to apply to Caltrans to establish a scenic corridor protection program. Its purpose is to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors through special conservation treatment. The State laws governing the Scenic Highway Program are found in the Streets and Highways Code Sections 260-263. While not officially Designated, there are two State Routes within Tulare County that are Eligible for designation: SR 198 heading east from Visalia, and SR 190 from SR 65 in Porterville to its terminus near Ponderosa. [1]

Local

In addition, the proposed Project is being evaluated pursuant to local policies listed below.

Porterville General Plan Policies

- LU-G-1: Promote a sustainable, balanced land use pattern that responds to existing needs and future needs of the City.

Tulare County General Plan Policies

- SL-1: To protect and feature the beauty of Tulare County's view of working and natural landscapes.
- SL-2: To protect the scenic views for travelers along Tulare County's roads and highways.

4.1.3 Impact Analysis

a) Have substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site has a potential scenic vista towards the east, the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range; however, the view is obstructed by several mature trees, single-family residential homes, and overhead utility lines. Views in the area consist of citrus groves to the south, residential homes to the east and west, and vacant land to the north. The proposed Project would not substantially alter the referenced vista as the Project would be located almost entirely underground. Construction would take place over approximately eight months; these activities would be temporary and would not affect a scenic vista. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant impact.

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

No Impact. There are no scenic resources located on site or in the vicinity of the Project site. The nearest highway that is eligible for listing as a state scenic highway is the eastern portion of SR 190 where it is bisected by SR 65, located approximately 0.80 miles north of the Project. Therefore, there would be no impact.

[1] (California Department of Transportation 2024)

c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Less than Significant Impact. The existing visual character of the Project site and its surroundings consist of irrigated farmland and single-family residential homes. The Project involves the installation of new public infrastructure within existing ROW and at Hope Elementary School. Upon completion of construction, the Project would not substantially change the visual quality of the site and its surrounding areas. Any visual impacts from construction would be temporary and less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project involves the installation of new public infrastructure within existing ROW and at Hope Elementary School. The Project would not contribute a new source of substantial light or glare. Construction equipment may present the opportunity for glare during construction; however, construction is temporary, and any effects would cease upon Project completion. The Project would underground water system facilities and would not increase light and glare sources for the area. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

4.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Table 4-2: Agriculture and Forest Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	5
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.2.1 Baseline Conditions

The Project site is located in the San Joaquin Valley portion of Tulare County. This area is characterized by rich, highly productive farmland. Agriculture is the most important sector in Tulare County's economy, and agriculture and related industries make Tulare County one of the two most productive agricultural counties in the United States, according to Tulare County Farm Bureau statistics. Agricultural lands (crop and commodity production and grazing) also provide Tulare County's most visible source of open space lands. Agriculture is a vital component of the Tulare County's economy and is a significant source of Tulare County's cultural identity. As such, preserving the productivity of agricultural lands is integral to maintaining Tulare County's culture and economic viability.

Tulare County's agricultural strength is based on the diversity of the crops produced. The 2022 *Tulare County Annual Crop and Livestock Report* covers more than 150 different commodities, 41 of which have a gross value in excess of $1,000,000. Although individual commodities may experience difficulties from year

to year, Tulare County continues to produce high-quality crops that provide food and fiber to more than 90 countries throughout the world.[2]

4.2.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

Federal Farmland Protection Policy Act

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) oversees the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) (7 United States Code (USC) Section 4201, et seq.; see also 7 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 658). The FPPA (a subtitle of the 1981 Farm Bill) is national legislation designed to protect farmland. The FPPA states its purpose is to "minimize the extent to which federal programs contribute to the unnecessary conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses." The FPPA applies to projects and programs that are sponsored or financed in whole or in part by the federal government. The FPPA does not apply to private construction projects subject to federal permitting and licensing, projects planned and completed without assistance from a federal agency, federal projects related to national defense during a national emergency, or projects proposed on land already committed to urban development. The FPPA spells out requirements to ensure federal programs to the extent practical are compatible with State, local, and private programs and policies to protect farmland and calls for the use of the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment system to aid in analysis.

State

California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection

As part of the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), the California Department of Conservation (DOC) applies the NRCS soil classifications to identify agricultural lands, and these agricultural designations are used in planning for the present and future of California's agricultural land resources. These designated agricultural lands are included in the Important Farmland Maps. The FMMP was established in 1982 to assess the location, quality, and quantity of agricultural lands and the conversion of these lands. The FMMP provides analysis of agricultural land use and land use changes throughout California. The DOC has a minimum mapping unit of 10 acres, with parcels that are smaller than 10 acres being absorbed into the surrounding classifications.

The list below provides a comprehensive description of all the categories mapped by the DOC.

- Prime Farmland. Farmland that has the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- Farmland of Statewide Importance. Farmland similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- Unique Farmland. Farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the State's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards

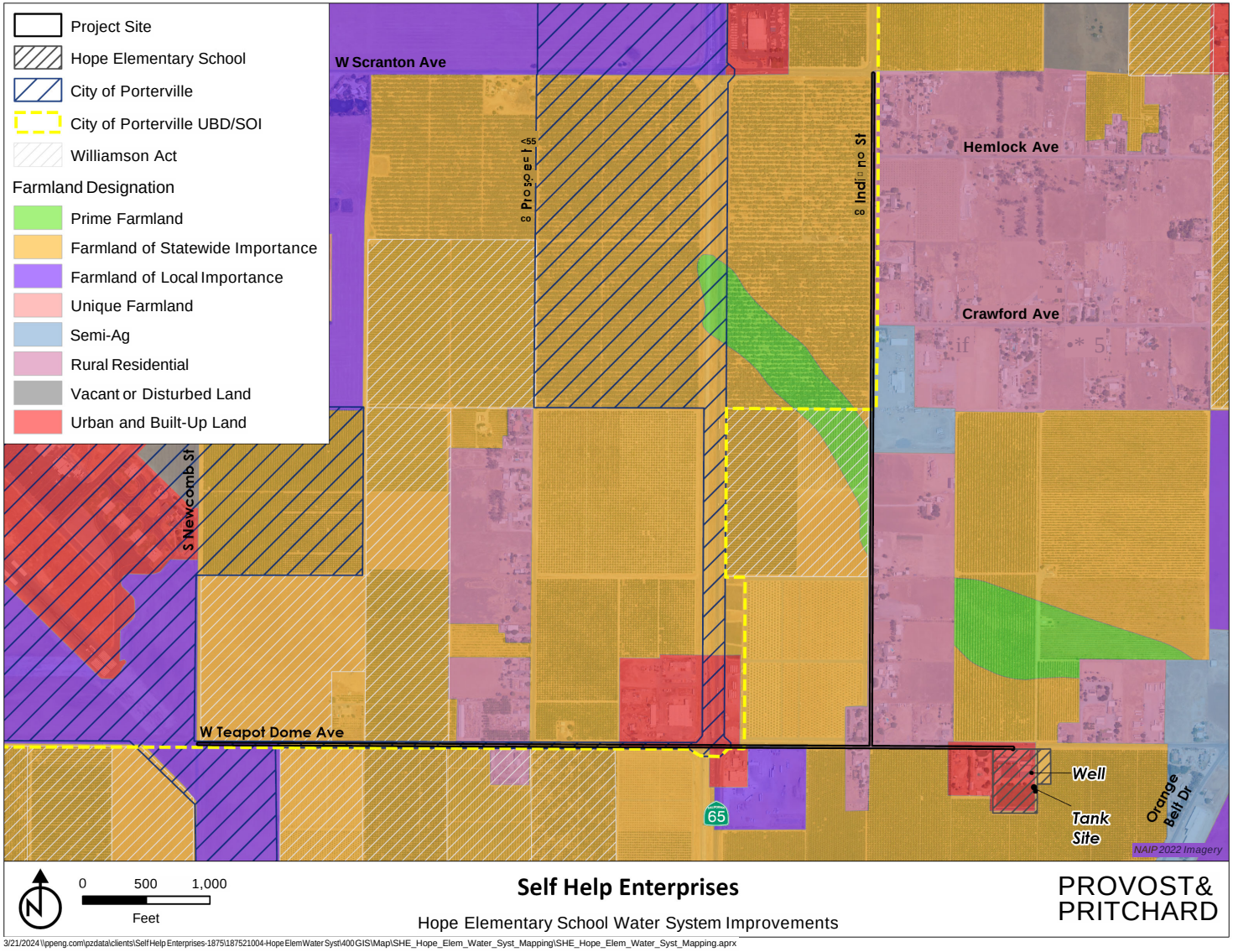
[2] (Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner 2023)

as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

- Farmland of Local Importance. Land of importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee.
- Grazing Land. Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities. The minimum mapping unit for Grazing Land is 40 acres.
- Urban and Built-up Land. Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, public administrative purposes, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.
- Other Land. Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry or aquaculture facilities; strip mines and borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than 40 acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.

The installation of the new water main pipeline would occur in the existing County and City ROW along West Teapot Dome Avenue and South Indiana Street. While the existing ROW is not subject to a farmland designation, the adjacent properties are designated as shown in Figure 4-1 below.

Figure 4-1: FMMP Map



California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act)

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, is promulgated in California Government Code (GC) Sections 51200-51297.4. The Williamson Act enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space uses in return for reduced property tax assessments. Private land within locally designated agricultural preserve areas is eligible for enrollment under Williamson Act contracts. However, an agricultural preserve must consist of no less than 100 acres. In order to meet this requirement two or more parcels may be combined if they are contiguous or if they are in common ownership.

The Williamson Act program is administered by the DOC in conjunction with local governments, which administer the individual contract arrangements with landowners. The landowner commits the parcel to a 10-year period, or a 20-year period for property restricted by a Farmland Security Zone Contract, wherein no conversion to a non-agricultural use is permitted. Each year the contract automatically renews unless a notice of non-renewal is filed. In return, the land is taxed at a rate based on the actual use of the land for agricultural purposes as opposed to its unrestricted market value. A landowner may also submit an application for immediate cancellation, provided that the cancellation is consistent with the criteria stated in the California Land Conservation Act and those adopted by the affected county or city. Non-renewal or immediate cancellation does not change the zoning of the property. Participation in the Williamson Act program is dependent on city or county adoption and implementation of the program and is voluntary for landowners.

The Project pipeline alignment is within the public ROW and therefore not subject to the Williamson Act.

Local Regulations

Porterville General Plan Policies

- OSC-G-4: Promote preservation of agriculture lands within and adjacent to the Planning Area.

Tulare County General Plan Policies

- AG-1*:* To promote the long-term preservation of productive and potentially-productive agricultural lands and to accommodate agricultural-support services and agriculturally-related activities that supports the viability of agriculture and further Tulare County's economic development goals.
    - AG-1.1: Primary Land Use – Tulare County shall maintain agriculture as the primary land use in the valley region of Tulare County, not only in recognition of the economic importance of agriculture, but also in terms of agriculture's real contribution to the conservation of open space and natural resources.
    - AG-1.17: Agricultural Water Resources – Tulare County shall seek to protect and enhance surface water and groundwater resources critical to agriculture.

4.2.3 Impact Analysis

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

No Impact. As demonstrated in Figure 4-1, the Project would install new water main pipelines and associated infrastructure in the public ROW along West Teapot Dome Avenue and South Indiana Street.

While the existing ROW is not subject to a farmland designation pursuant to the FMMP, the properties adjacent to the road ROW have been designated under the FMMP. Properties along West Teapot Dome Avenue have been designated as Farmland of State Importance, Urban and Built-up Land, and Rural Residential, while properties along South Indiana Street have designations of Urban and Built-up Land, Rural Residential, Prime Farmland, and Semi-Ag. As previously mentioned, the work for the Project would take place within existing ROW and none of the farmland adjacent to the pipeline alignment would need to be converted as part of the Project. As a result, no impact would occur.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact. Construction would occur within existing ROW along streets located in the Porterville city limits and UDB/SOI. ROW within Tulare County would also be included as a part of the Project. As shown in Figure 2-5, zone districts adjacent to the Project within the Porterville city limits consist of Public and Semi-Public zoned properties, while properties within Tulare County portion of the Project consists of Rural/Ag Zone districts (AE-10 and AE-20). Some of the agriculturally zoned properties adjacent to the pipeline alignment within Tulare County are subject to a Williamson Act contract. However, the Project itself would not conflict with the existing zoning or Williamson Act contract because work for the Project would take place within the existing ROW. As a result, there would be no impact on agriculturally zoned land or Williamson Act contracts.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

No Impact. The Project lies on the San Joaquin Valley floor, in a relatively flat and agricultural area. The Project would be located within the existing ROW. There are no forests or timberland located on or near the Project site and no land in the vicinity of the Project site is zoned for forest land or Timberland Production. There would be no impact.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. As discussed in impact analysis c, there are no forests or timberland within the Project site's vicinity. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

No Impact. The Project would not involve additional changes to the existing environment that would change the nature or location such that it would lead to conversion of farmlands to non-agricultural uses. The construction portion of the Project would be located in the ROW of West Teapot Dome Avenue and South Indiana Steet. Furthermore, the Project would not convert forest lands to non-forest uses. Therefore, there would be no impact.

4.3 AIR QUALITY

Table 4-3: Air Quality Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.3.1 Baseline Conditions

The Project lies within the eight-county San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB), which is managed by the San SJVAPCD. Air quality in the SJVAB is influenced by a variety of factors, including topography, local and regional meteorology. National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) have been established for the following criteria pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O_3), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), particulate matter 10 microns in size (PM_{10}), particulate matter 2.5 microns in size ($PM_{2.5}$), and lead (Pb). The CAAQS also set standards for sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, and visibility.

Air quality plans or attainment plans are used to bring the applicable air basin into attainment with all state and federal ambient air quality standards designed to protect the health and safety of residents within that air basin. Areas are classified under the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) as either "attainment", "non-attainment", or "extreme non-attainment" areas for each criteria pollutant based on whether the NAAQS have been achieved or not. Attainment relative to the State standards is determined by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The San Joaquin Valley is designated as a State and Federal extreme non-attainment area for O_3, a State and Federal non-attainment area for $PM_{2.5}$, a State non-attainment area for PM_{10}, a Federal and State attainment area for CO, SO_2, and NO_2, and a State attainment area for sulfates, vinyl chloride and Pb.[3]

4.3.2 Methodology

An Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Evaluation Report, Appendix A, was prepared using CalEEmod, Version 2022.1.1.21 for the Project in February of 2024. Emissions estimates are included for the construction portion of the Project, while operational emissions were considered negligible. The

[3] (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District 2024)

sections below detail the methodology of the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report (Appendix A) and its conclusions.

Short-Term Construction-Generated Emissions

Short-term construction emissions associated with the Project were calculated using CalEEmod, Version 2022.1.1.21. The emissions modeling includes emissions generated by off-road equipment, haul trucks, and worker commute trips. Emissions were quantified based on anticipated construction schedules and construction equipment requirements provided by the Project applicant. All remaining assumptions were based on the default parameters contained in the model. Modeling assumptions and output files are included in Appendix A.

Long-Term Operational Emissions

Long-term operational emissions associated with the Proposed Project were calculated using the CalEEmod, Version 2022.1.1.21. Operational emissions have been considered negligible due to the nature of the use. Modeling assumptions and output files are included in Appendix A.

4.3.3 Applicable Regulations

Federal

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

At the federal level, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has been charged with implementing national air quality programs. The USEPA's air quality mandates are drawn primarily from the CAA, which was signed into law in 1970. Congress substantially amended the CAA in 1977 and again in 1990.

Clean Air Act

The CAA required the USEPA to establish NAAQS, and also set deadlines for their attainment. Two types of NAAQS have been established: primary standards, which protect public health, and secondary standards, which protect public welfare from non-health-related adverse effects, such as visibility restrictions.

The CAA also required each state to prepare an air quality control plan referred to as a State Implementation Plan (SIP). The CAA Amendments of 1990 added requirements for states with nonattainment areas to revise their SIPs to incorporate additional control measures to reduce air pollution. The SIP is periodically modified to reflect the latest emissions inventories, planning documents, and rules and regulations of the air basins as reported by their jurisdictional agencies. The USEPA has responsibility to review all state SIPs to determine conformance with the mandates of the CAA, and the amendments thereof, and determine if implementation will achieve air quality goals. If the USEPA determines a SIP to be inadequate, a Federal Implementation Plan may be prepared for the nonattainment area that imposes additional control measures.

Toxic Substances Control Act

The Toxic Substances Control Act first authorized the USEPA to regulate asbestos in schools and Public and Commercial buildings under Title II of the law, which is also known as the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). AHERA requires Local Education Agencies to inspect their schools for asbestos-containing building materials and prepare management plans to reduce the asbestos hazard. The act also established a program for the training and accreditation of individuals performing certain types of asbestos work.

National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants

Pursuant to the CAA of 1970, the USEPA established the National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants. These are technology-based source-specific regulations that limit allowable emissions of Hazardous Air Pollutants.

State

California Air Resources Board

The CARB is the agency responsible for coordination and oversight of state and local air pollution control programs in California and for implementing the California Clean Air Act (CCAA) of 1988. Other CARB duties include monitoring air quality (in conjunction with air monitoring networks maintained by air pollution control districts and air quality management districts, establishing CAAQS, which in many cases are more stringent than the NAAQS, and setting emissions standards for new motor vehicles. The emission standards established for motor vehicles differ depending on various factors including the model year, and the type of vehicle, fuel and engine used.

California Clean Air Act

The CCAA requires that all air districts in the state endeavor to achieve and maintain CAAQS for O_3, CO, SO_2, and NO_2 by the earliest practical date. The CCAA specifies that districts focus particular attention on reducing the emissions from transportation and area-wide emission sources, and the act provides districts with authority to regulate indirect sources. Each district plan is required to either (1) achieve a five percent annual reduction, averaged over consecutive three-year periods, in district-wide emissions of each non-attainment pollutant or its precursors, or (2) to provide for implementation of all feasible measures to reduce emissions. Any planning effort for air quality attainment would thus need to consider both State and federal planning requirements.

California Assembly Bill 170

AB 170 was adopted by state lawmakers in 2003 creating Government Code Section 65302.1 which requires cities and counties in the San Joaquin Valley to amend their general plans to include data and analysis, comprehensive goals, policies and feasible implementation strategies designed to improve air quality.

Assembly Bills 1807 & 2588 - Toxic Air Contaminants

Within California, Toxic Air Contaminants (TAC) are regulated primarily through AB 1807 (Tanner Air Toxics Act) and AB 2588 (Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act of 1987). The Tanner Air Toxics Act sets forth a formal procedure for CARB to designate substances as TACs. This includes research, public participation, and scientific peer review before CARB designates a substance as a TAC. Existing sources of TACs that are subject to the Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act are required to: (1)

prepare a toxic emissions inventory; (2) prepare a risk assessment if emissions are significant; (3) notify the public of significant risk levels; and (4) prepare and implement risk reduction measures.

Local

Porterville General Plan Policies

- OSC-G-9: Improve and protect Porterville's air quality by making air quality a priority in land use and transportation planning and in development review.
- OSC-I-59: Require preparation of a Health Risk Assessment for any development subject to the Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Act.
- OSC-I-61: Coordinate air quality planning efforts with other local, regional and State agencies.
- OSC-I-63: Notify local and regional jurisdictions of proposed Projects that may affect regional air quality.

Tulare County General Plan Policies

- AQ-1: To improve air quality through a regional approach and interagency cooperation.
- AQ-2: To improve air quality by reducing air emissions related to transportation.
- AQ-4: To implement the best available controls and monitoring necessary to regulate air emissions.
    - AQ-4.1: Air Pollution Control Technology – Tulare County shall utilize the BACM and RACM as adopted by Tulare County to support SJVAPCD air quality attainment plans to achieve and maintain healthful air quality and high visibility standards.
    - AQ-4.2: Dust Suppression Measures – Tulare County shall require developers to implement dust suppression measures during excavation, grading, and site preparation activities consistent with SJVAPCD Regulation VIII – Fugitive Dust Prohibitions.

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

The SJVAPCD is the agency primarily responsible for ensuring that NAAQS and CAAQS are not exceeded and that air quality conditions are maintained in the SJVAB, within which the proposed Project is located. Responsibilities of the SJVAPCD include, but are not limited to, preparing plans for the attainment of ambient air quality standards, adopting and enforcing rules and regulations concerning sources of air pollution, issuing permits for stationary sources of air pollution, inspecting stationary sources of air pollution and responding to citizen complaints, monitoring ambient air quality and meteorological conditions, and implementing programs and regulations required by the CAA and the CCAA.
The SJVAPCD Rules and Regulations that are applicable to the proposed Project include, but are not limited to, the following:

Regulation VIII (Fugitive Dust Prohibitions), Regulation VIII (Rules 8011-8081): This regulation is a series of rules designed to reduce particulate emissions generated by human activity, including construction and demolition activities, carryout and track out, paved and unpaved roads, bulk material handling and storage, unpaved vehicle/traffic areas, open space areas, etc. If a non-residential area is 5.0 or more acres in area, a Dust Control Plan must be submitted as specified in Section 6.3.1 of Rule 8021. Additional requirements may apply, depending on total area of disturbance. The control measures that must be implemented at all construction sites are as follows:

- All disturbed areas, including storage piles, which are not actively utilized for construction purposes, shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using water, chemical stabilizers/suppressants, covered with a tarp or other similar cover, or vegetative ground cover.
- All on-site unpaved roads and off-site unpaved access roads shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions during construction using water or chemical stabilizer suppressant.
- All land clearing, grubbing, scraping, excavation, land leveling, grading cut and fill, and demolition activities during construction shall be effectively controlled of fugitive dust emissions utilizing application of water or pre-soaking.
- When materials are transported off-site, all material shall be covered, or effectively wetted to limit visible dust emissions, and at least six inches of freeboard space from top of container shall be maintained.
- All operations shall limit, or expeditiously remove the accumulation of mud or dirt from adjacent public streets at the end of each workday. The use of dry rotary brushes is expressly prohibited except where preceded or accompanied by sufficient wetting to limit the visible dust emissions. Use of blower devices is expressly forbidden.
- Following the addition of materials to, or the removal of materials from, the surface of outdoor storage piles, said piles shall be effectively stabilized of fugitive dust emissions utilizing sufficient water or chemical stabilizer/suppressant.
- Within urban areas, trackout shall be immediately removed when it extends 50 or more feet from the site at the end of each workday.
- Any site with 150 or more vehicle trips per day shall prevent carryout and trackout.

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Thresholds of Significance

Projects that produce emissions that exceed the following thresholds shall be considered significant for a project level and/or cumulatively considerable impact to air quality. The following thresholds are defined for purposes of determining cumulative effects as the baseline for "considerable". Projects located within the SJVAPCD will be subject to the following significance thresholds identified in tons per year (TPY)[4]:

Table 4-4: Air Quality Thresholds of Significance – Criteria Pollutants

Air Quality Thresholds of Significance – Criteria Pollutants			
Pollutant/Precursor	Construction Emissions	Operational Emissions	
		Permitted Equipment & Activities	Non-Permitted Equipment & Activities
	Emissions (tpy)	Emissions (tpy)	Emissions (tpy)
CO	100	100	100
NO_X	10	10	10
ROG	10	10	10
SO_X	27	27	27
PM_{10}	15	15	15
$PM_{2.5}$	15	15	15

[4] (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District 2015)

Regulatory Attainment Designations

Under the CCAA, the CARB is required to designate areas of the state as attainment, nonattainment, or unclassified with respect to applicable standards. An "attainment" designation for an area signifies that pollutant concentrations did not violate the applicable standard in that area. A "nonattainment" designation indicates that a pollutant concentration violated the applicable standard at least once, excluding those occasions when a violation was caused by an exceptional event, as defined in the criteria. Depending on the frequency and severity of pollutants exceeding applicable standards, the nonattainment designation can be further classified as serious nonattainment, severe nonattainment, or extreme nonattainment, with extreme nonattainment being the most severe of the classifications. An "unclassified" designation signifies that the data does not support either an attainment or nonattainment designation. The CCAA divides districts into moderate, serious, and severe air pollution categories, with increasingly stringent control requirements mandated for each category.

The USEPA designates areas for O_3, CO, and NO_2 as "does not meet the primary standards," "cannot be classified," or "better than national standards." For SO_2, areas are designated as "does not meet the primary standards," "does not meet the secondary standards," "cannot be classified," or "better than national standards." However, the CARB terminology of attainment, nonattainment, and unclassified is more frequently used. The USEPA uses the same sub-categories for nonattainment status: serious, severe, and extreme. In 1991, USEPA assigned new nonattainment designations to areas that had previously been classified as Group I, II, or III for PM_{10} based on the likelihood that they would violate national PM_{10} standards. All other areas are designated "unclassified."

The State and national attainment status designations pertaining to the SJVAB are summarized in Table 4-5. The SJVAB is currently designated as a nonattainment area with respect to the State PM10 standard, O_3, and PM2.5 standards. The SJVAB is designated nonattainment for the NAAQS 8-hour O_3 and PM2.5 standards. On September 25, 2008, the USEPA re-designated the San Joaquin Valley to attainment status for the PM10 NAAQS and approved the PM10 Maintenance Plan. California's ambient air monitoring network is one of the most extensive in the world, with more than 250 sites and 700 individual monitors measuring air pollutant levels across a diverse range of topography, meteorology, emissions, and air quality. Existing levels of ambient air quality and historical trends and projections in the Project are best documented by measurements made by these monitoring sites.

Table 4-5: Summary of Ambient Air Quality Standards & Attainment Designation

Summary of Ambient Air Quality Standards & Attainment Designation					
Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards*		National Standards*	
		Concentration*	Attainment Status	Primary	Attainment Status
OZONE (O_3)	1-hour	0.09 ppm	Non-Attainment/ Severe	–	No Federal Standard
	8-hour	0.070 ppm		0.075 ppm	Non-Attainment (Extreme)**
PARTICULATE MATTER (PM_{10})	AAM	20 µg/m³	Non-Attainment	–	Attainment
	24-hour	50 µg/m³		150 µg/m³	

Summary of Ambient Air Quality Standards & Attainment Designation					
Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards*		National Standards*	
		Concentration*	Attainment Status	Primary	Attainment Status
FINE PARTICULATE MATTER ($PM_{2.5}$)	AAM	12 µg/m³	Non-Attainment	12 µg/m³	Non-Attainment
	24-hour	No Standard		35 µg/m³	
CARBON MONOXIDE (CO)	1-hour	20 ppm	Attainment/ Unclassified	35 ppm	Attainment/ Maintenance
	8-hour	9 ppm		9 ppm	
	8-hour (Lake Tahoe)	6 ppm		–	
NITROGEN DIOXIDE (NO_2)	AAM	0.030 ppm	Attainment	53 ppm	Attainment/ Unclassified
	1-hour	0.18 ppm		100 ppm	
SULFUR DIOXIDE (SO_2)	AAM	–	Attainment	0.03 ppm	Attainment/ Unclassified
	24-hour	0.04 ppm		0.14 ppm	
	3-hour	–		0.5 ppm	
	1-hour	0.25 ppm		75 ppb	
LEAD (Pb)	30-day Average	1.5 µg/m³	Attainment	–	No Designation/ Classification
	Calendar Quarter	–		--	
	Rolling 3-Month Average	–		0.15 µg/m³	
SULFATES	24-hour	25 µg/m³	Attainment	No Federal Standards	
HYDROGEN SULFIDE	1-hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m³)	Unclassified		
VINYL CHLORIDE	24-hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m³)	Attainment		
VISIBILITY-REDUCING PARTICLE MATTER	8-hour	Extinction coefficient: 0.23/km-visibility of 10 miles or more due to particles when the relative humidity is less than 70%.	Unclassified		

** For more information on standards visit: https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/aaqs2.pdf*
*** No Federal 1-hour standard. Reclassified extreme nonattainment for the Federal 8-hour standard September 2020.*
Source: CARB 2016; SJVAPCD 2015, Accessed 2024.

4.3.4 Impact Analysis

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

Less than Significant Impact. As noted in Impact Assessment b and c below, implementation of the Project would not result in short-term or long-term increases in emissions that would exceed applicable thresholds of significance. Projects that do not exceed the recommended thresholds would not be considered to conflict with or obstruct the implementation of applicable air quality plans. Project related impacts to air quality would be considered less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

Short-Term Construction-Generated Emissions

Construction-generated emissions are temporary in duration, lasting approximately eight months total. The construction of the Project would result in the temporary generation of emissions associated with use of construction equipment, motor vehicle exhaust associated with construction equipment and worker trips, as well as the movement of construction equipment on unpaved surfaces.

Estimated construction-generated emissions are summarized in Table 4-6.

Table 4-6: Unmitigated Short-Term Construction-Generated Emissions of Criteria Air Pollutants

Short-Term Construction-Generated Emissions of Criteria Air Pollutants					
	Annual Emissions (tpy)				
Source	ROG	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
2026	0.023	0.161	0.193	.005	.0046
2027	0.024	0.020	0.184	0.006	0.006
SJVAPCD Significance Thresholds:	*10*	*10*	*100*	*15*	*15*
Exceed SJVAPCD Thresholds?	*No*	*No*	*No*	*No*	*No*

Emissions were quantified using CalEEmod Version 2022.1.1.21. Refer to Appendix A for modeling results and assumptions. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

It is important to note that the proposed Project would be required to comply with SJVPACD Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM_{10} Prohibitions). Mandatory compliance with SJVAPCD Regulation VIII would further reduce emissions of fugitive dust from the Project site, and adequately minimize the Project's potential to adversely affect nearby sensitive receptors to localized PM impacts.

Given that Project-generated emissions would not exceed applicable SJVAPCD significance thresholds, and the Project would be required to comply with SJVAPCD Regulation VIII, construction-generated emissions of criteria pollutants would be considered less than significant.

Long-Term Operational Emissions: Long-term operational emissions associated with the Project would be negligible, and similar to existing conditions. The impact of operations and maintenance generated emissions would be considered less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Sensitive receptors are those who are sensitive to air pollution, including children, the elderly, and the infirm. The SJVAPCD considers a sensitive receptor a location that houses or attracts children, the elderly, people with illnesses, or others who are especially sensitive to the effects of air pollutants. Examples of sensitive receptors include hospitals, residences, convalescent facilities, and schools. The closest existing sensitive receptors are single-family homes adjacent to the proposed pipeline alignment as well as Hope Elementary which is located on the existing well site. Despite this, the Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations due to the temporary and limited exposure period that sensitive receptors would experience. The California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment does not recommend assessing cancer risk for projects lasting less than two months in duration.[5] Linear water main construction projects generally move at a pace of 100 LF per day. At this rate, and considering the size of the Project frontage along sensitive receptor areas, construction within the vicinity of sensitive receptors would not exceed two months in duration. Therefore, it can be assumed that the Project's construction related, emission generating impacts would be less than significant for sensitive receptors near to and fronting the Project.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would not result in indirect effects related to odors. The Project does not include off-site components or facilitate additional projects that would generate new sources of odor on a permanent basis. During construction, there is a possibility for odors from construction activities (diesel exhaust, asphalt, etc.). However, upon completion of the construction, the area would return to pre-construction conditions with the addition of the new water main pipelines and associated infrastructure. During normal operation, no odors would be emitted by the operation of the pipelines to transport water. Impacts would be less than significant.

[5] (California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment 2015)

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 4-7: Biological Resources Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	IXI
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	IXI
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.4.1 Baseline Conditions

A reconnaissance-level field survey of the project site was conducted on January 5, 2024, by Provost & Pritchard biologist Jairo Perez. The survey consisted of walking and driving throughout accessible areas of the Project site while identifying and noting land uses, biological habitats and communities, and plant and animal species encountered. Habitats were also assessed to help with determining if they could be suitable for various rare or protected plant and animal species.

The field survey did not include focused surveys for special status species. The field survey conducted included the appropriate level of detail to assess the significance of potential impacts to sensitive biological resources resulting from implementing the Project. Furthermore, the field survey was sufficient to generally describe those features of the Project site that could be subject to the jurisdiction of federal and/or state agencies, such as the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).

Mr. Perez then utilized the results of the field survey to conduct an analysis of potential Project-related impacts to biological resources based on the resources known to occur or with the potential to occur within the Project site. Sources of information used in preparation of this analysis included: CDFW, California Natural Diversity Database and California Wildlife Habitat Relationships database; California Native Plant Society's Online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California; CalFlora's online database of California native plants; Jepson Herbarium's online database; United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Environmental Conservation Online System, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Consultation System (IPaC), and National Wetlands Inventory (NWI); NatureServe Explorer's online database; United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) NRCS Web Soil Survey; and manuals, reports, and references related to plants and animals of the San Joaquin Valley region.

The Project site is located within, and adjacent to, the City of Porterville, California, along the eastern side of the San Joaquin Valley in Tulare County, California. The Project site is within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) *Porterville* 7.5-minute quadrangle, within the northwest quadrat of section 14, and along the intersections of sections 10 and 11, and 14 and 15, Township 22 south, Range 27 east. The topography of the Project site is relatively flat with elevations ranging from approximately 450 – 470 feet above mean sea level. The soils within the Project site(s) consisted of 4 soil types that are predominantly non-hydric and non-hydric (See Appendix B). Like most of California, the San Joaquin Valley experiences a Mediterranean climate. The City of Porterville, and the Project site, would generally experience the same conditions. Warm, dry summers are followed by cool, moist winters. Summer temperatures often reach above 90 degrees Fahrenheit, and the humidity is generally low. Winter temperatures are often below 60 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and rarely exceed 70 degrees. The San Joaquin Valley receives an average of 12 inches of precipitation in the form of rainfall yearly, most of which occurs between October and March. Per the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory Data Base there are no natural waterways or wetlands within or surrounding the Project site. The Project site consisted of ruderal habitat that included road shoulders and road intersections and was surrounded by agricultural lands, and residential and industrial properties.

4.4.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

Endangered Species Act

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) protects plants and wildlife that are listed as endangered or threatened by the USFWS and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Section 9 of the ESA prohibits the take of listed wildlife, where take is defined as "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, collect, or attempt to engage in such conduct" (50 CFR 17.3). For plants, this statute governs removing, possessing, maliciously damaging, or destroying any listed plant on federal land and removing, cutting, digging-up, damaging, or destroying any listed plant on non-federal land in knowing violation of state law (16 USC 1538). Pursuant to Section 7 of the ESA, federal agencies are required to consult with the USFWS if their actions, including permit approvals or funding, could adversely affect a listed plant or wildlife species or its critical habitat. Through consultation and the issuance of a biological opinion, the USFWS may issue an incidental take statement allowing take of the species that is incidental to another authorized activity, provided the action will not jeopardize the continued existence of the species. Section 10 of the ESA provides for issuance of incidental take permits to private parties, provided a Habitat Conservation Plan is developed.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) implements international treaties devised to protect migratory birds and any of their parts, eggs, and nest from activities such as hunting, pursuing, capturing, killing, selling, and shipping, unless expressly authorized in the regulations or by permit. As authorized by the MBTA, the USFWS issues permits to qualified applicants for following types of activities: falconry, raptor propagation, scientific collecting, special purposes (rehabilitation, education, migratory game bird propagation, and salvage), take of depredating birds, taxidermy, and waterfowl sale and disposal. The regulations governing migratory bird permits are in 50 CFR part 13 General Permit Procedures and 50 CFR part 21 Migratory Bird Permits.

Clean Water Act

The purpose of the Clean Water Act (CWA) is to "restore and maintain clean and healthy waters" by regulating activities with potential to expose these waters to pollutants. Section 404 of the CWA gives the USACE authority to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States (WOTUS). The definition of WOTUS has been changed frequently, often in response to court cases involving water resources, or a change in presidential administration. The interpretation of WOTUS in the CWA generally includes rivers, streams, estuaries, the territorial seas, ponds, lakes, and wetlands that are immediately adjacent to a jurisdictional water. Wetlands are defined as those areas "that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions" (33 CFR 328.3 7b). Projects that only minimally affect jurisdictional waters and wetlands may meet the conditions of one of the existing Nationwide Permits, which provide quicker agency review time. Substantial impacts to jurisdictional waters and wetlands, or activities that are not covered by a Nationwide Permit (NWP), would require longer agency review times with an individual permit. The SWRCB, pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA, regulates discharge of fill or excavated materials into waters of the State and WOTUS, and upholds established water quality standards. The SWRCB implements procedures that strengthen the protection of waters that are no longer federally protected, due to changes in the

interpretation of WOTUS. The definition of waters of the State generally encompasses a greater array of aquatic resources than WOTUS, providing more protection from surface water to groundwater. Activities with potential to degrade the State's water resources would require a Water Quality Certification or would receive Waste Discharge Requirements in order to comply with the State's more stringent regulations to preserve, restore, and enhance the health of California's water resources.

State

California Endangered Species Act

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) generally parallels the main provisions of the ESA, but unlike its federal counterpart, the CESA applies the take prohibitions to species proposed for listing (called "candidate threatened" or "candidate endangered" by the State). Section 2080 of the California Fish and Game Code (FGC) prohibits the taking, possession, purchase, sale, and import or export of endangered, threatened, and candidate species, unless otherwise authorized by an Incidental Take Permit or in the regulations. Take is defined in Section 86 of the FGC as to "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill." The CESA allows for take incidental to otherwise lawful development projects. State lead agencies are required to consult with CDFW to ensure that any action they undertake is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered, threatened, or candidate species or result in destruction or adverse modification of essential habitat. The CDFW administers the act and authorizes take through Section 2081 agreements.

Fully Protected Species

The State of California first began to designate species as fully protected prior to the creation of the CESA and ESA. Lists of fully protected species were initially developed to provide protection to those animals that were rare or faced possible extinction, and included fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. Most fully protected species have since been listed as threatened or endangered pursuant to the CESA and/or ESA. FGC Sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515 prohibit the take or possession of fully protected species except as provided by other sections.

Native Plant Protection Act

Regarding listed rare and endangered plant species, the CESA defers to the California Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) of 1977 (CFCG Code Section 1900 to 1913), which prohibits importing of rare and endangered plants into California, and the taking and selling of rare and endangered plants. The CESA includes an additional listing category for threatened plants that are not protected pursuant to NPPA. In this case, plants listed as rare or endangered pursuant to the NPPA are not protected pursuant to CESA but can be protected pursuant to CEQA. In addition, plants that are not State listed, but that meet the standards for listing, are also protected pursuant to CEQA (CEQA Guidelines Section 15380). In practice, this is generally interpreted to mean that all species with a California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Rare Plant Rank of 1 or 2 qualify for protection pursuant to CEQA, and some species with a Rare Plant Rank of 3 or 4 may qualify for protection pursuant to CEQA. Rare Plant Rank 3 includes plants for which more information is needed on taxonomy or distribution. Rare Plant Rank 4 includes plants of limited distribution that may qualify for protection if their abundance and distribution characteristics are found to meet the standards for listing.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The State of California is subject to the MBTA, however the State has also included additional provisions for which projects are subject to. In addition to the federal provisions of the MBTA, the State has incorporated the protection of birds of prey in FGC Sections 3800, 3513, and 3503.5.

Local

Porterville General Plan Policies

- OSC-G-7: Protect habitat for special status species, designated under State and federal law.
- OSC-I-28: Require protection of sensitive habitat areas and special status species in new development site designs in the following order: 1) Avoidance; 2) onsite mitigation, 3) offsite mitigation, and 4) purchase of mitigation credits.
- OSC-I-29: Require assessments of biological resources prior to approval of any development within 300 feet of any creeks, sensitive habitat areas, or areas of potential sensitive status species.
- OSC-I-32: Identify and protect wildlife movement corridors that serve critical habitats to minimize wildlife-urban conflicts.
- OSC-I-35: Consult with all responsible agencies about wetland and vernal pool habitat potentially affected by development.
- OSC-I-36: Establish a "no net loss" policy for wetlands and vernal pools, including credits for land banking and off-site mitigation, and maintain a protection zone around wetlands, riparian corridors, and identified habit areas where development shall not occur, except as part of a parkway enhancement program (e.g., trails and bikeways).

Tulare County General Plan Policies

- ERM-1.1: Tulare County shall ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive wildlife and plant life, including those species designated as rare, threatened, and/or endangered by State and/or Federal government, through compatible land use development.
- ERM-1.2: Tulare County shall limit or modify proposed development within areas that contain sensitive habitat for special status species and direct development into less significant habitat areas. Development in natural habitats shall be controlled so as to minimize erosion and maximize beneficial vegetative growth.

4.4.3 Impact Analysis

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The Project would construct new water mains connecting Hope Elementary School to the City's water system. Portions of the new water mains would traverse through the City, while the school is located within Tulare County. Since the piping would be installed underground, there would only be temporary impacts. Species protected by FGC, CDFW, USFWS, CEQA, or the National Environmental Policy Act that have the potential to be impacted by Project activities include nesting migratory birds and raptors. In order to protect migratory birds and raptors that could potentially be located within the vicinity of the Project during construction, BIO-1 shall be

implemented to avoid a form of "take" to nesting birds. Implementation of this measure would diminish any potential impacts to a less than significant level. FGC Section 3503 states that it is "unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto." Breeding-season disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered a form of "take" by the CDFW. All of the regionally occurring special status species are considered absent or unlikely to occur within the Project site due to past or ongoing disturbance and/or absence of suitable habitat. The tables below contain a query of the California Natural Diversity Database for occurrences of special status plant and animal species that have the potential to occur within the Project site and within the *Porterville* 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle and the eight surrounding USGS quadrangles: *Cairns Corner, Ducor, Fountain Springs, Frazier Valley, Lindsay, Sausalito School, Success Dam,* and *Woodville* surrounding the Project site. Additionally, federally listed species found on the USFWS's IPaC system list were also included in the tables below.

Table 4-8: List of Special Status Plants with Potential to Occur on the Project Site and/or in the Vicinity.

Species	Status*	Habitat	Occurrence within the Site
ALKALI-SINK GOLDFIELDS (*LASTHENIA CHRYSANTHA*)	CNPS 1B	Found in vernal pool and wet saline flat habitats in the San Joaquin Valley region at elevations below 700 feet. Blooms February – April.	**Absent.** Habitats required by this species were absent from the Project site.
BRITTLESCALE (*ATRIPLEX DEPRESSA*)	CNPS 1B	Found in chenopod scrub, meadows and seeps, playas, valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools in alkaline, clay soils at elevations below approx. 1,050 feet. Blooms May to October.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats for this species were absent from the Project site and surrounding areas.
CALICO MONKEYFLOWER (*DIPLACUS PICTUS*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the Sierra Nevada foothills and the Tehachapi mountains in bare, sunny, shrubby areas, around granite outcrops within foothill woodland communities at elevations between 450 and 4,100 feet. Blooms March – May.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats for this species were absent from the Project site and surrounding areas.
CALIFORNIA JEWELFLOWER (*CAULANTHUS CALIFORNICUS*)	FE, CE, CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley and western Transverse Ranges in sandy soils. Occurs on flats and slopes, generally in non-alkaline grassland at elevations between 200 and 6,100 feet. Blooms February – April.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat was absent from the Project site and surrounding areas.
CALIFORNIA ALKALI GRASS (*PUCCINELLIA SIMPLEX*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley and other parts of California in saline flats and mineral springs within valley grassland and wetland-riparian communities at elevations below 3,000 feet. Blooms March – May.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat for this species was absent from the Project site and surrounding areas.

Species	Status*	Habitat	Occurrence within the Site
CHAPARRAL RAGWORT (*SENECIO APHANACTIS*)	CNPS 2B	Found in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and coastal scrub, typically within drying alkaline flats at elevations between 50 and 2,800 feet. Blooms February – May.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent from the Project site and surrounding areas.
EARLIMART ORACHE (*ATRIPLEX CORDULATA* VAR. *ERECTICAULIS*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley in saline and alkaline soils, typically within valley grasslands at elevations below 400 feet. Blooms August – September.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent from the Project site and surrounding areas.
KECK'S CHECKERBLOOM (*SIDALCEA KECKII*)	CNPS 1B, FE	Occurs in cismontane woodland and valley and foothill grassland communities, typically on grassy slopes in clay soils at elevations between 250 and 1,700 feet. Blooms April – May.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species were absent from the Project site and surrounding areas.
LESSER SALTSCALE (*ATRIPLEX MINUSCULA*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley in sandy, alkaline soils in alkali scrub, valley and foothill grassland, and alkali sink communities at elevations below 750 feet. Blooms April – October.	**Absent.** Habitat required by this species were absent within the Project site and surrounding areas.
LOST HILLS CROWNSCALE (*ATRIPLEX CORDULATA VAR. ERECTICAULIS*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley in dried ponds and vernal pools with alkaline soils in alkali scrub and valley and foothill grasslands at elevations below 2,900 feet. Blooms April – September.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species were absent within the Project site and surrounding areas.
RECURVED LARKSPUR (*DELPHINIUM RECURVATUM*)	CNPS 1B	Occurs in chenopod scrub, cismontane woodland, and grassland habitats on poorly drained, fine, alkaline soils; often in valley saltbush or valley chenopod scrub communities at elevations between 100 and 2,600 feet. Blooms March – June.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats required by this species were absent within the Project site and surrounding areas.
SAN JOAQUIN ADOBE SUNBURST (*PSEUDOBAHIA PEIRSONII*)	FT, CE, CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley and the Sierra Nevada foothills in bare, dark clay soils in valley and foothill grassland and cismontane woodland communities at elevations between 300 and 3,000 feet. Blooms March – May.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats and soils required by this species were absent from the Project site.
SAN JOAQUIN WOOLLYTHREADS (*MONOLOPIA CONGDONII*)	FE, CNPS 1B	Occurs in the San Joaquin Valley in sandy soils on alkaline or loamy plains in valley and foothill grassland and alkali scrub communities at elevations between 150 and 2,800 feet. Blooms February – May.	**Absent.** The habitats required by this species were absent within the Project site and surrounding areas.
SHINING NAVARRETIA (*NAVARRETIA NIGELLIFORMIS SSP. RADIANS*)	CNPS 1B	Found in cismontane woodland and valley and foothill grassland communities, sometimes in vernal pools. Occurs at elevations between 200 and 3,200 feet. Blooms May – July.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats for this species were absent from the Project site and surrounding areas.

Species	Status*	Habitat	Occurrence within the Site
SPINY-SEPALED BUTTON-CELERY (*ERYNGIUM SPINOSEPALUM*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the Sierra Nevada foothills and the San Joaquin Valley in vernal pools, swales, and roadside ditches. Often associated with clay soils in vernal pools within grassland communities. Occurs at elevations between 50 and 4,200 feet. Blooms April – July.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats required by this species were absent within the Project site and surrounding areas.
SPRINGVILLE CLARKIA (*CLARKIA SPRINGVILLENSIS*)	FT, CE, CNPS 1B	Endemic to the woodlands and grasslands of the southern Sierra Nevada, occurring primarily in the Tule River watershed. Found at elevations between 650 and 7,400 feet. Blooms in May.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats required by this species were absent within the Project site and surrounding areas.
STRIPED ADOBE-LILY (*FRITILLARIA STRIATA*)	CT, CNPS 1B	Found in the Sierra Nevada foothills in adobe soil within valley grassland and foothill woodland communities at elevations below 3,300 feet. Blooms February – April.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat and required soils were absent within the Project site.
SUBTLE ORACHE (*ATRIPLEX SUBTILIS*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley in saline depressions in alkaline soils within valley and foothill grassland communities at elevations below 300 feet. Blooms June – October.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent within the Project site and surrounding areas.
VERNAL POOL SMALLSCALE (*ATRIPLEX PERSISTENS*)	CNPS 1B	Occurs in the Central Valley in alkaline vernal pools at elevations below 400 feet. Blooms June – September.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent within the Project site and surrounding areas.

Table 4-9: List of Special Status Animals with Potential to Occur on the Project Site and/or in the Vicinity.

Species	Status*	Habitat	Occurrence within the Site
AMERICAN BADGER (*TAXIDEA TAXUS*)	CSSC	Occurs most abundantly in drier open stages of shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats with friable soils to burrow, but can be found within numerous habitats throughout California, including the margins of agricultural lands. Needs a sufficient prey base of burrowing rodents.	**Unlikely.** The Project site is a road shoulder that is regularly disturbed by vehicles and the surrounding areas are frequently cultivated and maintained agricultural lands. An American badger could potentially pass through the Project site, but it is unlikely they would forage or burrow within the Project site. The nearest recorded observation of this species within the vicinity was found in the vicinity of Porterville Airport, approximately 500 feet west of the Project site.
BLUNT-NOSED LEOPARD LIZARD (*GAMBELIA SILA*)	FE, CE, CFP	Occurs in the San Joaquin Valley region in expansive, arid areas with scattered vegetation. Today they inhabit non-native grassland and alkali sink scrub communities of the valley floor marked by poorly drained, alkaline, and saline soils. They can be found at elevations ranging from 100 to 2,600 feet. They are absent from areas with steep slopes and dense vegetation, and areas subject to seasonal flooding. Adults may excavate shallow burrows but rely on deeper pre-existing rodent burrows for hibernation and reproduction.	**Absent.** The habitat of the Project site is unsuitable for this species and the site and surrounding areas are regularly disturbed and maintained.
BUENA VISTA LAKE ORNATE SHREW (*SOREX ORNATUS RELICTUS*)	FE, CSSC	Prefers moist soils, inhabiting marshes, swamps, and riparian shrublands in the Tulare Basin. Uses stumps, logs, and leaf litter for cover.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats required by this species were absent from the Project site.
CALIFORNIA CONDOR (*GYMNOGYPS CALIFORNIANUS*)	FE, CE, CFP	Typically nests in cavities in canyon or cliff faces but has also been recorded nesting in giant sequoias in Tulare County. Requires vast expanse of open savannah, grassland, and/or foothill chaparral in mountain ranges of moderate altitude. Forages for carrion up to 100 miles from their roost/nest sites.	**Absent**. Suitable habitats required by this species were absent within the Project site and surrounding areas.
CROTCH BUMBLE BEE (*BOMBUS CROTCHII*)	CCE	Occurs throughout coastal California, as well as east to the Sierra Nevada-Cascade crest, and south into Mexico. Food plant genera include snapdragons, scorpionweeds, primroses, poppies, and buckwheats.	**Unlikely**. Suitable food plant genera required for this species were absent from the Project site. Also, the Project site is surrounded by maintained agricultural lands and citrus orchards. A crotch bumble bee could potentially pass through the Project site, but it is unlikely they would forage within the Project site. The nearest recorded observation of this species within the

Species	Status*	Habitat	Occurrence within the Site
			vicinity was approximately 2.8 miles northeast of the Project site in 1963.
MONARCH BUTTERFLY (*DANAUS PLEXIPPUS*)	FC	Roosts in wind-protected tree groves (eucalyptus, Monterey pine, cypress), with nectar and water sources nearby. Larval host plants consist of milkweeds (*Asclepias* sp.). Winter roost sites extend along the Pacific coast from northern Mendocino, California to Baja California, Mexico.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent from the Project site.
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA LEGLESS LIZARD (*ANNIELLA PULCHRA*)	CSSC	Found primarily underground, burrowing in loose, sandy soil. Forages in loose soil and leaf litter during the day. Occasionally observed on the surface at dusk and night.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent from the Project site.
NORTHWESTERN POND TURTLE (*ACTINEMYS MARMORATA*)	FPT	An aquatic turtle of ponds, marshes, slow-moving rivers, streams, and irrigation ditches with riparian vegetation. Requires adequate basking sites and sandy banks or grassy open fields to deposit eggs.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent within the Project site and surrounding areas.
PALLID BAT (*ANTROZOUS PALLIDUS*)	CSSC	Found in grasslands, chaparral, and woodlands, where it feeds on ground- and vegetation-dwelling arthropods, and occasionally takes insects in flight. Prefers to roost in rock crevices, but may also use tree cavities, caves, bridges, and other human-made structures.	**Unlikely.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent within the Project site. The nearest recorded observation of this species occurred approximately 5.5 miles east of the Project site in 1946.
SAN JOAQUIN KIT FOX (*VULPES MACROTIS MUTICA*)	FE, CT	Opportunistically forages in a variety of habitats. Dens in burrows within alkali sink, valley grassland, and woodland habitats in valleys and adjacent foothills and in human-made structures in cities, rangeland, and agricultural areas.	**Unlikely.** The site and surrounding areas are regularly maintained for agricultural purposes and are unsuitable for this species. This species is not expected to occur except, perhaps, as a transient. The nearest recorded observation of this species occurred approximately 200 feet west of the Project site in 1975.
SWAINSON'S HAWK (*BUTEO SWAINSONI*)	CT	Nests in large trees in open areas adjacent to grasslands, grain or alfalfa fields, or livestock pastures suitable for supporting rodent populations.	**Unlikely.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent within the Project site. The nearest recorded observation was approximately 4.8 miles northwest of the project site in 2017.
TIPTON KANGAROO RAT (*DIPODOMYS NITRATOIDES NITRATOIDES*)	FE, CE	Inhabits saltbush scrub and sink scrub communities in the Tulare Lake Basin of the southern San Joaquin Valley. This species needs soft friable soils to burrow.	**Absent**. Suitable habitat required by this species is absent from the Project site.
TOWNSEND'S BIG-EARNED BAT (*CORYNORHINUS TOWNSENDII*)	CSSC	Occurs in a variety of habitats, but prefers cool, dark roost sites, and is often found in caves and mines. They roost in the open, hanging from walls and ceilings. Western populations typically forage on moths in areas of dense foliage.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species is absent from the Project site.

Species	Status*	Habitat	Occurrence within the Site
TRICOLORED BLACKBIRD (*AGELAIUS TRICOLOR*)	CT, CSSC	Nests colonially near fresh water in dense cattails or tules, or in thickets of riparian shrubs. Forages in grassland and cropland. Large colonies are often found foraging in dairy farm feed fields.	**Unlikely**. The Project site and surrounding areas lack suitable habitat for this species. The nearest recorded observation of this species occurred approximately 5.7 miles northeast of the Project site in 1971.
VALLEY ELDERBERRY LONGHORN BEETLE (*DESMOCERUS CALIFORNICUS DIMORPHUS*)	FT	Lives in mature elderberry shrubs in the Central Valley and adjacent foothills from Tehama County south through Merced and Mariposa Counties with two scattered populations in Madera and Fresno Counties. Adults are active from March to June.	**Absent.** Elderberry shrubs that are required by this species are absent from the Project site and surrounding areas.
VERNAL POOL FAIRY SHRIMP (*BRANCHINECTA LYNCHI*)	FT	Occupies vernal and seasonal pools, with clear to tea-colored water, in grass or mud-bottomed swales, and basalt depression pools.	**Unlikely.** The Project site is within road shoulders and intersections, which are regularly maintained for agricultural purposes and are unsuitable for this species. The nearest recorded observation of this species occurred adjacent to the Project site near the intersection of West Teapot Dome Avenue and California State Route 65 in 2002.
WESTERN MASTIFF BAT (*EUMOPS PEROTIS CALIFORNICUS*)	CSSC	Found in open, arid to semi-arid habitats, including dry desert washes, flood plains, chaparral, oak woodland, open ponderosa pine forest, grassland, and agricultural areas, where it feeds on insects in flight. Roosts most commonly in crevices in cliff faces but may also use high buildings and tunnels.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent from the Project site.
WESTERN SPADEFOOT (*SPEA HAMMONDII*)	CSSC	The majority of the time this species is terrestrial and occurs in small mammal burrows and soil cracks, sometimes in the bottom of dried pools. Prefers open areas with sandy or gravelly soils, in a variety of habitats including mixed woodlands, grasslands, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, sandy washes, lowlands, river floodplains, alluvial fans, playas, alkali flats, foothills, and mountains. Vernal or seasonal pools, that hold water for a minimum of three weeks, are necessary for breeding.	**Absent.** The Project site includes road shoulders and intersections, which are regularly maintained for agricultural purposes and unsuitable for this species.

***EXPLANATION OF OCCURRENCE DESIGNATIONS AND STATUS CODES**

Present:	Species observed on the project site at time of field surveys or during recent past.
Likely:	Species not observed on the project site, but it may reasonably be expected to occur there on a regular basis.
Possible:	Species not observed on the project site, but it could occur there from time to time.
Unlikely:	Species not observed on the project site, and would not be expected to occur there except, perhaps, as a transient.
Absent:	Species not observed on the project site and precluded from occurring there due to absence of suitable habitat.

STATUS CODES

FE	Federally Endangered	CE	California Endangered
FT	Federally Threatened	CCE	California Endangered (Candidate)
FC	Federal Candidate	CT	California Threatened
		CFP	California Fully Protected
		CSSC	California Species of Special Concern

CNPS LISTING

1B	Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.

Project Impacts to Special Status Plant Species

Of the 19 regionally occurring special status plant species, all are considered absent from or unlikely to occur within the Project site due to past or ongoing disturbance and/or the absence of suitable habitat.

Since it is unlikely that these species would occur onsite, implementation of the Project would have no impact on these 19 special status plant species through construction mortality, disturbance, or loss of habitat. Mitigation measures are not warranted for special status plant species.

Project Impacts to Special Status Animal Species

Of the 17 regionally occurring special status animal species, all are considered absent from or unlikely to occur within the Project site due to past or ongoing disturbance and/or the absence of suitable habitat.

Since it is unlikely that these species would occur onsite, implementation of the Project would have no impact on these 17 special status species through construction mortality, disturbance, or loss of habitat. Mitigation measures are not warranted for special status animal species.

Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation **BIO-1** incorporated.

b) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No impact. The Project site does not contain a riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified by a local agency or by the CDFW or USFWS. Wetlands and riparian habitats are absent from the Project site according to the USWFS's NWI.[6] Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

[6] (United States Fish and Wildlife Service 2024)

No Impact. The Project site is within a ruderal habitat comprising existing road ROW and the existing elementary school. There are no federal or State protected wetlands within or adjacent to the Project site.[7] Therefore, the Project would not have an impact on federal or State protected wetlands.

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?

No impact. The Project would not interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or nursery sites. The Project would consist of construction in previously disturbed and highly trafficked areas. High levels of human activity discourage wildlife movement through the Project site. Construction activities and ground disturbance would be completed within the existing road ROW and at Hope Elementary School, neither of which contains any movement corridors or suitable habitat for special status species. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

No impact. The Project would be in accordance with the City of Porterville and Tulare County General Plan, including all Biological Resource Goals and Policies. There would be no conflicts with ordinances protecting biological resources. Therefore, there would be no impact.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No impact. There is no adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan applicable to the Project site. Therefore, there would be no impact.

4.4.4 Mitigation

BIO-1

a) (*Avoidance*): The Project's construction activities will occur, if feasible, between September 1 and January 31 (outside of the nesting bird season) to avoid impacts to nesting birds.

b) (*Pre-construction Surveys*): If activities must occur within the nesting bird season (February 1 to August 31), a qualified biologist will conduct a pre-construction survey for active migratory bird nests no more than seven days prior to the start of the construction within the project site and surrounding lands up to 100 feet from the project site and for active raptor nests within the project site and all accessible lands up to 500 feet from the project site. All raptor nests would be considered "active" upon the nest-building stage.

c) (*Avoidance Buffers*): On discovery of any active nests near work areas, the biologist will determine appropriate construction setback distances (avoidance buffers) based on applicable CDFW and/or USFWS guidelines, the biology of the species, and work and site

[7] Ibid.

conditions. If necessary, avoidance buffers will be identified with flagging, fencing, or other easily visible means, and will be maintained until the biologist has determined that the nestlings have fledged.

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Table 4-10: Cultural Resources Impacts

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

4.5.1 Baseline Conditions

The Project site is located in the southwestern part of Tulare County, south of the City of Porterville. Tulare County is within the Central San Joaquin Valley and is part of a culturally and historically rich part of the San Joaquin Valley. The Project seeks to consolidate the Hope Elementary School with the City's existing water system. To do this, new water mains connecting the school to the City's water system would be constructed along South Indiana Steet and West Teapot Dome Avenue. Land surrounding the proposed pipeline alignment includes large agricultural fields and rural residential land. Historical and recent land-use has thus changed the vegetation that was once present within and near the Project study area. Before the appearance of agriculture in the nineteenth century, the Project location would have been comprised of prairie grasslands with scattered oak tree savannas near the foothills, and along the various streams and drainages.

An intensive Phase I Cultural Resources Survey of the Project study area was conducted on February 10, 2024, by Taylored Archaeology staff. The entire Project study area was examined by walking a 4-meter transect on both sides of all roadways in all unpaved areas of the Project site. Staff additionally walked a meandering 3-meter transect within the well site at Hope Elementary School. All portions of the site were accessible and surveyed.

The Project site was checked for both prehistoric deposits and historical features, structures, and artifacts more than 50 years old that may be present on the ground surface. The entire site was accessible. No cultural or archaeological resources of any kind were identified during the Phase I Cultural Resources Survey (Appendix C).

Records Search

On February 5, 2024, Taylored Archaeology received a records search from the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), located at California State University, Bakersfield. The records search encompassed the Project site as well as a 0.5-mile radius surrounding the various locations. SSJVIC staff examined site record files, maps, and other materials to identify previously recorded resources and prior surveys within the delineated area. Additional sources included the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) Historic Properties Directory, Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility, and the California Inventory of Historic Resources (Appendix C). According to the records search results, one previous study has been conducted in the Project area, and no resources of any kind are known to exist within it.

Native American Outreach

A Sacred Lands File was requested from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) in Sacramento in January 2024. The NAHC was provided with a brief description of the Project and a map showing its location with a request that the NAHC perform a search of the Sacred Lands File to determine if any Native American resources have been recorded in the immediate Project area. The NAHC identifies, catalogs, and protects Native American cultural resources -- ancient places of special religious or social significance to Native Americans and known ancient graves and cemeteries of Native Americans on private and public lands in California. The NAHC is also charged with ensuring California Native American tribes' accessibility to ancient Native American cultural resources on public lands, overseeing the treatment and disposition of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains and burial items, and administering the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, among many other powers and duties. NAHC provide a current list of Native American Tribal contacts to notify of the project. Outreach letters were sent to the tribes provided on the NAHC contact list on February 13, 2024, with follow up emails sent on February 21, 2024. No responses were received. All Tribal correspondence is included within Appendix C.

4.5.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

National Historic Preservation Act and Archeological and Historic Preservation Act

If federal funding, such as State Revolving Funds, is applied to this Project, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and the Archeological and Historic Preservation Act (AHPA) would apply to this Project. The NHPA embodies a long-standing national policy to preserve historic sites, buildings, structures, districts and objects of national, State, tribal, local, and regional significance and, among other things, to protect such historic properties from adverse impacts caused by activities undertaken or funded by federal agencies. The NHPA is administered by the Department of the Interior and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation implements section 106 of the NHPA and has promulgated regulations for consultation regarding how to determine the effects of federal agency undertakings on historic properties (36 CFR Part 800). Although under certain circumstances the Council may become directly involved in such consultations, the procedures generally call for consultation between the federal agency and relevant State or tribal historic preservation officers (Tribal HPOs) and other interested parties. The intent of the AHPA is to limit the loss of important historical data that would result from federal, or federally authorized, construction activities. Unlike section 106 of the NHPA, which principally addresses adverse effects to historic properties identified within a project area prior to project

initiation, the requirements of the AHPA are typically invoked when historic properties are discovered after the project has begun and potential adverse effects may occur.

State

California Register of Historical Resources

PRC Section 5024.1 establishes the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). The register lists all California properties considered to be significant historical resources. The CRHR includes all properties listed as or determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), including properties evaluated under Section 106 of the. The criteria for listing are similar to those of the NRHP. Criteria for listing in the CRHR include resources that:

- Are associated with the events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;
- Are associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
- Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represent the work of an important creative individual, or possess high artistic values; or
- Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

The regulations set forth the criteria for eligibility as well as guidelines for assessing historical integrity and resources that have special considerations.

California Historical Resources Information System

CHRIS maintains documents and materials relating to historical resources (e.g. buildings, structures, objects, historic and archeological sites, landscapes, districts). CHRIS operates nine Information centers located on California State University and University of California campuses under direction from the OHP and State Historical Resources Commission (PRC 5020.4(a)(2) and 5020.4(a)(3)). The Project site is within the area overseen by the SSJVIC.

Local

Porterville General Plan Policies

- OSC-G-11: Identify and protect archaeological, paleontological, and historic resources.
- OSC-I-72: Develop an agreement with Native American representatives for consultation in the cases where new development may result in disturbance to Native American sites.
- OSC-I-73: Require that new development analyze and avoid any potential impacts to archaeological, paleontological, and historic resources by:
    - Requiring a records review for development proposed in areas that are considered archaeologically sensitive, including hillsides and near the Tule River;
    - Studying the potential effects of development and construction (as required by CEQA);
    - Developing, where appropriate, mitigation measures to minimize potential impacts; and Implementing appropriate measures to avoid the identified impacts.
    - Implementing appropriate measures to avoid the identified impacts.

Tulare County General Plan Policies

- ERM-6: To manage and protect sites of cultural and archaeological importance for the benefit of present and future generations.

- ERM-6.1: Evaluation of Cultural and Archaeological Resources – Tulare County shall participate in and support efforts to identify its significant cultural and archaeological resources using appropriate State and Federal standards.
- ERM-6.2: Protection of Resources with Potential State or Federal Designations – Tulare County shall protect cultural and archaeological sites with demonstrated potential for placement on the NRHP and/or inclusion in the California State Office of Historic Preservation's California Points of Interest and California Inventory of Historic Resources. Such sites may be of Statewide or local significance and have anthropological, cultural, military, political, architectural, economic, scientific, religious, or other values as determined by a qualified archaeological professional.
- ERM-6.4: Mitigation – If preservation of cultural resources is not feasible, every effort shall be made to mitigate impacts, including relocation of structures, adaptive reuse, preservation of facades, and thorough documentation and archival of records.
- ERM-6.6: Historic Structures and Sites – Tulare County shall support public and private efforts to preserve, rehabilitate, and continue the use of historic structures, sites, and parks. Where applicable, preservation efforts shall conform to the current Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.
- ERM-6.7: Cooperation of Property Owners – Tulare County should encourage the cooperation of property owners to treat cultural resources as assets rather than liabilities and encourage public support for the preservation of these resources.
- ERM-6.8: Solicit Input from Local Native Americans – Tulare County shall continue to solicit input from the local Native American communities in cases where development may result in disturbance to sites containing evidence of Native American activity and/or to sites of cultural importance.
- ERM-6.9: Confidentiality of Archaeological Sites – Tulare County shall, within its power, maintain confidentiality regarding the locations of archaeological sites in order to preserve and protect these resources from vandalism and the unauthorized removal or artifacts.
- ERM-6.10: Grading Cultural Resources Sites – Tulare County shall ensure all grading activities conform to Tulare County's Grading Ordinance and California Code of Regulations, Title 20, §2501 et. Seq.

4.5.3 Impact Analysis

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

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

a-b) Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. According to the records search provided by the SSJVIC on February 5, 2024, no cultural resources have been recorded within the project area, but two have been documented within the 0.5-mi. search radius: a short segment of the late 19th century Poplar Ditch and a segment of the Southern Pacific Railroad (See Appendix C).

To identify any historic properties, the SSJVIC examined the current inventories of the NRHP, CRHR, California Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, California Inventory of Historic Resources, California State Historic Landmarks, and other pertinent historical data available at the SSJVIC.

There are no recorded cultural resources within the Project area or radius that are listed in the NRHP, the CRHR, the California Points of Historical Interest, California Inventory of Historic Resources, or the California State Historic Landmarks.

While no known cultural resources were identified on-site during the survey, unknown resources may exist below the surface. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 will ensure that potential impacts from uncovering unknown cultural resources remain less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. No formal cemeteries or other places of human internment are known to exist on the Project site; however, in accordance with Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and PRC Section 5097.98, if human remains are uncovered, Mitigation Measure CUL-2 as outlined below would be implemented.

4.5.4 Mitigation

CUL-1 (*Archaeological Resources*): In the event that archaeological resources are encountered at any time during construction, development or any ground-moving activities within the entire Project area, all work in the vicinity of the find shall halt until a qualified archaeologist can assess the discovery. The Project applicant shall implement all recommendations of the archaeologist necessary to avoid or reduce to a less than significant level potential impacts to cultural resource. Appropriate actions could include a Data Recovery Plan or preservation in place.

CUL-2 (*Human Remains*): If human remains are uncovered, or in any other case when human remains are discovered during construction, the Tulare County Coroner is to be notified to arrange proper treatment and disposition. If the remains are identified—on the basis of archaeological context, age, cultural associations, or biological traits—as those of a Native American origin, Health and Safety Code 7050.5 and Public Resources Code 5097.98 require that the coroner notifies the NAHC within 24 hours of discovery. The NAHC will then identify the Most Likely Descendent (MLD) who will determine the manner in which the remains are treated.

4.6 ENERGY

Table 4-11: Energy Impacts

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

4.6.1 Baseline Conditions

Southern California Edison provides electric utilities to the Porterville area. Much of the energy consumed in the region is for residential, commercial, and transportation purposes. Construction equipment and construction worker vehicles operated during Project construction would use fossil fuels. This increased fuel consumption would be temporary and would cease at the end of the construction activity, and it would not have a residual requirement for additional energy input.

4.6.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

There are no federal regulations, laws, or policies related to energy which are applicable to the Project.

State

California Environmental Quality Act

In order to ensure that energy implications are considered in project decisions, CEQA requires that reports include a discussion of the potential energy impacts of Projects, with particular emphasis on avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy (see PRC section 21100(b)(3)). Energy conservation implies that a project's cost-effectiveness be reviewed not only in dollars but also in terms of energy requirements. For many projects, cost-effectiveness may be determined more by energy efficiency than by initial dollar costs. A lead agency may consider the extent to which an energy source serving the project has already undergone an environmental review that adequately analyzed and mitigated the effects of energy production.

Local

Neither the Porterville General Plan or Tulare County General Plan contain specific goals and policies relative to the issue of energy which are applicable to the Project.

4.6.3 Impact Analysis

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

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed in Section 4.3, the Project would not exceed any air emission thresholds during construction or operation. The Project would comply with construction best management practices (BMP) and once completed, the Project would be passive in nature and would not use an excessive amount of energy. During construction, equipment would utilize fuels in order to power machines and equipment. Energy use associated with the operation of the Project would come from the use of pumping water from the City of Porterville water system. Through adherence with all federal, State, and local regulations governing energy use, energy consumption would not contribute substantial adverse effects. Therefore, the Project would not result in potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during construction or operation.

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

No Impact. State and local authorities regulate energy use and consumption. These regulations at the State level are intended to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These include, among others, AB 1493 – Light-Duty Vehicle Standards; California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 6 – Energy Efficiency Standards; and California Code of Regulations Title 24, Parts 6 and 11 – California Energy Code and Green Building Standards. The Project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Therefore, there would be no impact.

4.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Table 4-12: Geology and Soils Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv. Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994) creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

4.7.1 Baseline Conditions

Porterville is situated along the western slope of a northwest-trending belt of rocks that make up the Sierra Nevada Range. The Sierra Nevada geomorphic province is primarily composed of cretaceous granitic plutons and remnants of Paleozoic and Mesozoic metavolcanic and metasedimentary rocks, and Cenozoic volcanic and sedimentary rocks. Most of Porterville has elevations ranging from 400 to 800 feet.

Faults and Seismicity

There are no known active earthquake faults in the City of Porterville. The Project area is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. However, there are several faults located within a 70-mile radius of the Project area. The following faults are located within the Project vicinity, an unnamed fault is located 2.06 miles south, Pond fault is 27 miles southwest, and the San Andreas fault zone is approximately 68 miles to the southwest. It is possible, but unlikely, that previously unknown faults could become active in the area. No Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones are in or near Porterville.[8]

Liquification

Liquefaction occurs when loose, water-saturated sediments lose strength and fail during strong ground shaking. In general, liquefiable areas are generally confined to the Valley floor covered by Quaternary-age alluvial deposits, Holocene soil deposits, current river channels, and active wash deposits and their historic floodplains, marshes, and dry lakes. According to the California Geologic Survey, the Project area has not been identified as an area that is at risk of seismic-related ground failure including liquefaction.[9]

Soil Subsidence

Subsidence occurs when a large land area settles due to over-saturation or extensive withdrawal of ground water, oil, or natural gas. These areas are typically composed of open-textured soils that become saturated, high in silt or clay content. The Project area consists primarily of Exeter loam and Flamen Loam with a low to moderate risk of subsidence. The San Joaquin Valley has become an area that has increasingly experienced subsidence due to excessive groundwater pumping activities, lowering the water table.

Soils

A review of USDA, NRCS database in January 2024 identified four soil types within the Project area. The soils are displayed with their core properties in the table below (Table 4-13), according to the Major Land Resource Area of California. The soil types are generally used for irrigated cropland, cultivated field crops, dairy cattle production, urban development, and grazing.

[8] (California Department of Conservation 2023)
[9] (California Department of Conservation - California Geological Survey 2020)

Table 4-13: Project Site Soils

Soil	Soil Map Unit	Percent of Project Site	Hydric Soil Category	Drainage	Permeability	Runoff
Exeter loam	Loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	7.5%	Predominantly non-hydric	Moderately well drained	Moderately slow	Medium
Havala loam	Loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes	8.4%	Non-hydric	Well drained	Moderately slow	Slow to moderate
San Joaquin loam	Loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	55.1%	Predominantly non-hydric	Well and moderately well drained	Very slow	Medium to very high
San Joaquin loam	Loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes	28.8%	Predominantly non-hydric	Well and moderately well drained	Very slow	Medium to very high

Dam and Levee Failure

The closest dam is Success Dam, which impounds Lake Success approximately 11 miles northeast of the Project area. The California Department of Water Resources Dam Breach Inundation Map indicated that there are no dams or levees near the Project area with a high risk of breaching.[10]

4.7.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program

The National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (Public Law 95-124) and creation of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) established a long-term earthquake risk reduction program to better understand, predict, and mitigate risks associated with seismic events. Four federal agencies are responsible for coordinating activities under NEHRP; USGS; National Science Foundation (NSF); Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); and National Institute of Standards and Technology. Since its inception, NEHRP has shifted its focus from earthquake prediction to hazard reduction. The current program objectives (NEHRP 2018) are as follows:

- Developing effective measures to reduce earthquake hazards;
- Promoting the adoption of earthquake hazard reduction activities by federal, state, and local governments, national building standards and model building code organizations, engineers, architects, building owners, and others who play a role in planning and constructing buildings, bridges, structures, and critical infrastructure or “lifelines”;

[10] (California Department of Water Resources 2024)

- Improving the basic understanding of earthquakes and their effects on people and infrastructure through interdisciplinary research involving engineering, natural sciences, and social, economic, and decision sciences; and
- Developing and maintaining the USGS seismic monitoring system (Advanced National Seismic System); the NSF-funded project aimed at improving materials, designs, and construction techniques (George E. Brown Jr. Network for Earthquake Engineering Simulation); and the global earthquake monitoring network (Global Seismic Network).

State

California Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (originally enacted in 1972 and renamed in 1994) is intended to reduce the risk to life and property from surface fault rupture during earthquakes. The statute prohibits the location of most types of structures intended for human occupancy across the traces of active faults and regulates construction in the corridors along active faults.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act of 1990 (PRC Sections 2690–2699.6) establishes statewide minimum public safety standards for mitigation of earthquake hazards. While the Alquist-Priolo Act addresses surface fault rupture, the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act addresses other earthquake-related hazards, including strong ground shaking, liquefaction, and seismically induced landslides. Its provisions are similar in concept to those of the Alquist-Priolo Act: The state is charged with identifying and mapping areas at risk of strong ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, and other seismic hazards, and cities and counties are required to regulate development within mapped seismic hazard zones. In addition, the act addresses not only seismically induced hazards but also expansive soils, settlement, and slope stability. Under the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act, cities and counties may withhold the development permits for a site within seismic hazard zones until appropriate site-specific geologic and/or geotechnical investigations have been carried out and measures to reduce potential damage have been incorporated into the development plans.

California Building Standards Code

The California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24 is assigned to the California Building Standards Commission, which, by law, is responsible for coordinating all building standards. The California Building Code incorporates by reference the International Building Code with necessary California amendments. The International Building Code is a widely adopted model building code in the United States published by the International Code Council. About one-third of the text within the California Building Standards Code has been tailored for California earthquake conditions.

Local

Porterville General Plan Policies

- OSC-G-5: Preserve soil resources to minimize damage to people, property, and the environment resulting from potential hazards.
- OSC-I-21: Adopt soil conservation regulations to reduce erosion caused by overgrazing, plowing, mining, new roadways and paths, construction, and off-road vehicles.
- OSC-I-23: Require adequate grading and replanting to minimize erosion and prevent slippage of manmade slopes.

- PHS-G-4: Protect soils, surface water, and groundwater from contamination from hazardous materials.

Tulare County General Plan Policies

- ERM-7: To preserve and protect soil resources in Tulare County for agricultural and timber productivity and protect public health and safety.
- HS-2: To reduce the risk to life and property and governmental costs from seismic and geologic hazards.
    - HS-2.1: Continued Evaluation of Earthquake Risks – Tulare County shall continue to evaluate areas to determine levels of earthquake risk.
    - HS-2.7: Subsidence – Tulare County shall confirm that development is not located in any known areas of active subsidence. Project

4.7.3 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project 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.

Less Than Significant Impact. No substantial faults are known to occur within the City of Porterville according to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Maps and the DOC. The nearest identified faults to the Project are located within a 70-mile radius of the Project area.

Therefore, the Project would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death associated with an unlikely event of a ruptured earthquake fault lines. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less than Significant Impact. Porterville is located sufficiently distant from major fault lines and the Project area consists of existing development on primarily flat, level land. Hazards associated with ground shaking are not prevalent in the Porterville area, however seismic ground shaking is considered moderate in the regional area. Impacts associated to this checklist item are less than significant.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project area is located on the San Joaquin Valley floor sufficiently far from known faults and consists of stable geological formation. The Project area has a moderate risk of damaging ground motion even though there has not been any exhibited fault activity in the Porterville area in the last 200 years. Seismic-related ground failure such as liquefaction is believed to be minimal or unlikely to occur. The Project is primarily located underground and would be designed to meet the current seismic engineering standards of the California Building Code. Any impacts associated with this checklist item would be less than significant.

iv. Landslides?

No Impact. The Project site is relatively flat, consisting of existing road ROW and the Hope Elementary School site. The existing conditions present no potential for landslides to occur. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Site construction activities would involve trenching, laying pipeline, connecting pipeline, pouring concrete, and installation of service meters. A review of USDA, NRCS database in January 2024, identifies the Project area with four soil types; Exeter loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, San Joaquin loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, San Joaquin Loam 2 to 9 percent slopes, and Havala loam. Soil properties can be seen on Table 4-13 above. Construction activities could expose soils to erosion processes. The extent of erosion would vary depending on slope steepness/stability, vegetation/cover, concentration of runoff, and weather conditions.

To prevent water and wind erosion during the construction period, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be developed for the Project as required by the California RWQCB, for all projects which disturb more than one acre in size. As part of the SWPPP, the applicant would be required to provide erosion control measures to protect the topsoil. Any stockpiled soils would be watered and/or covered to prevent loss due to wind erosion as part of the SWPPP during construction. As a result of these efforts, loss of topsoil and substantial soil erosion during the construction period are not anticipated. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

c) Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project site comprises relatively flat terrain. Substantial grade change would not occur in the topography to the point where the Project would expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects on, or offsite, such as landslides, lateral spreading, liquefaction or collapse. According to the City of Porterville General Plan, Public Health and Safety Element, the Project area has a moderate risk to high risk of damaging ground motion. However, the nearest faults are small and have not exhibited activity in the last 200 years. It is possible, but unlikely that previously unknown faults may become active in this geographic area. Any impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed location of the water pipeline is within existing ROW of Tulare County and the City of Porterville that have been previously excavated, graded, and compacted for construction of the roadway. Compliance with applicable building and construction codes would lessen impacts associated with any potential for expansive soils to less than significant.

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

No Impact. The proposed Project does not include the construction of septic tanks or other alternative wastewater disposal systems. There would be no impact.

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. No known paleontological resources exist within the Project area. As the Project would require ground-disturbing activities, it is possible that an undiscovered paleontological resource may be impacted by ground disturbing activities. However, if a paleontological resource is found incorporation of mitigation measure GEO-1 would reduce impacts to less than significant.

4.7.4 Mitigation

GEO-1 Should a unique paleontological resource, site, or unique geological feature be unearthed during any stage of Project activities, work in the area of discovery will cease until the area is evaluated by a qualified geologist and/or paleontologist. If discoveries are uncovered, the Project proponent will abide by recommendations of the geologist or paleontologist.

4.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Table 4-14: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impacts

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

4.8.1 Baseline Conditions

The Earth's climate has been warming for the past century. Experts believe this warming trend is related to the release of certain gases into the atmosphere. GHGs absorb infrared energy that would otherwise escape from the Earth. As the infrared energy is absorbed, the air surrounding the Earth is heated. An overall warming trend has been recorded since the late 19th century, with the most rapid warming occurring over the past 35 years, with 16 of the 17 warmest years on record occurring since 2001. Not only was 2016 the warmest year on record, but eight of the 12 months that make up the year—from January through September, with the exception of June—were the warmest on record for those respective months. October, November, and December of 2016 were the second warmest of those months on record—in all three cases, behind records set in 2015.[11] Human activities have been attributed to an increase in the atmospheric abundance of GHGs. The following is a brief description of the most commonly recognized GHGs:

Carbon dioxide (CO_2) is an odorless, colorless natural GHG. CO_2 is emitted from natural and anthropogenic sources. Natural sources include the following: decomposition of dead organic matter; respiration of bacteria, plants, animals, and fungus; evaporation from oceans; and volcanic out gassing. Anthropogenic sources include the burning of coal, oil, natural gas, and wood.

Methane (CH_4) is a flammable GHG. A natural source of CH_4 is the anaerobic decay of organic matter. Geological deposits, known as natural gas fields, also contain CH_4, which is extracted for fuel. Other sources are from landfills, fermentation of manure, and ruminants such as cattle.

Nitrous oxide (N_2O), is a colorless GHG. Nitrous oxide is produced by microbial processes in soil and water, including those reactions that occur in fertilizer containing nitrogen. In addition to agricultural sources, some industrial processes (fossil fuel-fired power plants, nylon production, nitric acid production, and vehicle emissions) also contribute to its atmospheric load.

Water vapor is the most abundant, and variable GHG. It is not considered a pollutant; in the atmosphere, it maintains a climate necessary for life.

O_3 is known as a photochemical pollutant and is a GHG; however, unlike other GHGs, O_3 in the troposphere is relatively short-lived and, therefore, is not global in nature. O_3 is not emitted directly

[11] (National Aeronautics and Space Administration 2017)

into the atmosphere but is formed by a complex series of chemical reactions between volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides (NOx), and sunlight.

Aerosols are suspensions of particulate matter in a gas emitted into the air through burning biomass (plant material) and fossil fuels. Aerosols can warm the atmosphere by absorbing and emitting heat and can cool the atmosphere by reflecting light.

Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) are nontoxic, nonflammable, insoluble, and chemically unreactive in the troposphere (the level of air at the earth's surface). CFCs were first synthesized in 1928 for use as refrigerants, aerosol propellants, and cleaning solvents. CFCs destroy stratospheric O_3; therefore, their production was stopped as required by the Montreal Protocol in 1987.

Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are synthetic chemicals that are used as a substitute for CFCs. Of all the GHGs, HFCs are one of three groups (the other two are perfluorocarbons and sulfur hexafluoride) with the highest global warming potential (GWP). HFCs are human-made for applications such as air conditioners and refrigerants.

Perfluorocarbons (PFCs) have stable molecular structures and do not break down through the chemical processes in the lower atmosphere; therefore, PFCs have long atmospheric lifetimes, between 10,000 and 50,000 years. The two main sources of PFCs are primary aluminum production and semiconductor manufacture.

Sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6) is an inorganic, odorless, colorless, nontoxic, nonflammable gas. It has the highest GWP of any gas evaluated. Sulfur hexafluoride is used for insulation in electric power transmission and distribution equipment, in the magnesium industry, in semiconductor manufacturing, and as a tracer gas for leak detection.

4.8.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

Although climate change and GHG reduction is a concern at the federal level; currently there are no regulations or legislation that have been enacted specifically addressing GHG emissions reductions and climate change at the project level. Neither the USEPA nor the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has promulgated explicit guidance or methodology to conduct project-level GHG analysis. However, the FHWA recommends that climate change impacts and strategies to reduce GHG emissions should considered and integrated throughout the transportation decision-making process. Such strategies include implementation of improved transportation system efficiency, use of cleaner fuels and cleaner vehicles, and a reduction in the growth of vehicle hours travelled.

State

Assembly Bill 32 - California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006

The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 requires the State of California to reduce its GHG emissions from 1990 levels by 2020. CARB is required to adopt regulations to maximize feasible and cost-effective GHG reduction measurements. The bill covers CO2, CH4, N_2O, HFCs, PFCs, sulfur SF_6, and Nitrogen trifluoride. A Scoping Plan is required and is updated every five years.

Senate Bill 97 - CEQA: Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Senate Bill 97, signed in August 2007, acknowledges that climate change is an important environmental issue that requires analysis under CEQA. This bill directs the Governor's Office of Planning and Research to prepare, develop, and transmit to the Resources Agency guidelines for the feasible mitigation of GHG emissions or the effects of GHG emissions, by July 1, 2009. The Resources Agency is required to certify or adopt those guidelines by January 1, 2010. Amendments to the CEQA guidelines took effect March 18, 2010. The revisions include a new section (Sec. 15064.4) that specifically addresses the potential significance of GHG emissions. Section 15064.4 calls for a "good-faith effort" to "describe, calculate or estimate" GHG emissions. Section 15064.4 further states that a lead agency "should" consider several factors when assessing the significance of impacts from GHG emissions on the environment, including: the extent to which the project would increase or reduce GHG emissions; whether project emissions exceed an applicable threshold of significance; and the extent to which the project complies with "regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions." The guidelines also state that a lead agency may determine that a project's incremental contribution to a cumulative effect is not cumulatively considerable if the project will comply with the requirements of previously approved plan or mitigation program (Sec. 15064(h)(3)). However, the guidelines do not require or recommend a specific analytical methodology or provide quantitative criteria for determining the significance of GHG emissions.

Mandatory Reporting of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Reporting of GHGs by major sources is required by the California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32, 2006). Revisions to the existing CARB mandatory GHG reporting regulation were considered at the board hearing on December 16, 2010. The revised regulation was approved by the California Office of Administrative Law and became effective on January 1, 2012. The revised regulation affects industrial facilities, suppliers of transportation fuels, natural gas, natural gas liquids, liquefied petroleum gas, and CO_2, operators of petroleum and natural gas systems, and electricity retail providers and marketers.

Cap-and-Trade Regulation

The cap-and-trade regulation is a key element in California's climate plan. It sets a statewide limit on sources responsible for 85 percent of California's GHG emissions and establishes a price signal needed to drive long-term investment in cleaner fuels and more efficient use of energy. The cap-and-trade rules came into effect on January 1, 2013 and apply to large electric power plants and large industrial plants. In 2015, they will extend to fuel distributors (including distributors of heating and transportation fuels). At that stage, the program will encompass nearly 85 percent of the state's total GHG emissions.

GHG emissions addressed by the cap-and-trade regulation are subject to an industry-wide cap on overall GHG emissions. The cap-and-trade regulation sets a firm limit or cap on GHGs, which declines approximately 3 percent each year beginning in 2013. Any growth in emissions must be accounted for under the cap, such that a corresponding and equivalent reduction in emissions must occur to allow any increase. The cap-and-trade regulation will help California achieve its goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020, and ultimately achieving an 80% reduction from 1990 levels by 2050. As such, the CARB has determined that the cap-and-trade regulation meets the requirements of AB 32

Local

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Climate Change Action Plan

On August 21, 2008, the SJVAPCD Governing Board approved the SJAPCD's Climate Change Action Plan with the following goals and actions:

Goals:

- Assist local land-use agencies with CEQA issues relative to projects with GHG emissions increases.
- Assist Valley businesses in complying with mandates of AB 32.
- Ensure that climate protection measures do not cause increase in toxic or criteria pollutants that adversely impact public health or environmental justice communities.

Actions:

- Authorize the Air Pollution Control Officer to develop GHG significance threshold(s) or other mechanisms to address CEQA projects with GHG emissions increases. Begin the requisite public process, including public workshops, and develop recommendations for Governing Board consideration in the spring of 2009.
- Authorize the Air Pollution Control Officer to develop necessary regulations and instruments for establishment and administration of the San Joaquin Valley Carbon Exchange Bank for voluntary GHG reductions created in the Valley. Begin the requisite public process, including public workshops, and develop recommendations for Governing Board consideration in spring 2009.
- Authorize the Air Pollution Control Officer to enhance the SJAVCPD's existing criteria pollutant emissions inventory reporting system to allow businesses subject to AB32 emission reporting requirements to submit simultaneous streamlined reports to the District and the state of California with minimal duplication.
- Authorize the Air Pollution Control Officer to develop and administer voluntary GHG emission reduction agreements to mitigate proposed GHG increases from new projects.
- Direct the Air Pollution Control Officer to support climate protection measures that reduce GHG emissions as well as toxic and criteria pollutants. Oppose measures that result in a significant increase in toxic or criteria pollutant emissions in already impacted area.

SJVAPCD CEQA Greenhouse Gas Guidance

On December 17, 2009, the SJVAPCD Governing Board adopted "Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under CEQA" and the policy, "District Policy—Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for Stationary Source Projects Under CEQA When Serving as the Lead Agency." The SJVAPCD concluded that the existing science is inadequate to support quantification of the impacts that project specific GHG emissions have on global climatic change. The SJVAPCD found the effects of project-specific emissions to be cumulative, and without mitigation, that their incremental contribution to global climatic change could be considered cumulatively considerable. The SJVAPCD found that this cumulative impact is best addressed by requiring all projects to reduce their GHG emissions, whether through project design elements or mitigation.

The SJVAPCD's approach is intended to streamline the process of determining if project-specific GHG emissions would have a significant effect. Projects exempt from the requirements of CEQA, and projects complying with an approved plan or mitigation program would be determined to have a less than significant cumulative impact. Such plans or programs must be specified in law or adopted by the public agency with jurisdiction over the affected resources and have a certified final CEQA document.

Best performance standards (BPS) to address operational emissions of a project would be established according to performance-based determinations. Projects complying with BPS would not require specific quantification of GHG emissions and would be determined to have a less than significant cumulative impact for GHG emissions. Projects not complying with BPS would require quantification of GHG emissions and demonstration that operational GHG emissions have been reduced or mitigated by 29 percent, as targeted by CARB's AB 32 Scoping Plan. Furthermore, quantification of GHG emissions would be required for all projects for which the lead agency has determined that an EIR is required, regardless of whether the project incorporates BPS.

APR 2025 – CEQA Determinations of Significance for Projects Subject to CARB's Cap-and Trade Regulation

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the determination of significance for increases of GHG emissions associated with projects that are subject to CARB's cap-and-trade regulation. The SJVAPCD recognizes that the CARB's Cap-and-Trade Regulation is an adopted state-wide plan for reducing or mitigating GHG emissions from targeted industries. GHG emissions addressed by the Cap-and-Trade regulation are subject to an industry-wide cap on overall GHG emissions. As such, any growth in emissions must be accounted for under that cap, such that a corresponding and equivalent reduction in emissions must occur to allow any increase. Further, the cap decreases over time, resulting in an overall decrease in GHG emissions. Therefore, the SJVAPCD concluded that GHG emissions increases subject to CARB's Cap-and-Trade regulation would have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact on global climate change. This policy applies to projects for which the SJVAPCD is the lead agency but is also useful for evaluation of other CEQA related projects for which the SJVAPCD may not be the lead agency.

Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Thresholds for Significance

Bay Area Air Quality Management District's (BAAQMD) approach to developing a threshold of significance for GHG emissions is to identify the emissions level for which a project would not be expected to substantially conflict with existing California legislation adopted to reduce statewide GHG emissions. If a project would generate GHG emissions above the threshold level, it would be considered to contribute substantially to a cumulative impact and would be considered significant. If mitigation can be applied to lessen the emissions such that the project meets its share of emission reductions needed to address the cumulative impact, the project would normally be considered less than significant. Although the Proposed Project is not located in the Bay Area, the BAAQMD's thresholds for significance are based on the statewide AB 32 objectives.

City of Porterville General Plan

The City of Porterville General Plan includes the following policies that address air quality:

- OSC-G-9: Improve and protect Porterville's air quality by making air quality a priority in land use and transportation planning and in development review.
- OSC-I-59: Require preparation of a Health Risk Assessment for any development subject to the Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Act.
- OSC-I-60: Require preparation of a Health Risk Assessment for any development subject to the Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Act.
- OSC-I-61: Coordinate air quality planning efforts with other local, regional and State agencies.
- OSC-I-63: Notify local and regional jurisdictions of proposed Projects that may affect regional air quality.

Tulare County General Plan Policies

- AQ-1: To improve air quality through a regional approach and interagency cooperation.
  - AQ-1.8: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan/Climate Action Plan – Tulare County will develop a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan (Plan) that identifies greenhouse gas emissions within Tulare County as well as ways to reduce those emissions. The Plan will incorporate the requirements adopted by the CARB specific to this issue. In addition, Tulare County will work with the Tulare County Association of Governments and other applicable agencies to include the following key items in the regional planning efforts.
    - Inventory all known, or reasonably discoverable, sources of greenhouse gases in Tulare County.
    - Inventory the greenhouse gases.
    - Set a target for the reduction of emissions attributable to Tulare County's discretionary land use decisions and its own internal government operations.
- AQ-4: To implement the best available controls and monitoring necessary to regulate air emissions.

4.8.3 Impact Analysis

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

Less than Significant Impact. Construction of the Project would result in GHG emissions from operation of both on-road and off-road equipment. As discussed previously, Project operations would require routine maintenance conducted by existing staff and would negligible amounts of new emissions, and therefore are not addressed further. As shown in Table 4-15, the Project would be below the BAAQMD which have been deemed applicable to this Project do to the lack of a threshold for GHG emissions by the SJVAPCD. Therefore, the GHG emissions from the Project would not have significant impacts on climate change.

Table 4-15. Unmitigated Short-Term Construction-Generated GHG Emissions

Short-Term Construction-Generated GHG Emissions	
Year	Emissions (Metric Tons CO_2e)[1]
2026	52
2027	48.1
BAY AREA AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT THRESHOLD FOR SIGNIFICANCE [2]	*1,100*
EXCEED THRESHOLD?	*No*

[1]Emissions were quantified using the CalEEmod, Version 2022..1.21 Refer to Appendix A for modeling results and assumptions. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

[2] Threshold for Significance for Projects other than Stationary Sources

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

Less than Significant Impact. After Project construction, operational GHG emissions would consist of routine maintenance conducted by existing staff and would generate negligible amounts of new emissions during operations. The Project would provide potable water to Hope Elementary School, whose current water sources do not meet safety standards. GHG emissions from the Project construction activities would be temporary and would not have a long-term impact on the state's ability to achieve the Scoping Plan's emission reduction targets for 2030 or beyond. The Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

4.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Table 4-16: Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.9.1 Baseline Conditions

Hazardous Materials

The Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (Cortese) List is a planning document used by the State, local agencies, and developers to comply with CEQA requirements in providing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. GC Section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) to develop at least annually an updated Cortese List. The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is responsible for a portion of the information contained in the Cortese List. Other State and local government agencies are required to provide additional hazardous material release information for the Cortese List. DTSC's EnviroStor database provides DTSC's component of Cortese List data. In addition

to the EnviroStor database, the SWRCB Geotracker database provides information on regulated hazardous waste facilities in California, including underground storage tank (UST) cases and non-UST cleanup programs, including Spills-Leaks-Investigations-Cleanups sites, Department of Defense sites, and Land Disposal program. A search of the DTSC EnviroStor database performed on February 14, 2024, determined that there is one known active hazardous waste site within the Project area.[12] The identified site is dated February 2, 2024, and is located at the Hope Elementary School site, however when reviewing the open case, no hazardous material or chemical is listed. The school is currently in the process of designing a new gym. Upon discussing this separate project with school representatives, including the project architect, it was determined that no hazardous material has been spilled on site, despite the site being listed on the DTSC EnviroStor database. A search of the SCRWB on February 14, 2024, did not identify any hazardous waste spill sites on or within the vicinity of the Project.[13]

Airports

The County of Tulare adopted the current Tulare County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan in 2012. The nearest airport is the Porterville Municipal Airport located approximately 500 feet northwest of the Project site along West Teapot Dome Avenue.[14]

Emergency Response Plan

The Tulare County Office of Emergency Services coordinates the development and maintenance of the Tulare County Operational Area Master Emergency Services Plan.

Sensitive Receptors

The closest sensitive receptors to the Project include Hope Elementary School, as well as rural single-family residences located along South Indiana Street and West Teapot Dome Avenue.

4.9.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

The United States Environmental Protection Agency

The USEPA was established in 1970 to consolidate in one agency a variety of federal research, monitoring, standard-setting and enforcement activities to ensure environmental protection. USEPA's mission is to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment — air, water, and land — upon which life depends. USEPA works to develop and enforce regulations that implement environmental laws enacted by Congress, is responsible for researching and setting national standards for a variety of environmental programs, and delegates to states and tribes the responsibility for issuing permits and for monitoring and enforcing compliance. Where national standards are not met, USEPA can issue sanctions and take other steps to assist the states and tribes in reaching the desired levels of environmental quality.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1967 (42 USC § 6901 et seq.) as amended by the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984, is the primary federal law for the regulation of solid

[12] (Department of Toxic Substances Control 2024)
[13] (State Water Resources Control Board 2024)
[14] (Tulare County 2012)

waste and hazardous waste in the United States. These laws provide for the "cradle-to-grave" regulation of hazardous wastes, including generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal. Any business, institution, or other entity that generates hazardous waste is required to identify and track its hazardous waste from the point of generation until it is recycled, reused, or disposed of. The USEPA has primary responsibility for implementing RCRA, but individual states are encouraged to seek authorization to implement some or all RCRA provisions. California received authority to implement the RCRA program in August 1992. DTSC is responsible for implementing the RCRA program in California, in addition to California's own hazardous waste laws, which are collectively known as the Hazardous Waste Control Law

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA, also called the Superfund Act; 42 USC § 9601 et seq.) is intended to protect the public and the environment from the effects of past hazardous waste disposal activities and new hazardous material spills. Under CERCLA, USEPA has the authority to seek the parties responsible for hazardous materials releases and to ensure their cooperation in site remediation. CERCLA also provides federal funding (through the "Superfund") for the remediation of hazardous materials contamination. The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-499) amends some provisions of CERCLA and provides for a Community Right-to-Know program. The DTSC is responsible for implementing the RCRA program as well as California's own hazardous waste laws, which are collectively known as the Hazardous Waste Control Law. Under the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) program, the CalEPA has in turn delegated enforcement authority to the County of San Bernardino for State law regulating hazardous waste producers or generators.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is responsible at the federal level for ensuring worker safety. OSHA sets federal standards for implementation of workplace training, exposure limits, and safety procedures for the handling of hazardous substances (as well as other hazards). OSHA also establishes criteria by which each state can implement its own health and safety program.

Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act

The Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), also known as SARA Title III, was enacted in November1986. This law requires any infrastructure at the state and local levels to plan for chemical emergencies. Reported information is then made publicly available so that interested parties may become informed about potentially dangerous chemicals in their community. EPCRA Sections 301 through 312 are administered by USEPA's Office of Emergency Management. USEPA's Office of Information Analysis and Access implements the EPCRA Section 313 program. In California, SARA Title III is implemented through California Accidental Release Program (CalARP).

State

Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 - Proposition 65

The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, more commonly known as Proposition 65, protects the state's drinking water sources from contamination with chemicals known to cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm. Proposition 65 also requires businesses to inform the public about exposure to such chemicals in the products they purchase, in their homes or workplaces, or that are released into the environment. In accordance with Proposition 65, the California Governor's Office publishes, at least annually, a list of such chemicals. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, an agency under the CalEPA, is the Lead Agency for implementation of the Proposition 65 program.

Proposition 65 is enforced through the California Attorney General's Office; however, district and city attorneys and any individual acting in the public interest may also file a lawsuit against a business alleged to be in violation of Proposition 65 regulations.

California Occupational Safety and Health Administration

California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) assumes primary responsibility for developing and enforcing workplace safety regulations in California. Cal/OSHA regulations pertaining to the use of hazardous materials in the workplace (CCR Title 8) include requirements for safety training, availability of safety equipment, accident and illness prevention programs, warnings about exposure to hazardous substances, and preparation of emergency action and fire prevention plans. Hazard communication program regulations that are enforced by Cal/OSHA require workplaces to maintain procedures for identifying and labeling hazardous substances, inform workers about the hazards associated with hazardous substances and their handling, and prepare health and safety plans to protect workers at hazardous waste sites. Employers also must make material safety data sheets available to employees and document employee information and training programs. In addition, Cal/OSHA has established maximum permissible radiofrequency radiation exposure limits for workers (Title 8 CCR § 5085(b)) and requires warning signs where radiofrequency radiation may exceed the specified limits (Title 8 CCR § 5085(c)). Cal/OSHA's Lead in Construction Standard is contained in Title 8, Section 1532.1 of the California Code of Regulations. The regulations address all of the following areas: permissible exposure limits; exposure assessment; compliance methods; respiratory protection; protective clothing and equipment; housekeeping; medical surveillance; medical removal protection; employee information, training, and certification; signage; record keeping; monitoring; and agency notification.

California Accidental Release Prevention

The purpose of the CalARP program is to prevent accidental releases of substances that can cause serious harm to the public and the environment, to minimize the damage if releases do occur, and to satisfy community right-to-know laws. In accordance with this program, businesses that handle more than a threshold quantity of regulated substance are required to develop a risk management plan. This risk management plan must provide a detailed analysis of potential risk factors and associated mitigation measures that can be implemented to reduce accident potential. CUPAs implement the CalARP program through review of risk management plans, facility inspections, and public access to information that is not confidential or trade secret.

California Health and Safety Code and Code of Regulations

California Health and Safety Code Chapter 6.95 and 19 California Code of Regulations Section 2729 set out the minimum requirements for business emergency plans and chemical inventory reporting. These regulations require businesses to provide emergency response plans and procedures, training program information, and a hazardous material chemical inventory disclosing hazardous materials stored, used, or handled on site. A business that uses hazardous materials or a mixture containing hazardous materials must establish and implement a business plan if the hazardous material is handled in certain quantities.

Local

Porterville General Plan Policies

- PHS-G-4: Protect soils, surface water, and ground water from contamination from hazardous materials.

- PHS-G-1: Minimize risks of property damage and personal injury posed by geologic and seismic hazards.
- PHS-I-2: Maintain and enforce appropriate building standards and codes to avoid and/or reduce risks associated with geologic constraints and to ensure that all new construction is designed to meet current safety regulations.

Tulare General Plan Policies

- HS-3: To minimize the possibility of the loss of life, injury, or damage to property as a result of airport hazards.
    - HS-3.1: Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan: Tulare County shall require that development around airports is consistent with the safety policies and land use compatibility guidelines contained in the adopted Tulare County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan (CALUP).
- HS-4: To protect residents, visitors, and property from hazardous materials through their safe use, storage, transport, and disposal.
    - HS-4.1: Hazardous Materials – Tulare County shall strive to ensure hazardous materials are used, stored, transported, and disposed of in a safe manner, in compliance with local, State, and Federal safety standards, including the Hazardous Waste Management Plan, Emergency Operations Plan, and Area Plan.
    - HS-4.2: Establishment of Procedures to Transport Hazardous Wastes – Tulare County shall continue to cooperate with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to establish procedures for the movement of hazardous wastes and explosives within Tulare County.
    - HS-4.4: Contamination Prevention – Tulare County shall review new development proposals to protect soils, air quality, surface water, and groundwater from hazardous materials contamination.
- HS-6: To minimize the exposure of Tulare County residents, visitors, and public and private property to the effects of urban and wildland fires.
    - HS-6.6: Wildland Fire Management Plans – Tulare County shall require the development of wildland fire management plans for projects adjoining significant areas of open space that may have high fuel loads.
    - HS-6.12: Weed Abatement – Tulare County shall continue to encourage weed abatement programs throughout Tulare County in order to promote fire safety.
- HS-7: To provide effective emergency response to natural or human-made hazards and disasters.
    - HS-7.3: To provide effective emergency response to natural or human-made hazards and disasters.

Tulare County Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Plan

Tulare County has prepared a Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Plan to serve as Tulare County's emergency response plan. The plan addresses responses to various emergency incidents, responsibilities of various agencies, and sources of outside assistance. The plan also identifies evacuation centers and addresses evacuation routes, which include all freeways, highways, and arterials that are located outside of the 100-year flood plain.[15]

4.9.3 Impact Analysis

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

Less than Significant Impact. Project construction would involve the storage, use, and transport of small amounts of hazardous materials (e.g., asphalt, fuel, lubricants, and other substances) on roadways. Regulations governing hazardous materials transport are stated in Title 22 CCR and the California Vehicle Code (Title 13 CCR). The transportation of hazardous materials also is subject to other applicable local and federal regulations, which have been specifically designed to minimize the risk of upset during routine construction activities. The State agencies with primary responsibility for enforcing federal and State regulations, and for responding to hazardous materials transportation emergencies, are the California Highway Patrol and the Caltrans. Together, these agencies determine container types to be used and license hazardous waste haulers for transportation of hazardous waste on public roads. Various local entities or agencies are generally delegated first responder responsibilities in the event of a hazardous material spill or release.

Construction and operation of the Project would be required by law to implement and comply with existing hazardous material regulations. Each of these regulations is specifically designed to protect public health through improved procedures for handling hazardous materials, better technology in equipment used to transport these materials, and a more coordinated, quicker response to emergencies. By implementing measures needed to be consistent with existing regulations, impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project consists of installing new water main pipeline and associated infrastructure, connecting Hope Elementary School to the City's water system. Power sources for operational purposes would be all electric. This infrastructure is not designed to convey or store hazardous materials. Project construction would temporarily involve the storage, use, and transport of small amounts of hazardous materials (e.g., asphalt, fuel, lubricants, and other substances) on roadways. Therefore, in the event of a reasonably-foreseeable upset or accident during construction or operational maintenance activities, minimal hazardous materials may be released into the environment. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

[15] (Tulare County 2018)

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

Less than Significant Impact. Schools in the Project area include Hope Elementary School, located within the same property as the existing well site. The Project would install a new water distribution pipeline and would not result in the routine use, transport or disposal of substantial quantities of hazardous materials. The Project would utilize hazardous materials such as fuels and lubricants during construction in association with construction equipment. Employment of industry standard BMP would ensure that the potential for hazardous materials spills within the vicinity of the school would be minimized. Impacts would therefore be less than significant.

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

No Impact. A search of the DTSC EnviroStor database and the SWRCB Geotracker performed on February 14, 2024, determined that there are no known active hazardous waste generators or hazardous material spill sites within the Project area or immediate vicinity. While, as discussed above, the EnviroStor database lists an active site at Hope Elementary School, coordination with school staff and representatives have confirmed that there are no known hazardous chemical releases on site. The database listing for the site has also not identify any chemicals or hazardous wastes which have been spilled on the site. There would be no impact.

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

No Impact. The Project area is located within the Airport Influence Area of the Porterville Municipal Airport as indicated by the Tulare County Airport Land Use Plan. While the Project is located within the boundaries of the Airport Influence Area, the existing well site as well as the work along West Teapot Dome Avenue and South Indiana Street are outside of the noise exposure contour.[16] Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project does not provide any physical barriers or disturb any roadways in such a way that would impede emergency or hazards response; all work conducted in public ROW would require an Encroachment Permit from the County of Tulare and a traffic control plan. Temporary traffic controls are required to comply with the FHWA's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Therefore, the proposed Project would not interfere with implementation of an emergency response plan or evacuation plan. Any impact would be less than significant.

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

[16] (Tulare County 2012)

No Impact. The Project is located in a rural community and adjacent to farmland. Construction equipment would utilize internal combustion engines in existing ROW, where vehicles utilizing internal combustion engines exist. Project operations would utilize existing methods of transportation and power. As discussed in further detail in Section 4.20, the Project is not located within an area that is susceptible to wildfire. Therefore, there would be no impact.

4.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Table 4-17: Hydrology and Water Quality Impacts

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

4.10.1 Baseline Conditions

The Project is located in Tulare County, in the Central San Joaquin Valley, part of the Great Valley of California. Like most of California, the San Joaquin Valley experiences a Mediterranean climate. Warm, dry summers are followed by cool, moist winters. Summer temperatures often reach above 90 degrees Fahrenheit, and the humidity is generally low. Winter temperatures are often below 60 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and rarely exceed 70 degrees. The San Joaquin Valley receives an average of 12 inches of precipitation in the form of rainfall yearly, most of which occurs between October and March.

The Project lies entirely within the Tule Groundwater Subbasin of the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin.[17] There are no tributaries, or distributaries located within the site boundaries or adjacent to the site.

Hope Elementary School currently supplies water to approximately 275 students and staff through a single source that has documented nitrate contamination over the past 15 years. The nitrate concentrations have exceeded the maximum contaminant level allowed by the State of California for potable drinking water.

4.10.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

Clean Water Act

The CWA is intended to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters (33 CFR 1251). The regulations implementing the CWA protect waters of the U.S. including streams and wetlands (33 CFR 328.3). The CWA requires states to set standards to protect, maintain, and restore water quality by regulating point source and some non-point source discharges. Under Section 402 of the CWA, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit process was established to regulate these discharges. The CWA also provides an exemption from the NPDES permitting process for agricultural return flows, which are to be regulated by the State. Such flows are regulated under the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act. Both types of permits--NPDES and those for exempt flows under the CWA--are issued by the State of California.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

FEMA produces flood insurance rate maps that identify special flood hazard areas. The maps further classify these areas into "zones" that broadly characterize the potential risk of an area being inundated by a 100-year or 500-year flood in any given year.

State

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (known as the Porter-Cologne Act), passed in 1969, dovetails with the CWA (see discussion of the CWA above). It established the SWRCB and divided the state into nine regions, each overseen by the California RWQCB. The SWRCB is the primary state agency responsible for protecting the quality of the state's surface water and groundwater supplies. However, much of the SWRCB's daily implementation authority is delegated to the nine RWQCBs, which are responsible for implementing CWA Sections 401, 402, and 303(d). In general, the SWRCB manages water rights and regulates statewide water quality, whereas the RWQCBs focus on water quality within their respective regions. The Proposed Project is located in the Central Valley RWQCB Region-5.

The Porter-Cologne Act requires the RWQCBs to develop water quality control plans (also known as Basin Plans) that designate beneficial uses of California's major surface water bodies and groundwater basins and establish specific narrative and numerical water quality objectives for those waters. Beneficial uses represent the services and qualities of a water body - i.e., the reasons why the water body is considered valuable. Water quality objectives reflect the standards necessary to protect and support those beneficial

[17] (Department of Water Resources 2018)

uses. Basin Plan standards are primarily implemented by regulating waste discharges so that water quality objectives are met. Under the Porter-Cologne Act, Basin Plans must be updated every 3 years.

Local

Porterville General Plan Policies

- OSC-G-8: Ensure adequate water quality and supply for the entire Porterville Community.
- OSC-I-38: Continue to work with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board for short- and long-term solutions for excessive salts in the ground water treatment operations.
- OSC-I-39: Adopt the Regional Water Quality Control Board's Policies on soil disturbance activities in order to minimize the disturbance of soils, vegetation, organic debris, and other materials that control runoff.
- OSC-I-40: Support the identification of degraded surface water and groundwater resources and promote restoration where appropriate.
- OSC-I-41: Monitor and enforce provisions to control non-point source water-pollution, including storm water flows, contained in the United States Environmental Protection Agency NPDES program as implemented by the Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- OSC-I-42: Support the collection of monitoring data for facilities or uses that are potential sources of groundwater pollution as part of project approvals, including residential and industrial development.
- OSC-I-44: Work with the Regional Water Quality Control Board to ensure that all point source pollutants are adequately mitigated (as part of the CEQA review and project approval process) and monitored to ensure long-term compliance.
- OSC-I-45: Continue to require use of feasible and practical BMP and other mitigation measures designed to protect surface water and groundwater from the adverse effects of construction activities and urban runoff in coordination with the Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- OSC-I-48: Protect groundwater recharge areas by carefully regulating the type of development within these areas.
- OSC-I-49: Promote the combined use of recharge areas, public recreation, wetlands mitigation programs and/or banking, as part of the City's open space or recreational trail system to the extent deemed feasible by good engineering or geotechnical practice.
- OSC-I-51: Prior to the approval of individual projects, require the City Engineer and/or Building Official to verify that the provisions of applicable point source pollution programs have been satisfied.
- OSC-I-52: Establish requirements for appropriate BMP to be implemented during construction efforts to control the discharge of pollutants, prevent sewage spills, and discharge of sediments into streets, stormwater conveyance channels, or waterways.
- OSC-I-53: Require development to retain areas of open space as natural or landscaped to aid in the recharge and retention of runoff.
- OSC-I-54: Support efforts to create additional water storage where needed, in cooperation with federal, state, and local water authorities. Additionally, support and/or engage in water banking in conjunction with these agencies where appropriate.
- OSC-I-56: Incorporate natural drainage systems and groundwater recharge features into developments where appropriate and feasible.
- PHS-G-2: Protect the community from risks to life and property posed by flooding and stormwater runoff.

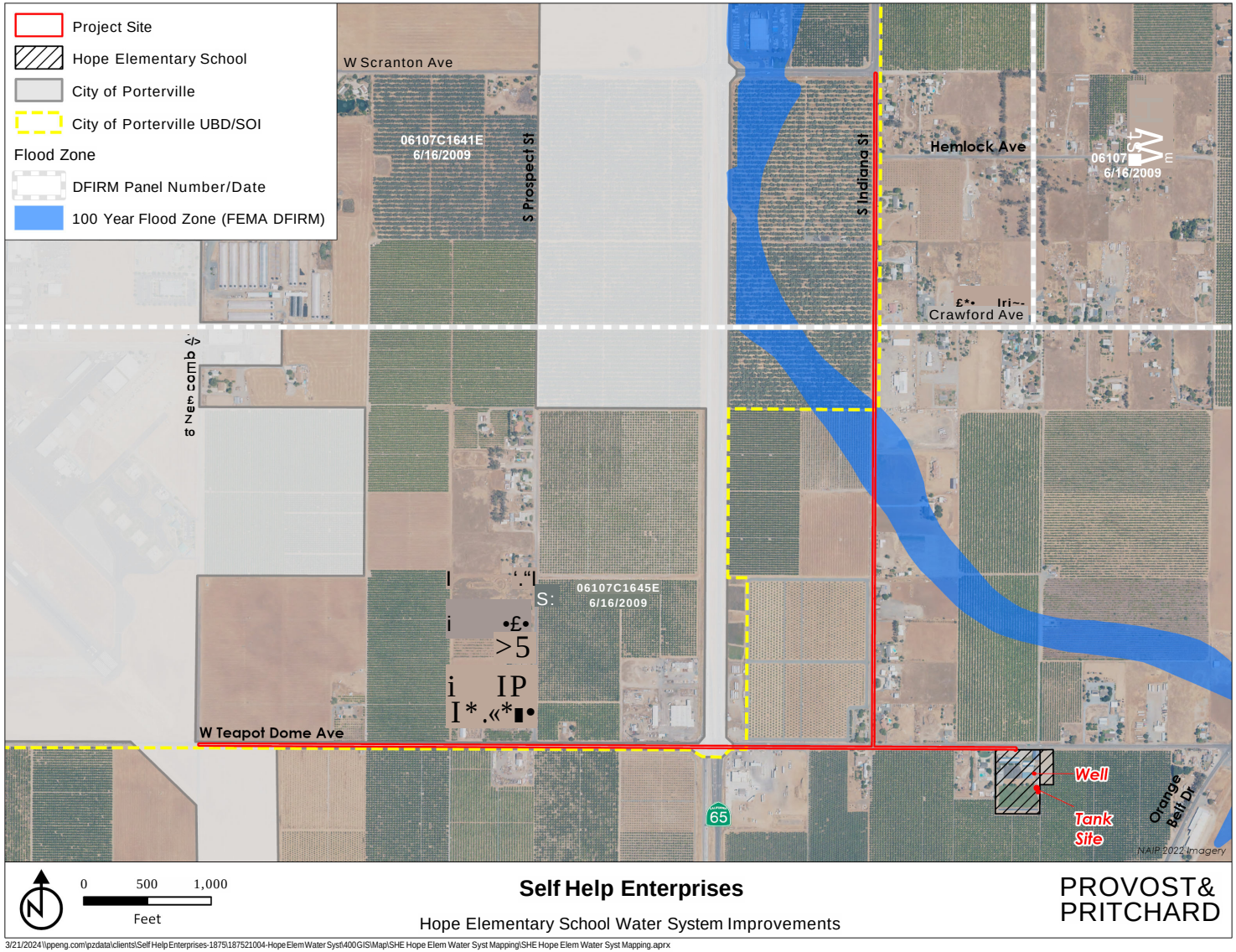
- PHS-I-8: Implement appropriate flood control measures to assure the safety of residents, while emphasizing maintenance of natural wildlife habitats and vegetation.
- PHS-I-10: Continue to require any new development in the floodway to obtain a permit from the California Reclamation Board and enforce the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.
- PHS-I-12: Continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program and encourage all property owners within flood hazard areas to carry flood insurance.

Tulare County General Plan Policies

- HS-5: To minimize the possibility of the loss of life, injury, or damage to property as a result of flood hazards.
    - HS-5.3: Participation in Federal Flood Insurance Program – Tulare County shall continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- WR-1: To provide for the current and long-range water needs of Tulare County and for the protection of the quality and quantity of surface and groundwater resources.
    - WR-1.5: Expand Use of Reclaimed Wastewater – To augment groundwater supplies and to conserve potable water for domestic purposes, Tulare County shall seek opportunities to expand groundwater recharge efforts.
    - WR-1.8: Groundwater Basin Management – Tulare County shall take an active role in cooperating in the management of Tulare County's groundwater resources.
    - WR-1.11: Groundwater Overdraft – Tulare County shall consult with water agencies within those areas of Tulare County where groundwater extraction exceeds groundwater recharge, with the goal of reducing and ultimately reversing groundwater overdraft conditions in Tulare County.
- WR-2: To provide for the current and long-range water needs of Tulare County and for the protection of the quality of surface and groundwater resources.
    - WR-2.2: NPDES Enforcement – Tulare County shall continue to support the State in monitoring and enforcing provisions to control non-point source water pollution contained in the USEPA NPDES program as implemented by the Water Quality Control Board.
    - WR-2.3: BMP – Tulare County shall continue to require the use of feasible BMPs and other mitigation measures designed to protect surface water and groundwater from the adverse effect of construction activities, agricultural operations requiring a Tulare County Permit and urban runoff in coordination with the Water Quality Control Board.
    - WR-2.4: Construction Site Sediment Control – Tulare County shall continue to enforce provisions to control erosion and sediment from construction sites.
    - WR-2.5: Major Drainage Management – Tulare County shall continue to promote protection of each individual drainage basin within Tulare County based on the basins unique hydrologic and use characteristics.
    - WR-2.6: Degraded Water Resources – Tulare County shall encourage and support the identification of degraded surface water and groundwater resources and promote restoration where appropriate.
    - WR-2.7: Industrial and Agricultural Sources – Tulare County shall work with agricultural and industrial concerns to ensure that water contaminants and waste products are handled in a manner that protects the long-term viability of water resources in Tulare County.

- WR-3: To provide a sustainable, long-term supply of water resources to meet domestic, agricultural, industrial, and recreational needs and to assure that new urban development is consistent with available water resources.

Figure 4-2: FEMA Flood Zones



4.10.3 Impact Analysis

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project includes consolidation with the City through the installation of approximately 6,550 LF of water main along South Indiana Street to the point of connection at West Scranton Avenue and the installation of approximately 5,300 LF of water main along West Teapot Dome Avenue to the point of connection at Newcomb Street. This would provide Hope Elementary School with a consistent and reliable source of water, as water produced by the existing well has been found to have nitrate levels higher than the regulatory maximum contaminant level. The SWRCB requires any new construction project of an acre or more to complete a SWPPP. A SWPPP would be incorporated which involves site planning and scheduling, limiting disturbed soil areas, and determining BMP to minimize the risk of pollution and sediments being discharged from construction sites. Implementation of the SWPPP would minimize the potential for the Project to substantially alter the existing drainage pattern. The SWPPP would assist control of stormwater runoff during construction in a manner that would reduce substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite. There would be minimal discharge to any surface or groundwater associated with the construction. All water supplied as a result of Project completion would come from the City of Porterville and would meet current water quality standards as required by the SWRCB. Any impact would be less than significant.

b) Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Less than Significant Impact. Implementation of the Project would not impede sustainable groundwater management of the San Joaquin Valley Tule subbasin, nor would it substantially decrease ground water supplies. As part of the Project the existing Hope Elementary well would be abandoned and would no longer be drawing water out of the groundwater basin. While the new connections would be new users on the City's water system, they would not be new users to the groundwater basin. Any impacts would be less than significant.

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

i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;

ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;

iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or

iv. impede or redirect flood flows?

i-iv) Less than Significant Impact. The ground disturbance generated by this Project is primarily the placement of underground pipeline within road ROW. Therefore, no existing drainage pattern of the

area would be permanently altered. No substantial erosion or siltation on or off-site is expected. Additionally, surface runoff that would result in flooding is not expected to be increased as a result of the Project. No streams or rivers would be altered, no flood flows would be impeded or redirected. Any impacts would be less than significant.

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

No Impact. As illustrated by Figure 4-2 above, the Project's new pipeline alignment would run through a portion of a flood zone along South Indiana Street. However, the Project would be undergrounded, with some infrastructure (such as fire hydrants) existing above the surface. This would not lead to the release of pollutants. Furthermore, the Project is not located within any, tsunami, or seiche zones that would cause the risk of released pollutants due to inundations. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Hope Elementary School well would be abandoned, and the site would be connected to the City of Porterville water system. The Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. Additionally, the installation of a water meter would help monitor and reduce water consumption. Any impacts would be less than significant.

4.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

Table 4-18: Land Use and Planning Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.11.1 Baseline Conditions

Pipeline installation for the project along Teapot Dome Avenue and South Indiana Street is partly located within Porterville's city limits and also partly lies within the City's UDB/ SOI boundary in Tulare County. The remaining portions of the Project, including Hope Elementary School, are located within Tulare County. Tulare County is bordered by Fresno County to the north, Kings County to the west, Kern County to the south, and Inyo County to the east. Construction of water mains would take place within existing road ROW along South Indiana Street, West Teapot Dome Avenue, ending at Newcomb Street and West Scranton Avenue, respectively. Land use and zoning designations of and within the vicinity of the Project site are illustrated in Figure 2-4 and Figure 2-5.

4.11.2 Applicable Regulations

In order to utilize the City's water supply, the Local Agency Formation Commission of Tulare County (LAFCo) would consider the approval of an extraterritorial service agreement to between Hope Elementary School and the City, allowing the City to provide water services outside its corporate boundary.

Federal

There are no federal regulations, plans, programs, or guidelines associated with land use that are applicable to the Project.

State

General Plan Law

Government Code Section 65300, et seq., regulates the substantive and topical requirements of general plans. State law requires each city and county to adopt a general plan "for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning." The California Supreme Court has called the general plan the "constitution for future development." The general plan expresses the community's development goals and embodies public policy relative to the distribution of future land uses, both public and private.

Local

Porterville General Plan Policies

• LU-G-1: Promote a sustainable, balanced land use pattern that responds to existing needs and future needs of the City.

• LU-G-3: Promote sustainability in the design and development of public and private development projects.

Tulare County General Plan

• PF-1: To provide a planning framework that promotes the viability of communities, hamlets, and cities while protecting the agricultural, open space, scenic, cultural, historic, and natural resource heritage of Tulare County.

4.11.3 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

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

a & b) No impact. The Project would consolidate Hope Elementary School's water system with the City of Porterville's water system through the construction of water mains and associated infrastructure within existing road ROW. The school's existing well would be abandoned and its existing water tank removed. Construction activities would take place in the jurisdiction of both the County of Tulare and the City of Porterville. All water mains would be buried following completion of construction. There would not be a division of an established community, change to land use designations, or conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation. Because the proposed improvements would be located within the existing road ROW, no changes to land use or zoning are proposed as part of this Project. Additionally, abandonment of the water well and removal of the water tank at the school site would not result in any impacts to land use or zoning. Therefore, there would be no impact.

4.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

Table 4-19: Mineral Resources Impacts

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

4.12.1 Baseline Conditions

The Project site primarily lies south of the City of Porterville within Tulare County and proposes to consolidate Hope Elementary School to the City's water system through the installation of water mains, fire hydrants, and abandonment of an existing well. Portions of the site would be located within the Porterville city limits. The majority of Tulare's County mines are located at the base of the Sierra Nevada foothills along rivers and streams. According to Tulare County General Plan Background Report, the most significant mineral resources within Tulare County are aggregate and include sand, gravel, and crushed stone.[18] Additionally, the background report shows that there are no known mineral resources present on the site nor is the site zoned for mineral resources production (see Figure 2-4 and Figure 2-5).

4.12.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

There are no federal regulations, laws, or policies related to mineral resources which are applicable to the Project.

State

There are no State regulations, laws, or policies related to mineral resources which are applicable to the Project.

Local

Neither the Porterville General Plan or Tulare County General Plan contain specific goals and policies relative to the issue of mineral resources that are applicable to the Project.

[18] (City of Porterville 2008)

4.12.3 Impact Analysis

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

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

a & b) No Impact. The Project proposes to consolidate Hope Elementary School with the City's water system through the installation of water mains and associated infrastructure within existing ROW. The Project site does not contain any known mineral resource nor is it zoned for mineral production, therefore there would be no impact.

4.13 NOISE

Table 4-20: Noise Impacts

Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.13.1 Baseline Conditions

The Project area is situated within a region dominated by agricultural uses. Surrounding land uses include agricultural and rural residential uses. Noise levels around the Project area are therefore associated with farm equipment and associated activities, as well as rural traffic noise. While much of unincorporated Tulare County is composed of discrete small communities and remote rural residences, the primary source of noise generation comes from State highways, several airports, and industrial facilities. Maximum noise levels generated by farm-related tractors typically range from 77 to 85 decibels (dB) at a distance of 50 feet from the tractor, depending on the horsepower of the tractor and the operating conditions. Due to the seasonal nature of the agricultural industry, there are often extended periods of time when little to no noise is generated along the streets in which construction would occur, followed by short-term periods of intensive mechanical equipment usage and corresponding noise generation.

4.13.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

There are no federal noise standards that directly regulate environmental noise related to the construction or operation of the Project. With regard to noise exposure and workers, the OSHA regulations safeguard the hearing of workers exposed to occupational noise.

State

GC Section 65302(f) requires city and county general plans to include a noise element. The purpose of a noise element is to guide future development to enhance future land use compatibility.

Local

The City of Porterville General Plan

The Noise Element included in the 2030 City of Porterville includes noise and land use compatibility standards for various land uses. These are shown in Table 4-21 below.

Table 4-21: Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments[19]

Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure, Ldn or CNEL dB			
	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Residential – Low density single family, duplex, mobile homes	<65 (<45 Interior)	65 to 70	70 to 75	>75 (>45 Interior)
Residential – Multiple family	<65 (<45 Interior)	65 to 70	70 to 75	>75 (>45 Interior)
Schools, libraries, churches, hospitals, nursing homes	<70	60 to 75	70 to 80	>80
Industrial, manufacturing, utilities, agriculture	<75	70 to 80	75 to 85	No levels identified

Interpretation: Normally acceptable – Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.
Conditionally acceptable – New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features are included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.
Normally unacceptable – New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features are included in the design.
Clearly unacceptable – New construction or development should generally not be undertaken. Porterville General Plan Policies:

- N-G-1: Minimize vehicular and stationary noise levels and noise from temporary activities.
- N-G-2: Ensure that new development is compatible with the noise environment.
- N-G-5: Reduce noise intrusion generated by miscellaneous noise sources through conditions of approval to control noise-generating activities.
- N-I-7: Require noise from existing mechanical equipment to be reduced by soundproofing materials and sound-deadening installation.

Tulare County General Plan

- HS-8: To protect Tulare County residents and visitors from the harmful effects of excessive noise while promoting Tulare County economic base.

[19] (City of Porterville 2008)

- HS-8.6: Noise Level Criteria – Tulare County shall ensure noise level criteria applied to land uses other than residential or other noise-sensitive uses are consistent with the recommendations of the California Office of Noise Control (CONC).

- HS-8.13: Noise Analysis – Tulare County shall require a detailed noise impact analysis in areas where current or future exterior noise levels from transportation or stationary sources have the potential to exceed the adopted noise policies of the Health and Safety Element, where there is development of new noise sensitive land uses or the development of potential noise generating land uses near existing sensitive land uses. The noise analysis shall be the responsibility of the project applicant and be prepared by a qualified acoustical engineer (i.e., a Registered Professional Engineer in the State of California, etc.) The analysis shall include recommendations and evidence to establish mitigation that will reduce noise exposure to acceptable levels (such as those referenced in Table 10-1 of the Health and Safety Element).

- HS-8.18: Construction Noise – Tulare County shall seek to limit the potential noise impacts of construction activities by limiting construction activities to the hours of 7 am to 7 pm, Monday through Saturday when construction activities are located near sensitive receptors. No construction shall occur on Sundays or national holidays without a permit from Tulare County to minimize noise impacts associated with development near sensitive receptors.

- HS-8.19: Construction Noise Control – Tulare County shall ensure that construction contractors implement best practices guidelines (i.e., berms, screens, etc.) as appropriate and feasible to reduce construction-related noise-impacts on surrounding land uses.

4.13.3 Impact Analysis

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

Less than Significant Impact. Project operations would be passive with minimal noise generating activity and therefore would not create a substantial increase in ambient noise levels. Maintenance activities would occur infrequently and are not expected to substantially increase ambient noise levels in the area above existing levels. Project construction would involve temporary noise sources and is anticipated to last approximately eight months. Activities involved in construction would generate infrequent maximum noise levels, as indicated in

Table 4-22, ranging from 79 to 91 A-weighted decibels (dBA) at a distance of 50 feet, without feasible noise control (e.g., mufflers) and ranging from 75 to 80 dBA at a distance of 50 feet, with feasible noise control.

Table 4-22: Typical Construction Noise Levels

Type of Equipment	dBA at 50 ft	
	Without Feasible Noise Control	With Feasible Noise Control[1]
Dozer or Tractor	80	75
Excavator	88	80
Scraper	88	80
Front End Loader	79	75
Backhoe	85	75
Grader	85	75
Truck	91	75

[1] Feasible noise control includes the use of intake mufflers, exhaust mufflers and engine shrouds operating in accordance with manufacturers specifications.

All construction-related activities and Project operations would comply with the standards set forth by the City of Porterville General Plan. The City exempts noise generation from construction taking place during daylight hours between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. on weekdays and 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekends. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project is located within an area dominated by agricultural production, which includes the use of off-road equipment and ground-disturbing activities on a regular basis. Conditions created by Project-related construction activities would not vary substantially from the baseline conditions routinely experienced nearby. Impacts would be less than significant.

c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. While the Project is located within the boundaries of the Airport Influence Area of the Tulare County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan, the existing well site as well as the work along West Teapot Dome Avenue and South Indiana Street are outside of the noise exposure contour. [20] Therefore, there would be no impact.

[20] (Tulare County 2012)

4.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Table 4-23: Population and Housing Impacts

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

4.14.1 Baseline Conditions

According to the United States Census Bureau, Porterville is the third largest city in Tulare County, with an estimated population of 62,998 as of 2022.[21] The County of Tulare was estimated to have a population of 477,884 people. Porterville's housing stock is currently made up of predominantly single-family homes, with a homeownership rate of approximately 55 percent, while the County had a homeowner rate of 58.3 percent. The City of Porterville has an average household size of 3.23 which is slightly less than the countywide average of 3.32.[22]

4.14.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

There are no federal regulations, plans, programs, and guidelines associated with population or housing that are applicable to the Project.

State

There are no State regulations, laws, or policies related to population and housing applicable to this Project.

Local

There are no local regulations, plans, programs, and guidelines associated with population or housing that are applicable to the Project.

[21] (United States Census Bureau 2023)
[22] Ibid.

4.14.3 Impact Analysis

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would connect the Hope Elementary School to the City of Porterville water system. Upgrading the existing water systems would provide more reliable and safe drinking water for the school. The Project would not directly induce population growth because it does not propose any new housing or land use changes. Any future projects along the Project alignment which could induce population would require separate environmental analysis. Any impacts would be less than significant.

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

No Impact. No housing would be removed, and no new housing is proposed as part of the Project. There would be no impact as a result of Project implementation.

4.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

Table 4-24: Public Services

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

4.15.1 Baseline Conditions

Fire Protection: The nearest fire station is Porterville Fire Station 73, which is approximately 2.5 miles northeast of Hope Elementary School.

Police Protection: The nearest police station, Porterville Police Department, is located approximately four miles north of the existing well site.

School: The nearest school is Hope Elementary School, located on the same site as the existing water well which is being replaced.

Parks: The nearest park to the Project area is Fallen Heroes Park located approximately three miles northeast.

Landfill: The Teapot Dome Landfill approximately 2.3 miles west of Hope Elementary School and Woodville Landfill approximately 19 miles northwest serve the Porterville area.[23]

[23] (Tulare County 2024)

4.15.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

National Fire Protection Association

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is an international nonprofit organization that provides consensus codes and standards, research, training, and education on fire prevention and public safety. The NFPA develops, publishes, and disseminates more than 300 such codes and standards intended to minimize the possibility and effects of fire and other risks. The NFPA publishes the NFPA 1, Uniform Fire Code, which provides requirements to establish a reasonable level of fire safety and property protection in new and existing buildings.

State

California Fire Code and Building Code

The 2022 California Fire Code (Title 24, Part 9 of the California Code of Regulations) establishes regulations to safeguard against hazards of fire, explosion, or dangerous conditions in new and existing buildings, structures, and premises. The Fire Code also establishes requirements intended to provide safety and assistance to fire fighters and emergency responders during emergency operations. The provision of the Fire Code includes regulations regarding fire-resistance rated construction, fire protection systems such as alarm and sprinkler systems, fire service features such as fire apparatus access roads, fire safety during construction and demolition, and wildland urban interface areas.

Local

Porterville General Plan Policies

- LU-G-5: Promote sustainability in the design and development of public and private development projects.
- OSC-G-3: Design public open spaces as sustainable systems.
- OSC-G-10: Reduce and conserve energy use in existing and new commercial, industrial, and public structures.
- OSC-I-7: Use native vegetation, drought tolerant plants, recycled water irrigation, other water-saving devices drainage swales and water percolation systems, and recycled building materials in public open spaces for ease of maintenance and environmental sustainability.
- OSC-I-8: Provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities through improvements to open space and parks, construction of facilities, and sponsoring of programs that stimulate active resident participation.
- OSC-I-10: Work with property owners, law enforcement officials, and the public to protect open space resources. These efforts will include but are not limited to: Soliciting volunteers to remove invasive vegetation; Removing abandoned items and trash; and Ensuring no illegal encampments occur on open space areas.
- PHS-G-3: Protect Porterville's residents and businesses from potential fire hazards.
- PHS-I-13: Maintain automatic and/or mutual aid agreements with surrounding jurisdictions for fire protection.

- PHS-I-14: Enforce weed abatement programs and building and fire code requirements to assure adequate fire protection.
- PHS-I-15: Develop and expand existing public fire safety and emergency life support education programs in order to promote public awareness of fire hazards and emergency procedures.
- PHS-G-5: Provide a comprehensive program of safety services including police, fire and medical response in all parts of Porterville.
- PHS-I-24: Provide cost effective fire, police, and emergency medical service within the City to minimize potential injury, loss and/or destruction to persons or property.
- PHS-I-28: Ensure that new development incorporates safety concerns into the site, circulation, building design and landscaping plans.
- PHS-I-32: Work with owners and operators of critical use facilities to ensure that they can provide alternate sources of electricity, water, and sewerage in the event that regular utilities are interrupted in a disaster.

Tulare County General Plan

- PF-7: To provide adequate fire and law enforcement facilities and services to ensure the safety of Tulare County residents and the protection of Tulare County property.
- PF-8: To ensure adequate schools and community facilities are provided and are conveniently located for Tulare County residents.

4.15.3 Impact Analysis

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:

i. Fire Protection:

ii. Police Protection:

iii. Schools:

iv. Parks:

v. Other public facilities:

a i-v) Less than Significant Impact. The Project would not require the addition or alteration of any public services from fire, law enforcement, schools, and parks. The Project would extend water system improvements to an existing school. While the new improvements would create the potential for new development along the Project alignment to tie into the City's water system, any potential for future development along the alignment would require separate environmental analysis at the time that such development is proposed. There would be no impact.

4.16 RECREATION

Table 4-25: Recreation Impacts

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

4.16.1 Baseline Conditions

Tulare County contains several County, State, and federal parks. There are a total of 13 County parks and recreational facilities that are owned and operated by Tulare County. The City of Porterville owns and operates nine parks. and the City also provides several other recreational facilities.

Porterville Sports Complex is located 2.3 miles west of the school with the nearest Tulare County park, Bartlett Park, approximately 8.7 east miles from the school site.

4.16.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

There are no federal regulations, plans, programs, or guidelines associated with recreation that are applicable to the Project.

State

There are no State regulations, plans, programs, or guidelines associated with recreation that are applicable to the Project.

Local

There are no local regulations, plans, programs, or guidelines associated with recreation that are applicable to the Project.

4.16.3 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

a-b) No Impact. The Project would connect Hope Elementary School to the City's water supply through constructing water mains, along with other associated improvements. The Project would not increase the use of parks and recreational facilities or cause physical deterioration of parks and recreational facilities. All water mains would be buried within the existing road ROW. The Project would not construct parks and recreational facilities or require the expansion of existing parks and recreational facilities that could have an adverse physical effect on the environment. Following construction, site conditions would be returned to preconstruction conditions, therefore there would be no impact.

4.17 TRANSPORTATION

Table 4-26: Transportation Impacts

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

4.17.1 Baseline Conditions

The existing site that would be connected to the City of Porterville water service is approximately 0.5 miles west of SR 65 and approximately two miles south of SR 190. The water main and service connections improvements would include 6,550 LF of water main along South Indiana Steet to the point of connection at West Scranton Avenue and the installation of approximately 5,300 LF of water main along West Teapot Dome Avenue to the point of connection at Newcomb Street.

4.17.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

Clean Air Act

The CAA requires that the Regional Transportation Plan integrate transportation and air quality during the planning process. The 1990 CCAA Amendment requires the following stipulations in order to receive federal funding:

- Establish a permitting program that achieves no net increase in stationary source emissions;
- Develop a strategy to reduce vehicle trips, use and miles traveled;
- Increase average vehicle ridership to 1.5 persons per vehicle during commute hours;
- Establish Best Available Retrofit Control Technology requirements for all permitted sources; and
- Development of indirect and area source programs.

State

California Department of Transportation

Caltrans manages the State highway system and ramp interchange intersections. The State agency is also responsible for highway, bridge, and rail transportation planning, construction, and maintenance. SR 65 is under the jurisdiction of Caltrans.

Local

There are no local regulations, plans, programs, or guidelines associated with transportation systems that are applicable to the Project.

4.17.3 Impact Analysis

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would primarily be located within the existing ROW of West Teapot Dome Avenue and South Indiana Street. The Project would also result in horizontal drilling under SR 65 along the Project alignment within Newcomb Street. Work completed within the ROW would be done incorporating traffic control measures typical of such projects. Any construction traffic would be temporary and occur over approximately eight months.

Following construction there is expected to be no change in the operating conditions of the roadways from what currently exists, and the Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of circulation systems. The Project is required to be reviewed and approved by the City/County's engineering department. Any impact to local roadways would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. There is no population growth associated with the Project, nor would implementation of the Project result in an increase of staff or drivers utilizing roadways in the area. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not increase any vehicle miles traveled in the area or interfere with existing level of service standards during Project operations. Construction-related vehicle miles traveled would be less than significant in nature.

c) Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No Impact. There would be no new roadways as a result of the proposed Project, therefore, there would be no increase of hazards due to a geometric design feature. As such, no impacts would occur as a result of Project implementation.

d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would require work in the public road ROW, and thus a Road Encroachment Permit would required to be obtained by the Tulare County Public Works Department. Permit conditions would require that adequate noticing and signage be placed in and near the Project

area. Compliance with Tulare County Public Works requirements would limit any impacts to emergency access. Impacts would be less than significant.

4.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Table 4-27: Tribal Cultural Resources Impacts

Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in the local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☒	☐	☐
ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

4.18.1 Baseline Conditions

Penutian-speaking Yokuts tribal groups occupied the southern San Joaquin Valley region and much of the nearby Sierra Nevada. For a variety of historical reasons, existing research information emphasizes the central Yokuts tribes who occupied both the valley and particularly the foothills of the Sierra. The northernmost tribes suffered from the influx of Euro-Americans during the Gold Rush and their populations were in substantial decline by the time ethnographic studies began in the early twentieth century. In contrast, the southernmost tribes were partially removed by the Spanish to missions and eventually absorbed into multi-tribal communities on the Sebastian Indian Reservation (on Tejon Ranch), and later the Tule River Reservation and Santa Rosa Rancheria to the north. The result is an unfortunate scarcity of ethnographic detail on southern Valley tribes, especially in relation to the rich information collected from the central foothills tribes where native speakers of the Yokuts dialects are still found. Regardless, the general details of indigenous life-ways were similar across the broad expanse of Yokuts territory, particularly in terms of environmentally influenced subsistence and adaptation and with regard to religion and belief, which were similar everywhere.

A Phase I Cultural Resources Survey was conducted for the Project, located south of Porterville, Tulare County, California. A records search of available site files and maps for the Project area and a one-mile buffer around it was conducted at the SSJVIC and a search of the NAHC Sacred Lands File was completed. No Native American sacred sites or cultural resources had been identified within or immediately adjacent to the Project study area, and no archaeological sites had been previously recorded within the study area.

Records Search

An archival records search was conducted at the California State University, Bakersfield, Southern SSJVIC, by SSJVIC staff members on February 5, 2024, to determine: (i) if prehistoric or historical cultural resources had previously been recorded within the Project area; (ii) if the Project area had been systematically surveyed by archaeologists prior to the initiation of this field study; and/or (iii) whether the region of the Project was known to contain archaeological sites and to thereby be archaeologically sensitive. (Appendix C). According to the records search results, one previous study has been conducted in the Project area, and no resources of any kind are known to exist within it.

Native American Outreach

A Sacred Lands File was requested from NAHC in Sacramento in January 2024. The NAHC was provided with a brief description of the Project and a map showing its location with a request that the NAHC perform a search of the Sacred Lands File to determine if any Native American resources have been recorded in the immediate Project area. The NAHC identifies, catalogs, and protects Native American cultural resources -- ancient places of special religious or social significance to Native Americans and known ancient graves and cemeteries of Native Americans on private and public lands in California. The NAHC is also charged with ensuring California Native American tribes' accessibility to ancient Native American cultural resources on public lands, overseeing the treatment and disposition of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains and burial items, and administering the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, among many other powers and duties. NAHC provide a current list of Native American Tribal contacts to notify of the project. Outreach letters were sent to the tribes provided on the NAHC contact list on February 13, 2024, with follow up emails sent on February 21, 2024, no responses were received. All Tribal correspondence is included within Appendix C.

The City of Porterville has received formal requests for notification from the Tule River Indian Tribe and the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe pursuant to AB 52.

4.18.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

There are no federal laws, regulations, or policies related to tribal cultural resources applicable to this Project.

State

Assembly Bill 52

AB 52, which was approved in September 2014, and which went into effect on July 1, 2015, requires that lead agencies consult with any California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a project, if so requested in writing by the tribe. The bill, chaptered in PRC Section 21084.2, also specifies that a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource (TCR) is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. TCRs are further defined under PRC Section 21074 as follows:

- A cultural landscape that meets the criteria of subdivision (a) is a TCR to the extent that the landscape is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape; and
- A historical resource described in Section 21084.1, a unique archaeological resource as defined in subdivision (g) of Section 21083.2, or a "nonunique archaeological resource" as defined in subdivision (h) of Section 21083.2 may also be a tribal cultural resource if it conforms with the criteria of subdivision (a).

Mitigation measures for TCRs must be developed in consultation with the affected California Native American tribe pursuant to newly chaptered Section 21080.3.2 of the PRC, or according to Section 21084.3. Section 21084.3 of the PRC identifies mitigation measures that include avoidance and preservation of TCRs and treating TCRs with culturally appropriate dignity, taking into account the tribal cultural values and meaning of the resource.

Local

There are no local laws, regulations, or policies related to tribal cultural resources applicable to the Project.

4.18.3 Impact Assessment

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

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

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

a i-ii) Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. A record search of site files and maps was conducted on February 5, 2024, at the SSJVIC, California State University, Bakersfield. These investigations determined there has been one previous cultural resource study completed within the Project area. According to the information provided, there are no recorded resources within the Project area.

A Sacred Lands File request was also completed by the NAHC on February 5, 2024. No sacred sites or TCRs were known in the Project area or vicinity. Outreach letters were sent to the tribal organizations (listed below) on the contact list that was provided by the NAHC.

1. Tribal Member Monitor Brandy Kendricks of Kern Valley Indian Community;
2. Chairperson Robert Robinson of Kern Valley Indian Community;
3. Chairperson Robert Gomez of the Tubatulabals of Kern Valley;
4. Chairperson Neil Peyron of the Tule River Indian Tribe;
5. Environmental Department Kerri Vera of the Tule River Indian Tribe;
6. Tribal Archaeologist Joey Garfield of the Tule River Indian Tribe; and
7. Chairperson Kenneth Woodrow of the Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band

The City of Porterville sent AB 52 letters to the Tule River Indian Tribe and the Santa Rosa Rancheria Yokut Tribe on March 13, 2024. No response or request for consultation was received.

It is concluded, barring evidence to the contrary, that there is little or no chance the Project would cause a substantial adverse change to the significance of a TCR as defined. Nonetheless, Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-2, described above in Section 4.5, shall be implemented in the event cultural materials or human remains are unearthed during excavation or installation of the new pipelines and associated infrastructure. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporation.

4.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Table 4-28: Utilities and Service Systems Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	X	☐
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	X	☐
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	X

4.19.1 Baseline Conditions

Wastewater Services / Facilities: The Project site and the surrounding area is outside of the city limits and is consequently on septic tanks for wastewater treatment needs.

Water: Currently, Hope Elementary School receives potable water from an existing well that has been found to have nitrate levels higher than the regulatory maximum contaminant level. Upon Project completion, the City of Porterville would be responsible for providing potable water through the proposed water main pipeline alignment.

Solid Waste: The Teapot Dome Landfill approximately 2.3 miles west of the Project area and Woodville Landfill approximately 19 miles northwest serve the Porterville area.[24]

[24] (Tulare County 2024)

4.19.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

Clean Water Act-Section 404

The CWA (33 USC 1251-1376), as amended by the Water Quality Act of 1987, is the major federal legislation governing water quality. The objective of the CWA is "to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's water." Important applicable sections of the Act are as follows:

- Sections 303 and 304 provide for water quality standards, criteria, and guidelines.
- Section 401 requires an applicant for any federal permit that proposes an activity which may result in a discharge to "waters of the United States" to obtain certification from the state that the discharge will comply with other provisions of the Act. The RWQCB provides certification.
- Section 402 establishes the NPDES, a permitting system for the discharge of any pollutant (except for dredge or fill material) into waters of the United States. This permit program is administered by the RWQCB.
- Section 404 establishes a permit program for the discharge of dredge or fill material into waters of the United States. The USACE administers this permit program.

Wetlands and other WOTUS. are subject to the jurisdiction of the USACE and USEPA under Section 404 of the CWA. Wet areas that are not regulated by this Act do not have a hydrologic link to other waters of the U.S., either through surface or subsurface flow. The USACE has the authority to issue a permit for any discharge, fill, or dredge of wetlands on a case-by-case basis, or by a general permit. General permits are handled through a NWP process. These permits allow specific activities that generally create minimal environmental effects. Projects that qualify under the NWP program must fulfill several general and specific conditions under each applicable NWP. If a proposed project cannot meet the conditions of each applicable, an individual permit would likely be required from the USACE.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

The RCRA as amended by the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984, is the primary federal law for the regulation of solid waste in the United States. The USEPA has primary responsibility for implementing RCRA, but individual states are encouraged to seek authorization to implement some or all RCRA provisions. California received the authority to implement the RCRA program in August 1992

State

Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery

The Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), a department of CalEPA, administers and provides oversight for all of California's State-managed non-hazardous waste handling and recycling programs.

Assembly Bill 341

AB 341 (Chapter 476, Statutes of 2011) increased the statewide solid waste diversion goal to 75 percent by 2020. The law also mandates recycling for commercial and multifamily residential land uses as well as schools and school districts. Section 5.408 of the 2013 California Green Building Standards Code (Title 24, California Code of Regulations, Part 11) requires that at least 50 percent of the nonhazardous construction and demolition waste from nonresidential construction operations be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (known as the Porter-Cologne Act), passed in 1969, dovetails with the CWA (see discussion of the CWA above). It established the SWRCB and divided the state into nine regions, each overseen by an RWQCB. The SWRCB is the primary state agency responsible for protecting the quality of the state's surface water and groundwater supplies. However, much of the SWRCB's daily implementation authority is delegated to the nine RWQCBs, which are responsible for implementing CWA §§ 401, 402, and 303(d). In general, the SWRCB manages water rights and regulates statewide water quality, whereas the RWQCBs focus on water quality within their respective regions. The Porter-Cologne Act requires the RWQCBs to develop water quality control plans (also known as Basin Plans) that designate beneficial uses of California's major surface water bodies and groundwater basins and establish specific narrative and numerical water quality objectives for those waters. Beneficial uses represent the services and qualities of a water body - i.e., the reasons why the water body is considered valuable. Water quality objectives reflect the standards necessary to protect and support those beneficial uses. Basin Plan standards are primarily implemented by regulating waste discharges so that water quality objectives are met. Under the Porter-Cologne Act, Basin Plans must be updated every 3 years. Public water systems, such as the Porterville water system, are subject to the Division of Drinking Water of the SWRCB.

Local

Porterville General Plan Policies

- PU-G-1: Ensure an adequate supply of fresh water to serve existing and future needs of the City.
- PU-G-2: Promote the conservation of water within Porterville.
- PU-G-3: Ensure wastewater collection and treatment services and reclamation area acreages are available to meet existing and future needs of the City.
- PU-G-4: Provide a comprehensive storm drainage system to protect life and property.
- PU-G-5: Achieve and maintain the State's solid waste management goals.
- PU-G-6: Ensure the provision of adequate utilities and communication systems to serve existing and future residents and businesses.

Tulare County General Plan

- PFS-1: To establish and maintain acceptable levels of service, minimize costs, and provide criteria for determining the location, capacity, and timing of existing and future public facilities and services.
    - PFS-1.2: Maintain Existing Levels of Services – Tulare County shall ensure new growth and developments do not create significant adverse impacts on existing Tulare County-owned and operated facilities.
- PFS-2: To ensure the provision of a reliable, safe, and adequate supply of high quality water as well as effective distribution and storage facilities to meet the existing and future needs in Tulare County.
- PFS-3: To ensure the provision of adequate wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal within Tulare County.
- PFS-4: To ensure the management of stormwater in a safe and environmentally sensitive manner through the provision of adequate storm drainage facilities that protect people and property.

- PFS-4.6: Agency Coordination – Tulare County shall work with the Army Corps of Engineers and other appropriate agencies to develop stormwater detention/retention facilities and recharge facilities that enhance flood protection and improve groundwater recharge.
- PFS-4.7: NPDES Enforcement – Tulare County shall continue to monitor and enforce provisions to control non-point source water pollution contained in the USEPA National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program.

4.19.3 Impact Analysis

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project entails construction of approximately 6,550 LF of water main along South Indiana Street to the point of connection at West Scranton Avenue and the installation of approximately 5,300 LF of water main along West Teapot Dome Avenue to the point of connection at Newcomb Street. Additionally, 1-inch service connections with meters would be installed along South Indiana Street and West Teapot Dome Avenue for future connection to residents. Fire hydrants would be installed at maximum intervals of 500 feet along the new pipeline alignment. The existing water system would be abandoned in place. The Project also includes abandonment/destruction of any existing wells in accordance with Tulare County standards. There would not be an increase in the amount of water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas or telecommunication facilities as only water service connections are being constructed. The impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Through the Project, Hope Elementary School would connect to the City's water supply. Historically the City has relied solely on groundwater for supplying municipal water service. The City currently operates 37 active wells which consist of over 275.7 miles of pipeline maintained and operated by the City. According to the City's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), Porterville had a gallons per capita per day (gpcd) target of 179 gpcd in 2020. 179 gpcd is where the City's water demand peaked in 2013. Since then, conservation efforts have helped reduce the overall City gpcd demand to 130 gpcd in 2015 and 133 gpcd in 2020, meeting the aforementioned target of 179 gpcd for 2020. The 2020 UWMP states that the targeted 179 gpcd for 2020 was a conservative target and while the City fell well below that demand, increasing development within the City would increase water demands, shrinking the gap between the targeted demand and actual demand. Despite this, the City has ample water to serve the Project currently and into the future.[25] Hope Elementary School is located within the City's planning area and would have been considered in the City's UWMP. Therefore, any impacts would be less than significant.

[25] (City of Porterville 2022)

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

No Impact. The Project is a water system improvement project, lacking construction of any new or modified buildings requiring wastewater facilities. Therefore, the Project would not result in the need for new wastewater facilities and would not have an adverse effect on wastewater treatment requirements. There would be no impact.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Project would not generate any additional solid waste from operation. Proposed Project construction would generate minimal amounts of solid waste. Any construction debris that is not recycled would be received at the Woodville Landfill. Any impacts would be less than significant.

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

No Impact. Tulare County of Tulare's Public Works Department provides commercial, residential, and industrial refuse collection to all locations within the County of Tulare. Tulare County currently serves the Project area and would continue to do so. The Project would adhere to all federal, State, and local regulations governing solid waste. There would be no impact.

4.20 WILDFIRE

Table 4-29: Wildfire Impacts

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

4.20.1 Baseline Conditions

The Project site primarily lies south of the City of Porterville within Tulare County and proposes to consolidate Hope Elementary School's existing water system to the City's water system through the installation of water mains, fire hydrants, and abandonment of an existing well. Portions of the site are located within Porterville. The Project site is relatively flat, consisting primarily of existing road ROW. All installed watermains would be buried following construction and would be placed within the existing road ROW. Installation of fire hydrants would occur every 500 feet where there are structures present. The Tulare County General Plan denotes that the Project site is not an area that is considered a high or very high fire threat.[26]

The closest fire station, Porterville Fire Station 73, is located 2.5 miles north of the Project site. Tulare County Fire Station 19 is located 5.6 miles north of the Project site.

[26] (City of Porterville 2008)

4.20.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

Federal Emergency Management Agency

FEMA is an agency within the United States Department of Homeland Security, created via Executive Order 12127 on April 1, 1979 by President Carter. A second Executive Order, 12148, signed on July 20, 1979, accorded the agency with the missions of emergency management and civil defense. In order to receive assistance through FEMA in the event of a disaster, a state's governor must declare a state of emergency and formally request a federal government response.

Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires a state mitigation plan as a condition of disaster assistance. There are two different levels of State disaster plans: "Standard;" and "Enhanced." States that develop an approved Enhanced State Plan, which includes California, can increase the amount of funding available through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The act has also established new requirements for local hazard mitigation plans.

National Fire Plan

The National Fire Plan was developed under Executive Order 11246 in August 2000, following a landmark wildland fire season. Its intent is to actively respond to severe wildland fires and their impacts to communities while ensuring sufficient firefighting capacity for the future. The plan addresses firefighting, rehabilitation, hazardous fuels reduction, community assistance, and accountability.

State

California Fire Plan

The California Fire Plan is the State's road map for reducing the risk of wildfire. In compliance with the California Fire Plan, individual California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) units are required to develop Fire Management Plans for their areas of responsibility. These documents assess the fire situation within each of CAL FIRE's 21 units and six contract counties. The plans include stakeholder contributions and priorities and identify strategic areas for pre-fire planning and fuel treatment at the local level. The plans are required to be updated annually.

Wildland-Urban Interface Building Standards

Title 24, Part 9 of the 2022 California Fire Code establishes standards and requirements for construction in relation to the prevention of wildfire. These codes include provisions for ignition-resistant construction standards in the wildland urban interface.

California Office of Emergency Service

Through the California Emergency Services Act of 1970, the California Office of Emergency Service provides the basis for local emergency preparedness. The Office of Emergency Services is responsible for preparing the California State Emergency Plan and for coordinating and supporting emergency services conducted by local governments. The responsibility for immediate response to an emergency, such as fires, landslides, earthquakes or riots, rests with local government agencies and segments of the private sector, with support services provided by other jurisdictions and/or State and federal agencies. In accordance with their normal

operating procedures, the initial response to an emergency will be made by local Fire, Law Enforcement, Medical, or Maintenance (Public Works) districts or departments.

California Fire and Building Code

The 2022 Fire and Building Code establishes the minimum requirements consistent with nationally recognized good practices to safeguard the public health, safety, and general welfare for the hazards of fire, explosion or dangerous conditions in new and existing buildings, structures and premises, and to provide safety and assistance to firefighters and emergency responders during emergency operations. The provisions of this code apply to the construction, alteration, movement enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal and demolition of every building or structure or any appurtenances connected or attached to such building structures throughout the State of California.

State

There are no local regulations, plans, programs, or guidelines associated with wildfire that are applicable to the Project.

4.20.3 Impact Analysis

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

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

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

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

a-d) No impact. According to CAL FIRE, the Project would not be located in or near a State Responsibility Area (SRA) or lands classified as a very high fire hazard severity zone.[27] [28] The nearest SRA is 3.3 miles east of the Project site with the nearest Very High Fire zone being 11.4 miles east of the site. Construction would consist of connecting Hope Elementary School to the City's water system through the installation of water mains and associated infrastructure, including the installation of fire hydrants along the Project alignment. There would be no impacts.

[27] (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2024)
[28] (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2024)

4.21 CEQA MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Table 4-30: CEQA Mandatory Findings of Significance

Does the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) 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) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.21.1 Statement of Findings

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The analysis conducted in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration results in a determination that the Project, with incorporation of mitigation measures, would have a less than significant effect on the environment. The potential for impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, and tribal cultural resources from the implementation of the Project would be less than significant with the incorporation of the mitigation measures identified in this analysis. Accordingly, the Project would involve no potential for significant impacts through the degradation of the quality of the environment, the reduction in the habitat or population of fish or wildlife, including endangered plants or animals, the elimination of a plant or animal community or example of a major period of California history or prehistory.

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

Less than Significant Impact. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(i) states that a Lead Agency shall consider whether the cumulative impact of a project is significant and whether the effects of the project are cumulatively considerable. The assessment of the significance of the cumulative effects of a project must, therefore, be conducted in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects. The Project involves the construction of approximately 2.25 miles of new water main, along with associated infrastructure, the effects of which would not result in significant cumulatively considerable impacts. Implementation of the Project would not result in significant cumulative impacts and all potential impacts would be less than significant through the implementation of basic regulatory requirements and Project design.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The analysis conducted in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration results in a determination that the Project, would have a less than significant effect on the environment. All potential impacts to human beings have found to be unsubstantial and would be considered less than significant.

CHAPTER 5 MITIGATION, MONITORING, AND REPORTING PROGRAM

This MMRP has been formulated based upon the findings of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the Project. The MMRP lists mitigation measures recommended in the IS/MND for the Project and identifies monitoring and reporting requirements.

Table 5-1: Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program presents the mitigation measures identified for the Project. Each mitigation measure is numbered with a symbol indicating the topical section to which it pertains, a hyphen, and the impact number. For example, AIR-2 would be the second mitigation measure identified in the Air Quality analysis of the IS/MND.

The first column of Table 5-1: Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program identifies the mitigation measure. The second column, entitled "When Monitoring is to Occur," identifies the time the mitigation measure should be initiated. The third column, "Frequency of Monitoring," identifies the frequency of the monitoring of the mitigation measure. The fourth column, "Agency Responsible for Monitoring," names the party ultimately responsible for ensuring that the mitigation measure is implemented. The last columns will be used by the Lead and Responsible Agencies to ensure that individual mitigation measures have been complied with and monitored.

Table 5-1: Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program

Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program						
Item	Mitigation Measure	When Monitoring is to Occur	Frequency of Monitoring	Agency Responsible for Monitoring	Method to Verify Compliance	Verification of Compliance
Biological Resources						
BIO-1 A)	**(Avoidance)** The Project's construction activities will occur, if feasible, between September 1 and January 31 (outside of the nesting bird season) to avoid impacts to nesting birds.	Prior to the start of construction activities	Daily	Hope Elementary School District	Contractor's construction schedule	
BIO-1 B)	**(Pre-construction Surveys)** If activities must occur within the nesting bird season (February 1 to August 31), a qualified biologist will conduct a pre-construction survey for active migratory bird nests no more than seven days prior to the start of the construction within the project site and surrounding lands up to 100 feet from the project site and for active raptor nests within the project site and all accessible lands up	Prior to the start of construction activities	7 days prior to the start of construction	Hope Elementary School District	Qualified Biologist report of pre-construction survey	
BIO-1 C)	**(Avoidance Buffers)** On discovery of any active nests near work areas, the biologist will determine appropriate construction setback distances (avoidance buffers) based on applicable CDFW and/or USFWS guidelines, the biology of the species, and work and site conditions. If necessary, avoidance buffers will be identified with flagging, fencing, or other easily visible means, and will be maintained until the biologist has determined that the nestlings have fledged.	Prior to the start of construction activities	7 days prior to the start of construction	Hope Elementary School District	Qualified Biologist report of pre-construction survey	
Cultural Resources						
CUL-1	**(Archaeological Resources)** In the event that archaeological resources are encountered at any time during construction, development or any ground-moving activities within the entire Project area, all work in the vicinity of the find shall halt until a qualified archaeologist can assess the discovery. The Project applicant shall implement all recommendations of the archaeologist necessary to avoid or reduce to a less than significant level potential impacts to cultural resource. Appropriate	During construction activities	Daily	Hope Elementary School District	Hope Elementary School District with assistance of a qualified archaeologist	

Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program						
Item	Mitigation Measure	When Monitoring is to Occur	Frequency of Monitoring	Agency Responsible for Monitoring	Method to Verify Compliance	Verification of Compliance
	actions could include a Data Recovery Plan or preservation in place.					
CUL-2	**(Human Remains)** If human remains are uncovered, or in any other case when human remains are discovered during construction, the Tulare County Coroner is to be notified to arrange proper treatment and disposition. If the remains are identified—on the basis of archaeological context, age, cultural associations, or biological traits—as those of a Native American origin, California Health and Safety Code 7050.5 and Public Resource Code 5097.98 require that the coroner notify the NAHC within 24 hours of discovery. The NAHC will then identify the Most Likely Descendent (MLD) who will determine the manner in which the remains are treated.	During construction activities	Daily	Hope Elementary School District	Hope Elementary School District with assistance of County Coroner	
Geology and Soils						
GEO-1	**(Paleontological Resources)** Should a unique paleontological resource, site, or unique geological feature be unearthed during any stage of Project activities, work in the area of discovery will cease until the area is evaluated by a qualified geologist and/or paleontologist. If discoveries are uncovered, the Project proponent will abide by recommendations of the geologist or paleontologist.	During construction activities	Daily	Hope Elementary School District	Hope Elementary School District with assistance of a qualified geologist and/or paleontologist	

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Appendix A: CalEEMod Output Files

Hope Elementary Water System Project Detailed Report

Table of Contents

1. Basic Project Information

1.1. Basic Project Information

1.2. Land Use Types

1.3. User-Selected Emission Reduction Measures by Emissions Sector

2. Emissions Summary

2.1. Construction Emissions Compared Against Thresholds

2.2. Construction Emissions by Year, Unmitigated

3. Construction Emissions Details

3.1. Linear, Grading & Excavation (2026) - Unmitigated

3.3. Linear, Grading & Excavation (2027) - Unmitigated

3.5. Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade (2027) - Unmitigated

3.7. Linear, Paving (2027) - Unmitigated

4. Operations Emissions Details

4.10. Soil Carbon Accumulation By Vegetation Type

4.10.1. Soil Carbon Accumulation By Vegetation Type - Unmitigated

4.10.2. Above and Belowground Carbon Accumulation by Land Use Type - Unmitigated

4.10.3. Avoided and Sequestered Emissions by Species - Unmitigated

5. Activity Data

5.1. Construction Schedule

5.2. Off-Road Equipment

5.2.1. Unmitigated

5.3. Construction Vehicles

5.3.1. Unmitigated

5.4. Vehicles

5.4.1. Construction Vehicle Control Strategies

5.5. Architectural Coatings

5.6. Dust Mitigation

5.6.1. Construction Earthmoving Activities

5.6.2. Construction Earthmoving Control Strategies

5.7. Construction Paving

5.8. Construction Electricity Consumption and Emissions Factors

5.18. Vegetation

5.18.1. Land Use Change

5.18.1.1. Unmitigated

5.18.1. Biomass Cover Type

5.18.1.1. Unmitigated

5.18.2. Sequestration

5.18.2.1. Unmitigated

6. Climate Risk Detailed Report

6.1. Climate Risk Summary

6.2. Initial Climate Risk Scores

6.3. Adjusted Climate Risk Scores

6.4. Climate Risk Reduction Measures

7. Health and Equity Details

7.1. CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Scores

7.2. Healthy Places Index Scores

7.3. Overall Health & Equity Scores

7.4. Health & Equity Measures

7.5. Evaluation Scorecard

7.6. Health & Equity Custom Measures

8. User Changes to Default Data

1. Basic Project Information

1.1. Basic Project Information

Data Field	Value
Project Name	Hope Elementary Water System Project
Construction Start Date	9/1/2026
Lead Agency	—
Land Use Scale	Project/site
Analysis Level for Defaults	County
Windspeed (m/s)	2.10
Precipitation (days)	23.0
Location	36.02173281413761, -119.03213120166615
County	Tulare
City	Unincorporated
Air District	San Joaquin Valley APCD
Air Basin	San Joaquin Valley
TAZ	2736
EDFZ	9
Electric Utility	Southern California Edison
Gas Utility	Southern California Gas
App Version	2022.1.1.21

1.2. Land Use Types

Land Use Subtype	Size	Unit	Lot Acreage	Building Area (sq ft)	Landscape Area (sq ft)	Special Landscape Area (sq ft)	Population	Description
User Defined Linear	2.24	Mile	1.00	0.00	0.00	—	—	—

1.3. User-Selected Emission Reduction Measures by Emissions Sector

No measures selected

2. Emissions Summary

2.1. Construction Emissions Compared Against Thresholds

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

Un/Mit.	TOG	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10E	PM10D	PM10T	PM2.5E	PM2.5D	PM2.5T	BCO2	NBCO2	CO2T	CH4	N2O	R	CO2e
Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unmit.	0.85	0.71	4.87	5.82	0.02	0.15	0.00	0.15	0.14	0.00	0.14	—	1,719	1,719	0.07	0.01	0.00	1,725
Daily, Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unmit.	0.85	0.71	4.87	5.82	0.02	0.15	0.00	0.15	0.14	0.00	0.14	—	1,719	1,719	0.07	0.01	0.00	1,725
Average Daily (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unmit.	0.16	0.13	0.93	1.06	< 0.005	0.04	0.00	0.04	0.03	0.00	0.03	—	313	313	0.01	< 0.005	0.00	314
Annual (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unmit.	0.03	0.02	0.17	0.19	< 0.005	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	—	51.8	51.8	< 0.005	< 0.005	0.00	52.0

2.2. Construction Emissions by Year, Unmitigated

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

Year	TOG	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10E	PM10D	PM10T	PM2.5E	PM2.5D	PM2.5T	BCO2	NBCO2	CO2T	CH4	N2O	R	CO2e
Daily - Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

2026	0.85	0.71	4.87	5.82	0.02	0.15	0.00	0.15	0.14	0.00	0.14	—	1,719	1,719	0.07	0.01	0.00	1,725
2027	0.43	0.37	3.28	3.06	0.01	0.13	0.00	0.13	0.12	0.00	0.12	—	990	990	0.04	0.01	0.00	993
Daily - Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2026	0.85	0.71	4.87	5.82	0.02	0.15	0.00	0.15	0.14	0.00	0.14	—	1,719	1,719	0.07	0.01	0.00	1,725
2027	0.84	0.70	4.70	5.81	0.02	0.14	0.00	0.14	0.13	0.00	0.13	—	1,719	1,719	0.07	0.01	0.00	1,725
Average Daily	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2026	0.16	0.13	0.89	1.06	< 0.005	0.03	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.03	—	313	313	0.01	< 0.005	0.00	314
2027	0.13	0.11	0.93	1.01	< 0.005	0.04	0.00	0.04	0.03	0.00	0.03	—	289	289	0.01	< 0.005	0.00	290
Annual	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2026	0.03	0.02	0.16	0.19	< 0.005	< 0.005	0.00	< 0.005	< 0.005	0.00	< 0.005	—	51.8	51.8	< 0.005	< 0.005	0.00	52.0
2027	0.02	0.02	0.17	0.18	< 0.005	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	—	47.9	47.9	< 0.005	< 0.005	0.00	48.1

3. Construction Emissions Details

3.1. Linear, Grading & Excavation (2026) - Unmitigated

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

Location	TOG	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10E	PM10D	PM10T	PM2.5E	PM2.5D	PM2.5T	BCO2	NBCO2	CO2T	CH4	N2O	R	CO2e
Onsite	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.85	0.71	4.87	5.82	0.02	0.15	—	0.15	0.14	—	0.14	—	1,719	1,719	0.07	0.01	—	1,725
Dust From Material Movement	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Daily, Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.85	0.71	4.87	5.82	0.02	0.15	—	0.15	0.14	—	0.14	—	1,719	1,719	0.07	0.01	—	1,725
Dust From Material Movement	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Average Daily	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.16	0.13	0.89	1.06	< 0.005	0.03	—	0.03	0.03	—	0.03	—	313	313	0.01	< 0.005	—	314
Dust From Material Movement	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Annual	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.03	0.02	0.16	0.19	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	< 0.005	—	51.8	51.8	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	52.0
Dust From Material Movement	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Offsite	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Daily, Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Average Daily	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Annual	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

3.3. Linear, Grading & Excavation (2027) - Unmitigated

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

Location	TOG	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10E	PM10D	PM10T	PM2.5E	PM2.5D	PM2.5T	BCO2	NBCO2	CO2T	CH4	N2O	R	CO2e
Onsite	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Daily, Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.84	0.70	4.70	5.81	0.02	0.14	—	0.14	0.13	—	0.13	—	1,719	1,719	0.07	0.01	—	1,725
Dust From Material Movement	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Average Daily	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.05	0.04	0.29	0.35	< 0.005	0.01	—	0.01	0.01	—	0.01	—	104	104	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	105
Dust From Material Movement	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Annual	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.01	0.01	0.05	0.06	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	< 0.005	—	17.3	17.3	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	17.3
Dust From Material Movement	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Offsite	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Daily, Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Average Daily	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Annual	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

3.5. Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade (2027) - Unmitigated

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

Location	TOG	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10E	PM10D	PM10T	PM2.5E	PM2.5D	PM2.5T	BCO2	NBCO2	CO2T	CH4	N2O	R	CO2e
Onsite	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.43	0.37	3.28	3.06	0.01	0.13	—	0.13	0.12	—	0.12	—	990	990	0.04	0.01	—	993
Dust From Material Movement	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Daily, Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.43	0.37	3.28	3.06	0.01	0.13	—	0.13	0.12	—	0.12	—	990	990	0.04	0.01	—	993
Dust From Material Movement	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Average Daily	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.07	0.06	0.53	0.49	< 0.005	0.02	—	0.02	0.02	—	0.02	—	160	160	0.01	< 0.005	—	161
Dust From Material Movement	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Annual	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.01	0.01	0.10	0.09	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	< 0.005	—	26.5	26.5	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	26.6
Dust From Material Movement	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Offsite	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Daily, Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Average Daily	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Annual	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

3.7. Linear, Paving (2027) - Unmitigated

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

Location	TOG	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10E	PM10D	PM10T	PM2.5E	PM2.5D	PM2.5T	BCO2	NBCO2	CO2T	CH4	N2O	R	CO2e
Onsite	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.16	0.14	1.47	2.06	< 0.005	0.07	—	0.07	0.07	—	0.07	—	315	315	0.01	< 0.005	—	317
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Daily, Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Average Daily	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	0.01	0.01	0.12	0.16	< 0.005	0.01	—	0.01	0.01	—	0.01	—	25.1	25.1	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	25.2
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Annual	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Off-Road Equipment	< 0.005	< 0.005	0.02	0.03	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	< 0.005	—	4.15	4.15	< 0.005	< 0.005	—	4.16
Onsite truck	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Offsite	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Daily, Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Average Daily	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Annual	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worker	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vendor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Hauling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

4. Operations Emissions Details

4.10. Soil Carbon Accumulation By Vegetation Type

4.10.1. Soil Carbon Accumulation By Vegetation Type - Unmitigated

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

Vegetation	TOG	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10E	PM10D	PM10T	PM2.5E	PM2.5D	PM2.5T	BCO2	NBCO2	CO2T	CH4	N2O	R	CO2e
Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily, Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Annual	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

4.10.2. Above and Belowground Carbon Accumulation by Land Use Type - Unmitigated

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

Land Use	TOG	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10E	PM10D	PM10T	PM2.5E	PM2.5D	PM2.5T	BCO2	NBCO2	CO2T	CH4	N2O	R	CO2e
Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Daily, Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Annual	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

4.10.3. Avoided and Sequestered Emissions by Species - Unmitigated

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

Species	TOG	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10E	PM10D	PM10T	PM2.5E	PM2.5D	PM2.5T	BCO2	NBCO2	CO2T	CH4	N2O	R	CO2e
Daily, Summer (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Avoided	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sequestered	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Removed	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Daily, Winter (Max)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Avoided	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sequestered	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Removed	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Annual	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Avoided	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sequestered	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Removed	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

5. Activity Data

5.1. Construction Schedule

Phase Name	Phase Type	Start Date	End Date	Days Per Week	Work Days per Phase	Phase Description
Linear, Grading & Excavation	Linear, Grading & Excavation	9/30/2026	1/31/2027	5.00	88.0	—
Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade	Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade	2/1/2027	4/24/2027	5.00	59.0	—
Linear, Paving	Linear, Paving	4/25/2027	6/4/2027	5.00	29.0	—

5.2. Off-Road Equipment

5.2.1. Unmitigated

Phase Name	Equipment Type	Fuel Type	Engine Tier	Number per Day	Hours Per Day	Horsepower	Load Factor

Linear, Grading & Excavation	Excavators	Diesel	Average	1.00	8.00	36.0	0.38
Linear, Grading & Excavation	Off-Highway Trucks	Diesel	Average	1.00	8.00	376	0.38
Linear, Grading & Excavation	Concrete/Industrial Saws	Diesel	Average	1.00	8.00	33.0	0.73
Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade	Cranes	Diesel	Average	1.00	8.00	367	0.29
Linear, Paving	Pavers	Diesel	Average	1.00	8.00	81.0	0.42

5.3. Construction Vehicles

5.3.1. Unmitigated

Phase Name	Trip Type	One-Way Trips per Day	Miles per Trip	Vehicle Mix
Linear, Grading & Excavation	—	—	—	—
Linear, Grading & Excavation	Worker	0.00	7.70	LDA,LDT1,LDT2
Linear, Grading & Excavation	Vendor	0.00	6.80	HHDT,MHDT
Linear, Grading & Excavation	Hauling	0.00	20.0	HHDT
Linear, Grading & Excavation	Onsite truck	—	—	HHDT
Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade	—	—	—	—
Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade	Worker	0.00	7.70	LDA,LDT1,LDT2
Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade	Vendor	0.00	6.80	HHDT,MHDT
Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade	Hauling	0.00	20.0	HHDT
Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade	Onsite truck	—	—	HHDT
Linear, Paving	—	—	—	—
Linear, Paving	Worker	0.00	7.70	LDA,LDT1,LDT2
Linear, Paving	Vendor	0.00	6.80	HHDT,MHDT
Linear, Paving	Hauling	0.00	20.0	HHDT
Linear, Paving	Onsite truck	—	—	HHDT

5.4. Vehicles

5.4.1. Construction Vehicle Control Strategies

Non-applicable. No control strategies activated by user.

5.5. Architectural Coatings

Phase Name	Residential Interior Area Coated (sq ft)	Residential Exterior Area Coated (sq ft)	Non-Residential Interior Area Coated (sq ft)	Non-Residential Exterior Area Coated (sq ft)	Parking Area Coated (sq ft)

5.6. Dust Mitigation

5.6.1. Construction Earthmoving Activities

Phase Name	Material Imported (cy)	Material Exported (cy)	Acres Graded (acres)	Material Demolished (sq. ft.)	Acres Paved (acres)
Linear, Grading & Excavation	—	—	1.00	0.00	—
Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade	—	—	1.00	0.00	—

5.6.2. Construction Earthmoving Control Strategies

Non-applicable. No control strategies activated by user.

5.7. Construction Paving

Land Use	Area Paved (acres)	% Asphalt
User Defined Linear	1.00	100%

5.8. Construction Electricity Consumption and Emissions Factors

kWh per Year and Emission Factor (lb/MWh)

Year	kWh per Year	CO2	CH4	N2O
2026	0.00	532	0.03	< 0.005

2027	0.00	532	0.03	< 0.005

5.18. Vegetation

5.18.1. Land Use Change

5.18.1.1. Unmitigated

Vegetation Land Use Type	Vegetation Soil Type	Initial Acres	Final Acres

5.18.1. Biomass Cover Type

5.18.1.1. Unmitigated

Biomass Cover Type	Initial Acres	Final Acres

5.18.2. Sequestration

5.18.2.1. Unmitigated

Tree Type	Number	Electricity Saved (kWh/year)	Natural Gas Saved (btu/year)

6. Climate Risk Detailed Report

6.1. Climate Risk Summary

Cal-Adapt midcentury 2040–2059 average projections for four hazards are reported below for your project location. These are under Representation Concentration Pathway (RCP) 8.5 which assumes GHG emissions will continue to rise strongly through 2050 and then plateau around 2100.

Climate Hazard	Result for Project Location	Unit
Temperature and Extreme Heat	27.9	annual days of extreme heat
Extreme Precipitation	1.05	annual days with precipitation above 20 mm
Sea Level Rise	—	meters of inundation depth

Wildfire	0.00	annual hectares burned

Temperature and Extreme Heat data are for grid cell in which your project are located. The projection is based on the 98th historical percentile of daily maximum/minimum temperatures from observed historical data (32 climate model ensemble from Cal-Adapt, 2040–2059 average under RCP 8.5). Each grid cell is 6 kilometers (km) by 6 km, or 3.7 miles (mi) by 3.7 mi.
Extreme Precipitation data are for the grid cell in which your project are located. The threshold of 20 mm is equivalent to about ¾ an inch of rain, which would be light to moderate rainfall if received over a full day or heavy rain if received over a period of 2 to 4 hours. Each grid cell is 6 kilometers (km) by 6 km, or 3.7 miles (mi) by 3.7 mi.
Sea Level Rise data are for the grid cell in which your project are located. The projections are from Radke et al. (2017), as reported in Cal-Adapt (Radke et al., 2017, CEC-500-2017-008), and consider inundation location and depth for the San Francisco Bay, the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta and California coast resulting different increments of sea level rise coupled with extreme storm events. Users may select from four scenarios to view the range in potential inundation depth for the grid cell. The four scenarios are: No rise, 0.5 meter, 1.0 meter, 1.41 meters
Wildfire data are for the grid cell in which your project are located. The projections are from UC Davis, as reported in Cal-Adapt (2040–2059 average under RCP 8.5), and consider historical data of climate, vegetation, population density, and large (> 400 ha) fire history. Users may select from four model simulations to view the range in potential wildfire probabilities for the grid cell. The four simulations make different assumptions about expected rainfall and temperature are: Warmer/drier (HadGEM2-ES), Cooler/wetter (CNRM-CM5), Average conditions (CanESM2), Range of different rainfall and temperature possibilities (MIROC5). Each grid cell is 6 kilometers (km) by 6 km, or 3.7 miles (mi) by 3.7 mi.

6.2. Initial Climate Risk Scores

Climate Hazard	Exposure Score	Sensitivity Score	Adaptive Capacity Score	Vulnerability Score
Temperature and Extreme Heat	3	0	0	N/A
Extreme Precipitation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sea Level Rise	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wildfire	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Flooding	0	0	0	N/A
Drought	0	0	0	N/A
Snowpack Reduction	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Air Quality Degradation	0	0	0	N/A

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

6.3. Adjusted Climate Risk Scores

Climate Hazard	Exposure Score	Sensitivity Score	Adaptive Capacity Score	Vulnerability Score
Temperature and Extreme Heat	3	1	1	3

Extreme Precipitation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sea Level Rise	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wildfire	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Flooding	1	1	1	2
Drought	1	1	1	2
Snowpack Reduction	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Air Quality Degradation	1	1	1	2

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

6.4. Climate Risk Reduction Measures

7. Health and Equity Details

7.1. CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Scores

The maximum CalEnviroScreen score is 100. A high score (i.e., greater than 50) reflects a higher pollution burden compared to other census tracts in the state.

Indicator	Result for Project Census Tract
Exposure Indicators	—
AQ-Ozone	82.5
AQ-PM	94.6
AQ-DPM	16.5
Drinking Water	99.2
Lead Risk Housing	58.2
Pesticides	89.6
Toxic Releases	18.7
Traffic	5.99

Effect Indicators	—
CleanUp Sites	80.9
Groundwater	93.6
Haz Waste Facilities/Generators	71.6
Impaired Water Bodies	43.8
Solid Waste	75.7
Sensitive Population	—
Asthma	65.9
Cardio-vascular	86.1
Low Birth Weights	44.5
Socioeconomic Factor Indicators	—
Education	86.7
Housing	66.1
Linguistic	87.9
Poverty	85.6
Unemployment	99.7

7.2. Healthy Places Index Scores

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

Indicator	Result for Project Census Tract
Economic	—
Above Poverty	7.981521879
Employed	12.04927499
Median HI	12.63954831
Education	—
Bachelor's or higher	17.25907866
High school enrollment	100

Preschool enrollment	22.08392147
Transportation	—
Auto Access	74.57975106
Active commuting	7.35275247
Social	—
2-parent households	46.32362376
Voting	46.91389709
Neighborhood	—
Alcohol availability	68.71551392
Park access	7.493904786
Retail density	3.554471962
Supermarket access	14.19222379
Tree canopy	64.63492878
Housing	—
Homeownership	51.00731426
Housing habitability	39.48415244
Low-inc homeowner severe housing cost burden	23.77774926
Low-inc renter severe housing cost burden	34.33850892
Uncrowded housing	37.31553959
Health Outcomes	—
Insured adults	52.48299756
Arthritis	0.0
Asthma ER Admissions	35.8
High Blood Pressure	0.0
Cancer (excluding skin)	0.0
Asthma	0.0
Coronary Heart Disease	0.0

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	0.0
Diagnosed Diabetes	0.0
Life Expectancy at Birth	20.9
Cognitively Disabled	66.4
Physically Disabled	29.8
Heart Attack ER Admissions	14.4
Mental Health Not Good	0.0
Chronic Kidney Disease	0.0
Obesity	0.0
Pedestrian Injuries	62.3
Physical Health Not Good	0.0
Stroke	0.0
Health Risk Behaviors	—
Binge Drinking	0.0
Current Smoker	0.0
No Leisure Time for Physical Activity	0.0
Climate Change Exposures	—
Wildfire Risk	0.0
SLR Inundation Area	0.0
Children	39.2
Elderly	43.3
English Speaking	48.4
Foreign-born	51.5
Outdoor Workers	0.3
Climate Change Adaptive Capacity	—
Impervious Surface Cover	92.0
Traffic Density	6.9

Traffic Access	0.0
Other Indices	—
Hardship	87.3
Other Decision Support	—
2016 Voting	57.9

7.3. Overall Health & Equity Scores

Metric	Result for Project Census Tract
CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Score for Project Location (a)	96.0
Healthy Places Index Score for Project Location (b)	16.0
Project Located in a Designated Disadvantaged Community (Senate Bill 535)	Yes
Project Located in a Low-Income Community (Assembly Bill 1550)	Yes
Project Located in a Community Air Protection Program Community (Assembly Bill 617)	No

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

7.4. Health & Equity Measures

No Health & Equity Measures selected.

7.5. Evaluation Scorecard

Health & Equity Evaluation Scorecard not completed.

7.6. Health & Equity Custom Measures

No Health & Equity Custom Measures created.

8. User Changes to Default Data

Screen	Justification
Construction: Construction Phases	No grubbing phase
Construction: Off-Road Equipment	Adding Construction Equipment

Appendix B: Biological Evaluation

SELF HELP ENTERPRISES

HOPE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT BIOLOGICAL EVALUATION

PORTERVILLE, CALIFORNIA
FEBRUARY 2024

PREPARED FOR:
Self Help Enterprises
8445 W. Elowin Court
P.O. Box 6520
Visalia, CA 93290

PREPARED BY:
Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group
455 W. Fir Avenue, Clovis, California 93611

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Report Prepared for:
Self Help Enterprises
Self Help Enterprises
8445 W. Elowin Court
P.O. Box 6520
Visalia, CA 93290

Contact:
Daniela Medel
(559) 802-1677

Report Prepared by:
Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group
Preparer: Jairo Perez, Biologist
Project Manager: Wyatt Czeshinski – Associate Planner, Liz Varner – Senior Engineer.
QA/QC: Geoff Cline - Principal Biologist, Amy Wilson – Senior Planner.
Other personnel involved in report preparation: Ben Toews – Assistant GIS Specialist, Rafael Sanchez – Assistant Planner, Amy Giacomini – Assistant Environmental Specialist.

Contact:
Wyatt Czeshinski
(559) 449-2700

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 Introduction 1
1.1 Project Description 1
1.2 Report Objectives 1
1.3 Study Methodology 5
2 Existing Conditions 6
2.1 Regional Settings 6
2.1.1 Topography 6
2.1.2 Climate 6
2.1.3 Soils 6
2.2 Biotic Habitats 6
2.2.1 Ruderal 7
2.3 Natural Communities of Special Concern and Riparian Habitat 7
2.4 Designated Critical Habitat 7
2.5 Wildlife Movement Corridors and Native Wildlife Nursery Sites 7
2.6 Special Status Plants and Animals 8
3 Impacts and Mitigation 15
3.1 Significance Criteria 15
3.1.1 CEQA 15
3.1.2 NEPA 15
3.2 Relevant Goals, Policies, and Laws 16
3.2.1 Tulare County General Plan 16
3.2.2 Porterville 2030 General Plan 17
3.2.3 Porterville Development Ordinance (Zoning) 18
3.2.4 Threatened and Endangered Species 19
3.2.5 Designated Critical Habitat 19
3.2.6 Migratory Birds 19
3.2.7 Birds of Prey 19
3.2.8 Nesting Birds 19
3.2.9 Wetlands and other "Jurisdictional Waters" 19
3.3 Potentially Significant Project-Related Impacts and Mitigation 21
3.3.1 Project-Related Mortality and/or Disturbance of Nesting Migratory Raptors and Birds 22
3.4 Section 7 Determinations 22
3.5 Less Than Significant Project-Related Impacts 23
3.5.1 Project-Related Impacts to Special Status Plant Species Absent From, or Unlikely to Occur on, the project site 23
3.5.2 Project-Related Impacts to Special Status Animal Species Absent From, or Unlikely to Occur on, the project site 23
3.5.3 Project-Related Impacts to Riparian Habitat and Natural Communities of Special Concern 24
3.5.4 Project-Related Impacts to Regulated Waters, Wetlands, and Water Quality 24
3.5.5 Project-Related Impacts to Wildlife Movement Corridors and Native Wildlife Nursery Sites 24
3.5.6 Project-Related Impacts to Critical Habitat 24

3.5.7 Local Policies or Habitat Conservation Plans 24
3.5.8 Project-Related Impact to Essential Fish Habitat 24
4 References 25

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Regional Location Map 2
Figure 2: Topographic Quadrangle Map 3
Figure 3: Project Site Map 4

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: List of Soils Located on the Project Site and Their Basic Properties 6
Table 2: List of Special Status Plants with Potential to Occur on the project site and/or in the Vicinity. 8
Table 3: List of Special Status Animals with Potential to Occur on the Project Site and/or in the Vicinity. . 11
Table 4: Section 7 Determinations 22

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Representative Photos of the project site
Appendix B: CNDDB 9-Quad Species List
Appendix C: IPaC Species List
Appendix D: NRCS Web Soil Survey Report
Appendix E: NMFS EFH Mapper

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CDFW ..... California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA ..... California Environmental Quality Act
CNDDB ..... California Natural Diversity Database
CNPS ..... California Native Plant Society
City ..... City of Porterville
County ..... Tulare County
ECOS ..... U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Environmental Conservation Online System
EPA ..... Environmental Protection Agency
HUC ..... Hydrologic Unit Code
IPaC ..... U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Consultation system
MBTA ..... Migratory Treaty Bird Act
MSL ..... Mean Sea Level
NEPA ..... National Environmental Policy Act
NRCS ..... Natural Resources Conservation Service
Project ..... Hope Elementary School Water System Improvement Project
Provost & Pritchard ..... Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group
RWQCB ..... Regional Water Quality Control Board
School ..... Hope Elementary School
SWPPP ..... Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB ..... State Water Resources Control Board
USACE ..... United States Army Corps of Engineers
USC ..... United States Code
USDA ..... United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS ..... United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS ..... United States Geological Survey

1 INTRODUCTION

This Biological Evaluation Report, prepared by Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group (Provost & Pritchard) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), includes a description of the biological resources present or with the potential to occur within the proposed Hope Elementary School (school) Water System Improvement Project (project) and evaluates potential project-related impacts to those resources.

1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The school is located east of the intersection of South Indiana Street and West Teapot Dome Avenue and approximately 2200 feet east from the City of Porterville (City), which is located along the eastern side of the San Joaquin Valley in Tulare County, California (see Figure 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3). It is served by a single active well that is in exceedance of acceptable maximum contaminant levels for nitrate. As a result, the school now seeks to consolidate with the City's existing water system. To do this, new water mains connecting the school to the City's water system would be constructed. The approximately 6-acre project site includes the existing well and tank at the school and construction of two water mains (approximately 6,550 linear feet of 12-inch water main along South Indiana Avenue from West Teapot Dome Avenue to West Scranton Avenue and approximately 5,300 linear feet of water main along West Teapot Dome Avenue from the frontage of the school to Newcomb Street) and various water infrastructure at the school and along the new water mains. Portions of the new water mains will traverse through the City. The existing water tank on-site would be removed and the existing well would be destroyed.

1.2 REPORT OBJECTIVES

Construction activities such as those proposed by the project could potentially modify biological resources or habitats that are crucial for sensitive plant and wildlife species. In cases such as these, development may be regulated by state or federal agencies, and/or addressed by local regulatory agencies. This report addresses issues related to the following:

- The presence of sensitive biological resources on the project site, or with the potential to occur on the project site.
- The federal, state, and local regulations regarding these resources.
- Mitigation measures that may be required to reduce the magnitude of anticipated impacts and/or comply with permit requirements of state and federal resource agencies.

Therefore, the objectives of this report are to:

- Summarize all project-specific information related to existing biological resources.
- Make reasonable inferences about the biological resources that could occur on the project site based on habitat suitability and the proximity of the project site to a species' known range.
- Summarize all state and federal natural resource protection laws that may be relevant to implementation of the project.
- Identify and discuss project impacts and effects to biological resources likely to occur onsite within the context of CEQA, NEPA, and/or state or federal laws.
- Identify and prescribe a set of avoidance and mitigation measures that would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level (as identified by CEQA) or avoid and minimize effects (as identified by NEPA) and are generally consistent with recommendations of the resource agencies for affected biological resources.

Figure 1: Regional Location Map

Figure 2: Topographic Quadrangle Map

Figure 3: Project Site Map

1.3 STUDY METHODOLOGY

A reconnaissance-level field survey of the project site was conducted on January 5, 2024, by Provost & Pritchard biologist, Jairo Perez. The survey consisted of walking and driving throughout accessible areas of the project site while identifying and noting land uses, biological habitats and communities, and plant and animal species encountered. Habitats were also assessed to help with determining if they could be suitable for various rare or protected plant and animal species. Representative photographs of the site were taken and are presented in Appendix A.

Mr. Perez then utilized the results of the field survey to conduct an analysis of potential project-related impacts to biological resources based on the resources known to occur or with the potential to occur within the project site. Sources of information used in preparation of this analysis included: the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB; see Appendix B for the species list) and California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (CWHR) database, California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California, CalFlora's online database of California native plants, Jepson Herbarium's online database (i.e., Jepson eFlora), United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS), Environmental Conservation Online System (ECOS), Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC; see Appendix C for the species list) system, and National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), iNaturalist; NatureServe Explorer's online database, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (see Appendix D for the Web Soil Survey Report), California Herps website, and various manuals, reports, and references related to plants and animals of the San Joaquin Valley region.

The field survey did not include focused surveys for special status species. The field survey conducted included the appropriate level of detail to assess the significance of potential impacts to sensitive biological resources resulting from implementing the project. Furthermore, the field survey was sufficient to generally describe those features of the project that could be subject to the jurisdiction of federal and/or state agencies, such as the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), CDFW, Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).

2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1 REGIONAL SETTINGS

2.1.1 TOPOGRAPHY

The project site is located within the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) *Porterville* quadrangle, within the northwest quadrat of section 14, and intersecting sections 10, 11, 14 and 15, Township 22 south, Range 27 east (see Figure 2). The topography of the project site is relatively flat with elevations ranging from approximately 450 - 470 feet above mean sea level (MSL).

2.1.2 CLIMATE

Like most of California, the project site experiences a Mediterranean climate. Warm, dry summers are followed by cool, moist winters. In the summer, average high temperatures range between 90- and 100-degrees Fahrenheit (°F), but often exceed 100°F, and the humidity is generally low. Winter temperatures are often below 60°F during the day and rarely exceed 70°F. On average, the City of Porterville receives approximately 13 inches of precipitation in the form of rain yearly, most of which occurs between October and March (Bestplaces, 2024). The project site would be expected to receive similar amounts of precipitation.

2.1.3 SOILS

Four soils were identified within the project site and are listed in Table 1 (see Appendix D for the Web Soil Survey Report). The soils are displayed with their core properties in the table below, according to the Major Land Resource Area of California.

Table 1: List of Soils Located on the Project Site and Their Basic Properties.

Soil	Soil Map Unit	Percent of Project Site	Hydric Soil Category	Drainage	Permeability	Runoff
Exeter loam	Loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	7.5%	Predominantly non-hydric	Moderately well drained	Moderately slow	Medium
Havala loam	Loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes	8.4%	Non-hydric	Well drained	Moderately slow	Slow to moderate
San Joaquin loam	Loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	55.1%	Predominantly non-hydric	Well and moderately well drained	Very slow	Medium to very high
San Joaquin loam	Loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes	28.8%	Predominantly non-hydric	Well and moderately well drained	Very slow	Medium to very high

The soils of the site are predominantly non-hydric and non-hydric. Predominantly non-hydric soils are defined as no major component listed for a given map unit rated as hydric, and at least one contrasting minor component rated as hydric. Non-hydric soils are defined as no major or minor components for the map unit rated as hydric.

2.2 BIOTIC HABITATS

The project site contained one habitat type: ruderal. This habitat and the constituent plant and animal species that were observed in this habitat is described in more detail in the following sections.

2.2.1 RUDERAL

The ruderal habitat within the project site includes road shoulders and road intersections. Vegetation observed within the disturbed ruderal habitat of the project site included scattered annual blue grass (*Poa annua*), Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), bryum moss (*Bryum argenteum*), cheeseweed mallow (*Malva parviflora*), chickweed (*Stellaria media*), common groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*) doveweed (*Croton setiger*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), flax-leaved horseweed (*Erigeron bonariensis*), smooth crab grass (*Digitaria ischaemum*), silverleaf nightshade (*Solanum Elaeagnifolium*), spotted spurge (*Euphorbia maculata*), Johnson grass (*Sorghum halepense*), white-stemmed filaree (*Erodium moschatum*), Russian thistle (*Kali tragus*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), telegraph weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*), and wild radish (*Raphanus raphanistrum*).

The ruderal field survey within the project site resulted in the identification of numerus bird species including common raven (*Corvus corax*), house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*), Red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), and white crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*). A deceased striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*) was observed on West Teapot Dome Avenue. Coyotes (*Canis latrans*), and other nocturnal animals (i.e., Virginia opossums (*Didelphis virginianus*)) could occasionally pass through the ruderal habitat on their way to more suitable habitat elsewhere.

2.3 NATURAL COMMUNITIES OF SPECIAL CONCERN AND RIPARIAN HABITAT

Natural communities of special concern are those that are of limited distribution, distinguished by significant biological diversity, or home to special status species. CDFW has classified and mapped all-natural communities in California. Just as the special status plant and animal species, these natural communities of special concern can be found within the CNDDB. There is no recorded observation of a natural community of special concern within the project site. Additionally, no natural communities of special concern were observed during the biological survey.

Riparian habitat is composed of plant communities that occur along the banks, and sometimes over the banks, of most waterways and is an important habitat for numerous wildlife species. CDFW has jurisdiction over most riparian habitats in California. No natural waterways were observed within or adjacent to the project site.

2.4 DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT

The USFWS often designates areas of “critical habitat” when it lists species as threatened or endangered. Critical habitat is a specific geographic area that contains features essential for the conservation of a threatened or endangered species, which may require special management and protection. According to the IPaC, designated critical habitat is absent from the project site and vicinity.

2.5 WILDLIFE MOVEMENT CORRIDORS AND NATIVE WILDLIFE NURSERY SITES

Wildlife movement corridors are routes that animals regularly and predictably follow during seasonal migration, dispersal from native ranges, daily travel within home ranges, and inter-population movements. Movement corridors in California are typically associated with valleys, ridgelines, and rivers and creeks supporting riparian vegetation. The habitat of the project site is common to the area and it is unlikely that the project site is utilized as a wildlife movement corridor.

Native wildlife nursery sites are areas where a species or group of similar species raise their young in a concentrated place, such as maternity bat roosts. No native wildlife nursery sites were found within the project site.

2.6 SPECIAL STATUS PLANTS AND ANIMALS

California contains several rare plant and animal species. In this context, "rare" is defined as a species known to have low populations or limited distributions. This results in rare and sensitive species becoming increasingly more vulnerable to extirpation. State and federal regulations have provided the CDFW and USFWS with a mechanism for conserving and protecting the diversity of plant and animal species native to California. Numerous native plants and animals have been formally designated as "threatened" or "endangered" under state and federal endangered species legislation. Other formal designations include "candidate" for listing or "species of special concern" by CDFW. The CNPS has its list of native plants considered rare, threatened, or endangered. Collectively these animals and plants are referred to as "special status species."

A query of the CNDDB for occurrences of special status plant and animal species was conducted for the *Porterville* 7.5-minute U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) quadrangle that contains the project site, and for the 8 surrounding USGS quadrangles: *Cairns Corner, Ducor, Fountain Springs, Frazier Valley, Lindsay, Sausalito School, Success Dam, and Woodville.* A query of the IPaC was also completed for the project site. These species, and their potential to occur within the project site, are listed in Table 2 and Table 3 on the following pages. Other special status species that did not show up in the CNDDB query, but have the potential to occur in the vicinity, are also included in Table 3. Species lists obtained from CNDDB and IPaC are available in Appendix B and Appendix C, respectively. All relevant sources of information, as discussed in the Study Methodology section of this report, as well as field observations, were used to determine if any special status species have the potential to occur within the project site.

Table 2: List of Special Status Plants with Potential to Occur on the project site and/or in the Vicinity.

Species	Status*	Habitat	Occurrence within the Site
Alkali-sink goldfields (*Lasthenia chrysantha*)	CNPS 1B	Found in vernal pool and wet saline flat habitats in the San Joaquin Valley region at elevations below 700 feet. Blooms February – April.	**Absent.** Habitats required by this species were absent from the project site.
Brittlescale (*Atriplex depressa*)	CNPS 1B	Found in chenopod scrub, meadows and seeps, playas, valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools in alkaline, clay soils at elevations below approx. 1,050 feet. Blooms May to October.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats for this species were absent from the project site and surrounding areas.
Calico monkeyflower (*Diplacus pictus*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the Sierra Nevada foothills and the Tehachapi mountains in bare, sunny, shrubby areas, around granite outcrops within foothill woodland communities at elevations between 450 and 4,100 feet. Blooms March – May.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats for this species were absent from the project site and surrounding areas.
California jewelflower (*Caulanthus californicus*)	FE, CE, CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley and western Transverse Ranges in sandy soils. Occurs on flats and slopes, generally in non-alkaline grassland at elevations	**Absent.** Suitable habitat was absent from the project site and surrounding areas.

		between 200 and 6,100 feet. Blooms February – April.	
California alkali grass (*Puccinellia simplex*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley and other parts of California in saline flats and mineral springs within valley grassland and wetland-riparian communities at elevations below 3,000 feet. Blooms March – May.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat for this species was absent from the project site and surrounding areas.
Chaparral ragwort (*Senecio aphanactis*)	CNPS 2B	Found in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and coastal scrub, typically within drying alkaline flats at elevations between 50 and 2,800 feet. Blooms February – May.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent from the project site and surrounding areas.
Earlimart orache (*Atriplex cordulata* var. *erecticaulis*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley in saline and alkaline soils, typically within valley grasslands at elevations below 400 feet. Blooms August – September.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent from the project site and surrounding areas.
Keck's checkerbloom (*Sidalcea keckii*)	CNPS 1B, FE	Occurs in cismontane woodland and valley and foothill grassland communities, typically on grassy slopes in clay soils at elevations between 250 and 1,700 feet. Blooms April – May.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species were absent from the project site and surrounding areas.
Lesser saltscale (*Atriplex minuscula*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley in sandy, alkaline soils in alkali scrub, valley and foothill grassland, and alkali sink communities at elevations below 750 feet. Blooms April – October.	**Absent.** Habitat required by this species were absent within the project site and surrounding areas.
Lost Hills crownscale (*Atriplex cordulata var. erecticaulis*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley in dried ponds and vernal pools with alkaline soils in alkali scrub and valley and foothill grasslands at elevations below 2,900 feet. Blooms April – September.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species were absent within the project site and surrounding areas.
Recurved larkspur (*Delphinium recurvatum*)	CNPS 1B	Occurs in chenopod scrub, cismontane woodland, and grassland habitats on poorly drained, fine, alkaline soils; often in valley saltbush or valley chenopod scrub communities at elevations between 100 and 2,600 feet. Blooms March – June.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats required by this species were absent within the project site and surrounding areas.
San Joaquin adobe sunburst (*Pseudobahia peirsonii*)	FT, CE, CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley and the Sierra Nevada foothills in bare, dark clay soils in valley and foothill grassland and cismontane woodland communities at elevations	**Absent.** Suitable habitats and soils required by this species were absent from the project site.

		between 300 and 3,000 feet. Blooms March – May.	
San Joaquin woollythreads (*Monolopia congdonii*)	FE, CNPS 1B	Occurs in the San Joaquin Valley in sandy soils on alkaline or loamy plains in valley and foothill grassland and alkali scrub communities at elevations between 150 and 2,800 feet. Blooms February – May.	**Absent.** The habitats required by this species were absent within the project site and surrounding areas.
Shining navarretia (*Navarretia nigelliformis ssp. radians*)	CNPS 1B	Found in cismontane woodland and valley and foothill grassland communities, sometimes in vernal pools. Occurs at elevations between 200 and 3,200 feet. Blooms May – July.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats for this species were absent from the project site and surrounding areas.
Spiny-sepaled button-celery (*Eryngium spinosepalum*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the Sierra Nevada foothills and the San Joaquin Valley in vernal pools, swales, and roadside ditches. Often associated with clay soils in vernal pools within grassland communities. Occurs at elevations between 50 and 4,200 feet. Blooms April – July.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats required by this species were absent within the project site and surrounding areas.
Springville clarkia (*Clarkia springvillensis*)	FT, CE, CNPS 1B	Endemic to the woodlands and grasslands of the southern Sierra Nevada, occurring primarily in the Tule River watershed. Found at elevations between 650 and 7,400 feet. Blooms in May.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats required by this species were absent within the project site and surrounding areas.
Stripped adobe-lily (*Fritillaria striata*)	CT, CNPS 1B	Found in the Sierra Nevada foothills in adobe soil within valley grassland and foothill woodland communities at elevations below 3,300 feet. Blooms February – April.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat and required soils were absent within the project site.
Subtle orache (*Atriplex subtilis*)	CNPS 1B	Found in the San Joaquin Valley in saline depressions in alkaline soils within valley and foothill grassland communities at elevations below 300 feet. Blooms June – October.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent within the project site and surrounding areas.

Vernal pool smallscale (*Atriplex persistens*)	CNPS 1B	Occurs in the Central Valley in alkaline vernal pools at elevations below 400 feet. Blooms June – September.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent within the project site and surrounding areas.

Table 3: List of Special Status Animals with Potential to Occur on the Project Site and/or in the Vicinity.

Species	Status*	Habitat	Occurrence within the Site
American badger (*Taxidea taxus*)	CSSC	Occurs most abundantly in drier open stages of shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats with friable soils to burrow, but can be found within numerous habitats throughout California, including the margins of agricultural lands. Needs a sufficient prey base of burrowing rodents.	**Unlikely.** The project site is a road shoulder that is regularly disturbed by vehicles and the surrounding areas are frequently cultivated and maintained agricultural lands. An American badger could potentially pass through the project site, but it is unlikely they would forage or burrow within the project site. The nearest recorded observation of this species within the vicinity was found in the vicinity of Porterville Airport, approximately 500 feet west of the project site.
Blunt-nosed leopard lizard (*Gambelia sila*)	FE, CE, CFP	Occurs in the San Joaquin Valley region in expansive, arid areas with scattered vegetation. Today they inhabit non-native grassland and alkali sink scrub communities of the valley floor marked by poorly drained, alkaline, and saline soils. They can be found at elevations ranging from 100 to 2,600 feet. They are absent from areas with steep slopes and dense vegetation, and areas subject to seasonal flooding. Adults may excavate shallow burrows but rely on deeper pre-existing rodent burrows for hibernation and reproduction.	**Absent.** The habitat of the project site is unsuitable for this species and the site and surrounding areas are regularly disturbed and maintained.
Buena Vista Lake Ornate Shrew (*Sorex ornatus relictus*)	FE, CSSC	Prefers moist soils, inhabiting marshes, swamps, and riparian shrublands in the Tulare Basin. Uses stumps, logs, and leaf litter for cover.	**Absent.** Suitable habitats required by this species were absent from the project site.
California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*)	FE, CE, CFP	Typically nests in cavities in canyon or cliff faces but has also been recorded nesting in giant sequoias in Tulare County. Requires vast expanse of open savannah, grassland, and/or foothill chaparral in mountain	**Absent**. Suitable habitats required by this species were absent within the project site and surrounding areas.

Species	Status*	Habitat	Occurrence within the Site
		ranges of moderate altitude. Forages for carrion up to 100 miles from their roost/nest sites.	
Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*)	CCE	Occurs throughout coastal California, as well as east to the Sierra Nevada-Cascade crest, and south into Mexico. Food plant genera include snapdragons, scorpionweeds, primroses, poppies, and buckwheats.	**Unlikely**. Suitable food plant genera required for this species were absent from the project site. Also, the project site is surrounded by maintained agricultural lands and citrus orchards. A crotch bumble bee could potentially pass through the project site, but it is unlikely they would forage within the project site. The nearest recorded observation of this species within the vicinity was approximately 2.8 miles northeast of the project site in 1963.
Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)	FC	Roosts in wind-protected tree groves (eucalyptus, Monterey pine, cypress), with nectar and water sources nearby. Larval host plants consist of milkweeds (*Asclepias* sp.). Winter roost sites extend along the Pacific coast from northern Mendocino to Baja California, Mexico.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent from the project site.
Northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*)	CSSC	Found primarily underground, burrowing in loose, sandy soil. Forages in loose soil and leaf litter during the day. Occasionally observed on the surface at dusk and night.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent from the project site.
Northwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*)	FPT	An aquatic turtle of ponds, marshes, slow-moving rivers, streams, and irrigation ditches with riparian vegetation. Requires adequate basking sites and sandy banks or grassy open fields to deposit eggs.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent within the project site and surrounding areas.
Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*)	CSSC	Found in grasslands, chaparral, and woodlands, where it feeds on ground- and vegetation-dwelling arthropods, and occasionally takes insects in flight. Prefers to roost in rock crevices, but may also use tree cavities, caves, bridges, and other human-made structures.	**Unlikely.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent within the project site. The nearest recorded observation of this species occurred approximately 5.5 miles east of the project site in 1946.
San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*)	FE, CT	Opportunistically forages in a variety of habitats. Dens in burrows within alkali sink, valley grassland, and woodland habitats in valleys and adjacent foothills and in human-made	**Unlikely.** The site and surrounding areas are regularly maintained for agricultural purposes and are unsuitable for this species. This species is not expected to occur except, perhaps, as a transient. The

Species	Status*	Habitat	Occurrence within the Site
		structures in cities, rangeland, and agricultural areas.	nearest recorded observation of this species occurred approximately 200 feet west of the project site in 1975.
Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)	CT	Nests in large trees in open areas adjacent to grasslands, grain or alfalfa fields, or livestock pastures suitable for supporting rodent populations.	**Unlikely.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent within the project site. The nearest recorded observation was approximately 4.8 miles northwest of the project site in 2017.
Tipton kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys nitratoides nitratoides*)	FE, CE	Inhabits saltbush scrub and sink scrub communities in the Tulare Lake Basin of the southern San Joaquin Valley. This species needs soft friable soils to burrow.	**Absent**. Suitable habitat required by this species is absent from the project site.
Townsend's big-earned bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*)	CSSC	Occurs in a variety of habitats, but prefers cool, dark roost sites, and is often found in caves and mines. They roost in the open, hanging from walls and ceilings. Western populations typically forage on moths in areas of dense foliage.	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species is absent from the project site.
Tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*)	CT, CSSC	Nests colonially near fresh water in dense cattails or tules, or in thickets of riparian shrubs. Forages in grassland and cropland. Large colonies are often found foraging in dairy farm feed fields.	**Unlikely**. The project site and surrounding areas lack suitable habitat for this species. The nearest recorded observation of this species occurred approximately 5.7 miles northeast of the project site in 1971.
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*)	FT	Lives in mature elderberry shrubs in the Central Valley and adjacent foothills from Tehama County south through Merced and Mariposa Counties with two scattered populations in Madera and Fresno Counties. Adults are active from March to June.	**Absent.** Elderberry shrubs that are required by this species are absent from the project site and surrounding areas.
Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*)	FT	Occupies vernal and seasonal pools, with clear to tea-colored water, in grass or mud-bottomed swales, and basalt depression pools.	**Unlikely.** The project site is within road shoulders and intersections, which are regularly maintained for agricultural purposes and are unsuitable for this species. The nearest recorded observation of this species occurred adjacent to the project site near the intersection of West Teapot Dome Avenue and California State Route 65 in 2002.
Western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*)	CSSC	Found in open, arid to semi-arid habitats, including dry desert washes, flood plains, chaparral, oak woodland, open ponderosa pine forest, grassland, and agricultural areas, where it feeds	**Absent.** Suitable habitat required by this species was absent from the project site.

Species	Status*	Habitat	Occurrence within the Site
		on insects in flight. Roosts most commonly in crevices in cliff faces but may also use high buildings and tunnels.	
Western spadefoot (*Spea hammondii*)	FPT, CSSC	The majority of the time this species is terrestrial and occurs in small mammal burrows and soil cracks, sometimes in the bottom of dried pools. Prefers open areas with sandy or gravelly soils, in a variety of habitats including mixed woodlands, grasslands, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, sandy washes, lowlands, river floodplains, alluvial fans, playas, alkali flats, foothills, and mountains. Vernal or seasonal pools, that hold water for a minimum of three weeks, are necessary for breeding.	**Absent.** The project site includes road shoulders and intersections, which are regularly maintained for agricultural purposes and unsuitable for this species.

***EXPLANATION OF OCCURRENCE DESIGNATIONS AND STATUS CODES**

Present:	Species observed on the project site at time of field surveys or during recent past.
Likely:	Species not observed on the project site, but it may reasonably be expected to occur there on a regular basis.
Possible:	Species not observed on the project site, but it could occur there from time to time.
Unlikely:	Species not observed on the project site, and would not be expected to occur there except, perhaps, as a transient.
Absent:	Species not observed on the project site and precluded from occurring there due to absence of suitable habitat.

STATUS CODES

FE	Federally Endangered	CE	California Endangered
FT	Federally Threatened	CCE	California Endangered (Candidate)
FC	Federal Candidate	CT	California Threatened
		CFP	California Fully Protected
		CSSC	California Species of Special Concern

CNPS LISTING

1B Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.

3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

3.1 SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

3.1.1 CEQA

General plans, area plans, and specific projects are subject to the provisions of CEQA. The purpose of CEQA is to assess the impacts of proposed projects on the environment prior to project implementation. Impacts to biological resources are just one type of environmental impact assessed under CEQA and vary from project to project in terms of scope and magnitude. Projects requiring removal of vegetation may result in the mortality or displacement of animals associated with this vegetation. Animals adapted to humans, roads, buildings, and pets may replace those species formerly occurring on a site. Plants and animals that are rare may be destroyed or displaced. Sensitive habitats such as wetlands and riparian woodlands may be altered or destroyed. Such impacts may be considered either "significant" or "less than significant" under CEQA. According to *CEQA Statute and Guidelines* (AEP 2023), "significant effect on the environment" means a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic interest. Specific project impacts to biological resources may be considered "significant" if they would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS;
- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS;
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP), or other approved local, regional, or state HCP.

Furthermore, CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a) states that a project may trigger the requirement to make a "mandatory finding of significance" if the project has 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, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory."

3.1.2 NEPA

Federal projects are subject to the provisions of NEPA. The purpose of NEPA is to assess the effects of a proposed action on the human environment, assess the significance of those effects, and recommend measures that if implemented would mitigate those effects. As used in NEPA, a determination that certain

effects on the human environment are "significant" requires considerations of both context and intensity (40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1508.27).

For the purposes of assessing effects of an action on biological resources, the relevant context is often local. The analysis may, however, require a comparison of the action area's biological resources with the biological resources of an entire region. Project activities must have a federal nexus and discuss federally listed species, and/or designated critical habitat that may be affected in the action area.

Federal agencies are required to determine whether their actions may affect listed or proposed species and designated critical habitat. The primary role of this document is to provide agencies conclusion and the rationale to support those conclusions regarding the effects of any proposed actions of the project on protected resources. Document content and recommended elements are identified in 50 CFR 402.12(f).

Under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, federal agencies must consult with NOAA Fisheries or the USFWS, depending on the species, through an informal or formal consultation when any action the agency carries out, funds, or authorizes may affect either a species listed as threatened or endangered under the Act, or any critical habitat designated for it.

Once resources are assessed an Endangered Species Act Section 7 finding needs to be made regarding proposed or listed species and/or designated critical habitat that may be present in the project area. This report will provide the necessary information for the lead federal agency to make a determination on affects. This finding may result in one of the following determinations:

- *"*No effect*"* - means there will be no impacts, positive or negative, to listed or proposed resources. Generally, this means no listed resources will be exposed to action and its environmental consequences. Concurrence from the Service is not required.
- *"*May affect, but not likely to adversely affect" means that all effects are beneficial, insignificant, or discountable. Beneficial effects have contemporaneous positive effects without any adverse effects to the species or habitat. Insignificant effects relate to the size of the impact and include those effects that are undetectable, not measurable, or cannot be evaluated. Discountable effects are those extremely unlikely to occur. These determinations require written concurrence from the Service.
- *"*May affect, likely to adversely affect" means that listed resources are likely to be exposed to the action or its environmental consequences and will respond in a negative manner to the exposure.

3.2 RELEVANT GOALS, POLICIES, AND LAWS

3.2.1 TULARE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

The Tulare County General Plan contains the following goals and policies related to Environmental Resource Management (ERM) and Biological Resources (section 8.1) related to the project:

3.2.1.1.1 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

ERM-1.1: *Protection of Rare and Endangered Species*.
The County shall ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive wildlife and plant life, including those species designated as rare, threatened, and/or endangered by State and/or Federal government, through compatible land use development.

ERM-1.2: *Development in Environmentally Sensitive Areas*.
The County shall limit or modify proposed development within areas that contain sensitive habitat for special status species and direct development into less significant habitat areas.

Development in natural habitats shall be controlled so as to minimize erosion and maximize beneficial vegetative growth.

3.2.2 PORTERVILLE 2030 GENERAL PLAN

The Porterville 2030 General Plan contains the following relevant goals and policies of Open Space and Conservation Guiding (OSC-G) and Implementation (OSC-I) related to Biological Resources (Section 6.4) related to the project:

3.2.2.1.1 GUIDING POLICY

OSC-G-7: Protect habitat for special status species, designated under State and federal law.

3.2.2.1.2 IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES

OSC-I-26: Adopt habitat conservation regulations, including requirements and incentives to incorporate natural wildlife habitat features into new development and public landscapes, parks, and other public facilities.

The regulations will require adequate mitigation measures (e.g., selective preservation, replanting, sensitive site planning, etc.) for all development that will adversely impact significant biological resources, consistent with State and federal law.

OSC-I-28: Require protection of sensitive habitat areas and special status species in new development site designs in the following order: 1) Avoidance; 2) onsite mitigation, 3) offsite mitigation, and 4) purchase of mitigation credits.

OSC-I-29: Require assessments of biological resources prior to approval of any development within 300 feet of any creeks, sensitive habitat areas, or areas of potential sensitive status species.

The term "special status" species includes species classified as rare and endangered. These priorities are consistent with the California Department of Fish and Game guidelines. When habitat preservation on-site is not feasible (i.e., preserved parcels would be too small to be of any value), then off-site mitigation should occur.

OSC-I-30: Adopt regulations to promote water-conserving landscape plans, including the use of drought tolerant plants.

OSC-I-32: Identify and protect wildlife movement corridors that serve critical habitats to minimize wildlife-urban conflicts.

OSC-I-35: Consult with all responsible agencies about wetland and vernal pool habitat potentially affected by development.

This consultation will occur as part of the environmental review process.

OSC-I-36: Establish a "no net loss" policy for wetlands and vernal pools, including credits for land banking and off-site mitigation, and maintain a protection zone around wetlands, riparian corridors, and identified habit areas where development shall not occur, except as part of a parkway enhancement program (e.g., trails and bikeways).

Protection zones will be determined on case-by-case based on biological studies and field assessment.

3.2.3 PORTERVILLE DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (ZONING)

The City of Porterville Development Ordinance (Zoning) contains the following relevant goals and policies related to Additional Use and Development Regulations (*Chapter 300 Section .05*) Habitat Conservation relating to the project's project sites:

3.2.3.1.1 HABITAT CONSERVATION

New development shall be located to protect and preserve areas in which plant and/or animal life or its habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which would easily be disturbed or degraded by human activities and development. The provisions of this section apply to discretionary development projects proposed within or adjacent to (within 300 feet of the boundary of) sensitive habitat areas designated in the General Plan.

(a) ***Site Design.*** *Sensitive habitat areas shall be protected by any of the following means: 1) avoidance; 2) onsite mitigation; 3) offsite mitigation; and 4) purchase of mitigation credits.*

(b) ***Biological Report.*** *A discretionary development application for a project on a site located within or adjacent to (within 300 feet of the boundary of) sensitive habitat areas designated in the General Plan shall also include a report commissioned by the City that contains the following:*

(1) *An evaluation of the impact the development may have on the habitat, and whether the development will be consistent with the biological continuance of the habitat. Maximum feasible mitigation measures to protect the resource shall be identified and a program for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the mitigation measures shall be included.*
(2) *Conditions of approval recommendations for the restoration of damaged habitats, where feasible.*

(c) ***Required Findings.*** *Approval of a development permit for a project within or adjacent to identified habitat areas shall not occur unless the applicable review body first finds that:*

(1) *There will be no significant negative impact on the identified sensitive habitat and the proposed use will be consistent with the biological continuance of the habitat.*
(2) *The proposed use will not significantly disrupt the habitat.*
(3) *Adequate mitigation measures are required to mitigate impacts to significant biological resources.*
(4) *There has been "no net loss" of wetlands and vernal pools. Disturbed wetlands and vernal pools have been replaced.*
(5) *Where feasible, damaged habitats will be restored as a condition of development approval.*

3.2.4 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

Permits may be required from CDFW and/or USFWS if activities associated with a project have the potential to result in the "take" of a species listed as threatened or endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and/or Endangered Species Act (ESA), respectively. Take is defined by CESA as, "to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill" (California Fish and Game Code, Section 86). Take is more broadly defined by the ESA to include "harm" (16 USC, Section 1532(19), 50 CFR, Section 17.3). CDFW and USFWS are responsible agencies under CEQA and NEPA. Both agencies review CEQA and NEPA documents in order to determine the adequacy of the treatment of endangered species issues and to make project-specific recommendations for their conservation.

3.2.5 DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT

When species are listed as threatened or endangered, the USFWS often designates areas of "critical habitat" as defined by section 3(5)(A) of the ESA. Critical habitat is a term defined in the ESA as a specific geographic area that contains features essential for the conservation of a threatened or endangered species and that may require special management and protection. Critical habitat is a tool that supports the continued conservation of imperiled species by guiding cooperation with the federal government. Designations only affect federal agency actions or federally funded or permitted activities. Critical habitat does not prevent activities that occur within the designated area. Only activities that involve a federal permit, license, or funding and are likely to destroy or adversely modify critical habitat will be affected.

3.2.6 MIGRATORY BIRDS

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA: 16 USC 703-712) prohibits killing, possessing, or trading in any bird species covered in one of four international conventions to which the United States is a party, except in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior. The name of the act is misleading, as it covers almost all bird's native to the United States, even those that are non-migratory. The MBTA encompasses whole birds, parts of birds, and bird nests and eggs. Additionally, California Fish and Game Code makes it unlawful to take or possess any non-game birds covered by the MBTA (Section 3513), as well as any other native non-game birds (Section 3800).

3.2.7 BIRDS OF PREY

Birds of prey are protected in California under provisions of California Fish and Game Code (Section 3503.5), which states that it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the order Falconiformes (hawks and eagles) or Strigiformes (owls), as well as their nests and eggs. The bald eagle and golden eagle are afforded additional protection under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 USC 668), which makes it unlawful to kill birds or their eggs, or take feathers or nests, without a permit issued by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

3.2.8 NESTING BIRDS

In California, protection is afforded to the nests and eggs of all birds. California Fish and Game Code (Section 3503) states that it is "unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto." Breeding-season disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered a form of "take" by the CDFW.

3.2.9 WETLANDS AND OTHER "JURISDICTIONAL WATERS"

The definition of "waters of the United States" (WOTUS) often changes from one presidential administration to the next. The current definition, established under the Biden Administration that became effective on March 20, 2023 (i.e., "new rule"), has adopted much of the same WOTUS designations as the pre-2015 rules, but has incorporated the most recent science and court case rulings. Traditional navigable waters, territorial seas, and interstate waters remain covered under the new rule. Natural drainage channels and adjacent wetlands may be considered "waters of the United States" or "jurisdictional waters" subject to the jurisdiction of the USACE if there is a "relatively permanent" surface water connection, or

"significant nexus" to WOTUS. The extent of jurisdiction has been defined in the Code of Federal Regulations but is also subject to interpretation by the federal courts. Jurisdictional waters generally include the following categories:

1) *Waters which are:*
    a. *Currently used, or were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide;*
    b. *The territorial seas; or*
    c. *Interstate waters, including interstate wetlands;*
2) *Impoundments of waters otherwise defined as WOTUS under this definition, other than impoundments of waters identified under item (5) of this section;*
3) *Tributaries of waters identified in items (1) or (2) of this section:*
    a. *That are relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of water; or*
    b. *That either alone or in combination with similarly situated waters in the region, significantly affect the chemical, physical, or biological integrity of waters identified in item (1) of this section;*
4) *Wetlands adjacent to the following waters:*
    a. *Waters identified in item (1) of this section; or*
    b. *Relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of water identified in items (2) or (3)(i) of this section and with a continuous surface connection to those waters; or*
    c. *Waters identified in items (2) or (3) of this section when the wetlands either alone or in combination with similarly situated waters in the region, significantly affect the chemical, physical, or biological integrity of waters identified in item (1) of this section;*
5) *Intrastate lakes and ponds, streams, or wetlands not identified in items (1) through (4) of this section:*
    a. *That are relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of water with a continuous surface connection to the waters identified in items (1) or (3)(i) of this section; or*
    b. *That either alone or in combination with similarly situated waters in the region, significantly affect the chemical, physical, or biological integrity of waters identified in item (1) of this section.*

Prior exclusions have been consolidated under the new rule, which excludes from jurisdiction any feature that satisfies the following terms:

- *Waste treatment systems, including treatment ponds or lagoons;*
- *Prior converted cropland;*
- *Ditches excavated wholly in and draining only dry land and do not carry a relatively permanent flow of water;*
- *Artificially irrigated areas that would revert to dry land if irrigation ceased;*
- *Artificial lakes or ponds created by excavating or diking dry land for the use of stock watering, irrigation, settling basins or rice growing;*
- *Artificial reflecting or swimming pools;*
- *Waterfilled depressions created in dry land; and*
- *Swales and erosional features (ex. gullies and small washes) characterized by low volume, infrequent, or short duration flow.*

The new rule has incorporated the best available science, relevant supreme court cases, public comment, technical expertise, and experience gained from more than 45 years of implementing the pre-2015 "waters of the United States" framework to inform jurisdictional limits. One significant court case involves the U.S. Supreme Court in its *2001 Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County v. United States Army Corps of*

Engineers (SWANCC) decision. It was determined that channels and wetlands isolated from other jurisdictional waters cannot be considered jurisdictional on the basis of their use, hypothetical or observed, by migratory birds.

Similarly, in its 2006 consolidated *Carabell/Rapanos* decision, the United States Supreme Court ruled that a significant nexus between a wetland and other navigable waters must exist for the wetland itself to be considered jurisdictional waters. The Supreme Court heard *Sackett v. United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)* in May 2023, to determine governing standards of a significant nexus between waters of the United States and adjacent wetlands. The court decided that adjacent wetlands would be protected under the CWA only if it maintained a continuous surface water connection with a federal water body. This decision has limited protection for networks of wetlands connected to navigable waters through subsurface flow. The final decision is anticipated to be published in October 2023.
The USACE regulates the filling or grading of waters of the United States. under the authority of Section 404 of the CWA. The extent of jurisdiction within drainage channels is defined by "ordinary high-water marks" on opposing channel banks. All activities that involve the discharge of dredge or fill material into Waters of the United States are subject to the permit requirements of the USACE. Such permits are typically issued on the condition that the applicant agrees to provide mitigation that results in no net loss of wetland functions or values. No permit can be issued until the RWQCB issues a Section 401 Water Quality Certification (or waiver of such certification) verifying that the proposed activity will meet state water quality standards.

Under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1969, the SWRCB has regulatory authority to protect the water quality of all surface water and groundwater in the State of California ("Waters of the State"). Nine RWQCBs oversee water quality at the local and regional level. The RWQCB for a given region regulates discharges of fill or pollutants into Waters of the State through the issuance of various permits and orders. Discharges into Waters of the State that are also Waters of the United States require a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the RWQCB as a prerequisite to obtaining certain federal permits, such as a Section 404 Clean Water Act permit. Discharges into all Waters of the State, even those that are not also Waters of the United States, require Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs), or waivers of WDRs, from the RWQCB. The RWQCB also administers the Construction Storm Water Program and the federal National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. Projects that disturb one acre or more of soil must obtain a Construction General Permit under the Construction Storm Water Program. A prerequisite for this permit is the development of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) by a certified Qualified SWPPP Developer. Projects that discharge wastewater, storm water, or other pollutants into a Water of the United States may require a NPDES permit.

CDFW has jurisdiction over the bed and bank of natural drainages and lakes according to provisions of Section 1601 and 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code. Activities that may substantially modify such waters through the diversion or obstruction of their natural flow, change or use of any material from their bed or bank, or the deposition of debris require a notification of a Lake or Streambed Alteration. If CDFW determines that the activity may adversely affect fish and wildlife resources, a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will be prepared. Such an agreement typically stipulates that certain measures will be implemented to protect the habitat values of the lake or drainage in question.

3.3 POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT PROJECT-RELATED IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

Species protected by California Fish and Game Code, CDFW, USFWS, CEQA or NEPA that have the potential to be impacted by project activities include nesting migratory birds and raptors. Corresponding mitigation measures can be found below.

3.3.1 PROJECT-RELATED MORTALITY AND/OR DISTURBANCE OF NESTING MIGRATORY RAPTORS AND BIRDS

The project site contains suitable nesting and foraging habitat for a variety of migratory bird species, including raptors. It is anticipated that during the nesting bird season, birds could nest on the ground or in shrubs, trees, or structures within the project site and forage within the project site. Migratory birds nesting within the project site during construction have the potential to be injured or killed by project-related activities. In addition to the direct "take" of migratory nesting birds, nesting birds within the project site or adjacent areas could be disturbed by project-related activities resulting in nest abandonment. Projects that adversely affect the nesting success of raptors and migratory birds or result in the mortality of individual would be a violation of state and federal laws and considered a significant impact under CEQA and NEPA.

While foraging habitat for migratory birds and raptors is present on the site, there will be no loss of foraging habitat from implementation of the project. Loss of foraging habitat for migratory birds and raptors is not considered a significant impact.

Implementation of the following measures will reduce potential impacts to nesting raptors and migratory birds to a less than significant level under CEQA and NEPA and will help the project comply with state and federal laws protecting these avian species.

> Mitigation Measure BIO-1a (*Avoidance*): The project's construction activities will occur, if feasible, between September 1 and January 31 (outside of the nesting bird season) to avoid impacts to nesting birds.
>
> Mitigation Measure BIO-1b (*Pre-construction Surveys*): If activities must occur within the nesting bird season (February 1 to August 31), a qualified biologist will conduct a pre-construction survey for active migratory bird nests no more than seven days prior to the start of the construction within the project site and surrounding lands up to 100 feet from the project site and for active raptor nests within the project site and all accessible lands up to 500 feet from the project site. All raptor nests would be considered "active" upon the nest-building stage.
>
> Mitigation Measure BIO-1c (*Avoidance Buffers*): On discovery of any active nests near work areas, the biologist will determine appropriate construction setback distances (avoidance buffers) based on applicable CDFW and/or USFWS guidelines, the biology of the species, and work and site conditions. If necessary, avoidance buffers will be identified with flagging, fencing, or other easily visible means, and will be maintained until the biologist has determined that the nestlings have fledged.

3.4 SECTION 7 DETERMINATIONS

In addition to the effects analysis performed in Table 2 and Table 3 of this document, Table 4 summarizes project effect determinations for federally-listed species found on the CNDDB list generated on January 3, 2024, and the USFWS IPaC list generated on January 4, 2024 (see Appendix B and Appendix C, respectively), in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

Table 4: Section 7 Determinations

Species	Determination	Rationale for Determination
Buena Vista Lake Ornate Shrew (*Sorex ornatus relictus*)	No effect	**Habitat absent.** Habitats required by this species were absent from the project site.
Blunt-nosed leopard lizard (*Gambelia sila*)	No effect	**Habitat absent.** Habitats required by this species were absent from the project site.

Species	Determination	Rationale for Determination
California condor *(Gymnogyps californianus)*	No effect	**Habitat absent.** Habitats required by this species for nesting and foraging were absent from the project site.
California jewelflower (*Caulanthus californicus*)	No effect	**Habitat absent.** Habitats required by this species were absent from the project site.
Keck's checkerbloom (*Sidalcea keckii*)	No effect	**Habitat absent.** Habitats required by this species were absent from the project site.
Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)	No effect	**Habitat absent**. Habitats required by this species were absent from the project site.
Northwestern pond turtle (*Actinemis marmorata*)	No effect	**Habitat absent**. Habitats required by his species were absent from the project site.
San Joaquin adobe sunburst *(Pseudobahia peirsonii)*	No effect	**Habitat absent.** Habitats required by this species were absent from the project site.
San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*)	No effect	**Habitat absent.** Habitats required by this species were absent from the project site. This species may travel through the project site.
San Joaquin wollythreads (*Monolopia congdonii*)	No effect	**Habitat absent.** Habitats required by this species were absent from the project site.
Springville clarkia (*Clarkia springvillensis*)	No effect	**Habitat absent.** Habitats required by this species were absent from the project site.
Tipton kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys nitratoides nitratoides*)	No effect	**Habitat absent**. Habitats required by this species were absent from the project site.
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*)	No effect	**Habitat absent.** Habitats required by this species were absent from the project site.
Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*)	No effect	**Habitat absent**. Vernal pool habitat was absent within the project site and surrounding areas.

3.5 LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT PROJECT-RELATED IMPACTS

3.5.1 PROJECT-RELATED IMPACTS TO SPECIAL STATUS PLANT SPECIES ABSENT FROM, OR UNLIKELY TO OCCUR ON, THE PROJECT SITE

Of the 19 regionally occurring special status plant species, all are considered absent from or unlikely to occur within the project site due to past or ongoing disturbance and/or the absence of suitable habitat.

Since it is unlikely that these species would occur onsite, implementation of the project should have no impact on these 19 special status plant species through construction mortality, disturbance, or loss of habitat. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

3.5.2 PROJECT-RELATED IMPACTS TO SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES ABSENT FROM, OR UNLIKELY TO OCCUR ON, THE PROJECT SITE

Of the 17 regionally occurring special status animal species, all are considered absent from or unlikely to occur within the project site due to past or ongoing disturbance and/or the absence of suitable habitat.

Since it is unlikely that these species would occur onsite, implementation of the project should have no impact on these 17 special status species through construction mortality, disturbance, or loss of habitat. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

3.5.3 PROJECT-RELATED IMPACTS TO RIPARIAN HABITAT AND NATURAL COMMUNITIES OF SPECIAL CONCERN

Riparian habitat and natural communities of special concern were absent from the project site. There are no CNDDB-designated "natural communities of special concern" recorded within the project site or surrounding lands. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

3.5.4 PROJECT-RELATED IMPACTS TO REGULATED WATERS, WETLANDS, AND WATER QUALITY

There are no natural or artificial aquatic features within the project site. Therefore, project activities would not result in direct impacts to regulated waters, wetlands, and water quality. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

Since construction would involve ground disturbance over an area greater than one acre, the project would be required to obtain a Construction Stormwater General Permit under the Storm Water Program administered by the RWQCB. A prerequisite for this permit is the development of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) so construction activities do not adversely affect water quality.

3.5.5 PROJECT-RELATED IMPACTS TO WILDLIFE MOVEMENT CORRIDORS AND NATIVE WILDLIFE NURSERY SITES

The project site does not have any features that would be used as wildlife movement corridors. While the project does not have features that may be used as native wildlife nursery sites. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

3.5.6 PROJECT-RELATED IMPACTS TO CRITICAL HABITAT

Designated critical habitat is absent from the project site and surrounding lands. Therefore, there would be no impact to critical habitat, and mitigation measures are not warranted.

3.5.7 LOCAL POLICIES OR HABITAT CONSERVATION PLANS

The project appears to be consistent with the goals and policies of the Tulare County General Plan and the Porterville 2030 General Plan. There are no known HCPs or NCCPs in the project vicinity. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

3.5.8 PROJECT-RELATED IMPACT TO ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) and Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) are absent from the project site and surrounding lands, and consultation with the National Marine Fisheries (NMFS) Service would not be required. Query results of the NMFS EHF Mapper can be found in Appendix E at the end of this document. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

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APPENDIX A: REPRESENTATIVE PHOTOS OF THE PROJECT SITE

APPENDIX B: CNDDB 9-QUAD SPECIES LIST

APPENDIX C: IPAC SPECIES LIST

APPENDIX D: NRCS WEB SOIL SURVEY REPORT

APPENDIX E: NMFS EFH MAPPER

Appendix C: Cultural Resource

Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment for the Hope Elementary School Water Systems Improvement Project, City of Porterville, Tulare County, California

Consuelo Y. Sauls

Prepared By

dp*

Taylored Archaeology
6083 N. Figarden Dr., Ste 616
Fresno, CA 93722

Prepared For

Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group
455 W. Fir Ave
Clovis, CA 93611

February 2024
(revised March 2024)

USGS Porterville 7.5' topographic quadrangle
17.9-acre APE; 100% surveyed
Keywords: Negative findings

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

Taylored Archaeology completed a Phase I Archaeological Survey Report for Hope Elementary School Water Systems Improvement Project, Tulare County, California. The proposed Project will construct two new water mains within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) totaling approximately 12,150 linear feet along South Indiana Avenue and West Teapot Dome Avenue. The Project will jack and bore under State Route 65 along West Teapot Dome Avenue during water main construction. A 2-inch service connection and water meter will be installed at New Hope Elementary School. An existing water tank on the school site will be removed.

The Project requires compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act with the City of Porterville (City) as lead agency. The City is seeking funding for the Project from the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) through the State's Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience (SAFER) Drinking Water Technical Assistance Program. The SAFER program may receive federal funds and therefore, the Project was additionally assessed for effects to historic properties within the APE under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Taylored Archaeology performed a phase I archaeological survey report of the APE, under contract with Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group to assess and determine whether historic resources are present that could be affected by the proposed Project. The archaeological investigation included: (1) a records search from the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS); (2) a request of the Native American Heritage Commission's (NAHC) Sacred Lands File and nongovernmental tribal outreach; (3) archival research; and (4) an archaeological pedestrian survey of the APE.

The SSJVIC reported one prior cultural resources study conducted within the APE and no cultural resources recorded within the APE. The SSJVIC also reported three previous cultural resources studies were conducted, and two historical resources were recorded, within a 0.5-mile radius of the APE. These include a segment of the Poplar Ditch (P-54-002208) and a segment of the Southern Pacific Railroad (P-54-004626) (Appendix C). No cultural resources were observed during the pedestrian survey.

The NAHC's Sacred Lands File search and outreach to local Native American representatives did not result in the identification of sacred places or other tribal cultural resources in the APE. A copy of this report will be submitted to the SSJVIC for entry into the CHRIS database.

Taylored Archaeology additionally advises the following:

In the event that previously unidentified archaeological remains are encountered during development or ground-moving activities in the APE, all work should be halted until a qualified archaeologist can identify the discovery and assess its significance. In the event of accidental discovery of unidentified archaeological remains during development or ground-moving

If human remains are uncovered during construction, the Tulare County Coroner is to be notified to investigate the remains and arrange proper treatment and disposition. If the remains are identified on the basis of archaeological context, age, cultural associations, or biological traits to be those of a Native American, California Health and Safety Code 7050.5 and PRC 5097.98 require that the coroner notify the NAHC within 24 hours of discovery. The NAHC will then identify the Most Likely Descendent who will be afforded an opportunity to make recommendations regarding the treatment and disposition of the remains.

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION 1
1.1 PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION 1
1.2 REGULATORY SETTING 2
1.2.1 CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT 2
1.2.2 NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT OF 1966 3
1.2.3 SECTION 106 OF NHPA 3
1.3 PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS 4
1.4 REPORT STRUCTURE 8

2 PROJECT SETTING 9
2.1 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT 9
2.2 PREHISTORIC SETTING 10
2.3 ETHNOGRAPHY 11
2.4 HISTORIC SETTING 12
2.4.1 California History 12
2.4.2 Central California History 13
2.4.3 Local History 13

3 METHODS 15
3.1 RECORDS SEARCH 15
3.2 ARCHIVAL RESEARCH 15
3.3 NATIVE AMERICAN OUTREACH 15
3.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL PEDESTRIAN SURVEY 16

4 RESULTS 17
4.1 RECORDS SEARCH 17
4.2 ARCHIVAL RESEARCH 18
4.3 NATIVE AMERICAN OUTREACH 18
4.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL PEDESTRIAN SURVEY RESULTS 19

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION 22

6 REFERENCES 23

APPENDICIES

A Personnel Qualifications
B Records Search Results
C Native American Outreach

FIGURES

Figure 1-1 Project vicinity in Tulare County, California..... 5
Figure 1-2 Project location on the USGS Porterville, CA 7.5-minute quadrangle..... 6
Figure 1-3 Aerial view of the APE showing survey coverage. 7
Figure 4-1 Eastern portion of APE on south side of West Teapot Dome Ave, facing west. .. 20
Figure 4-2 Well site at Hope Elementary. Tank in foreground. 20
Figure 4-3 Northern portion of APE on east side of South Indiana Street, facing south..... 21
Figure 4-4 Western portion of APE on south side of West Teapot Dome Ave, facing west.. 21

TABLES

Table 4-1 Previous Recorded Cultural Resources within 0.5-mile radius of the APE..... 17
Table 4-2 Previous Cultural Resources Studies within the APE 17
Table 4-3 Previous Cultural Resources Studies within 0.5-mile radius of the APE..... 17

1
INTRODUCTION

Taylored Archaeology performed a Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment for the Hope Elementary School Water Systems Improvement Project (Project) in unincorporated Tulare County, California under contract to Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group. As part of development approval process, the City of Porterville as lead agency must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code [PRC] 21000 [g] mandate that government agencies consider the impacts of a project on the environment, including cultural resources. The City of Porterville is seeking funding for the Project from the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) through the State's Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience (SAFER) Drinking Water Technical Assistance Program. The SAFER program may receive federal funds and therefore, the Project was additionally assessed for effects to historic properties within the APE under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

1.1 PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The Project is located south of the City of Porterville (City) and includes the intersection of South Indiana Street and West Teapot Dome Avenue in Tulare County, California (Figure 1-1). The APE is on the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute Porterville, California, topographic quadrangle in Sections 10, 11, 14, and 15 of Township 22 South, Range 27 East, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (Figure 1-2).

The Project contains a well site at the Hope Elementary School (School) that is served by a single active well that is in exceedance of acceptable maximum containment levels for nitrate. As a result, the Project is seeking to consolidate with the City's existing water system. The proposed Project will construct two new water mains. The first is approximately 6,550 linear feet of a new 12-inch water main along South Indiana Avenue from West Teapot Dome Avenue to West Scranton Avenue and connecting to City facilities in West Scranton Avenue. The second is approximately 5,300 linear feet of a new 12-inch water main along West Teapot Dome Avenue from the frontage of the school to Newcomb Street, connecting to City facilities in Newcomb Street. The Project will jack and bore approximately 300 linear feet of 12-inch water main under State Route 65 in route to Newcom Street. Additionally, at the school site a 2-inch service connection and water meter would be installed, providing the school with the ability to use the new water main domestic water use, irrigation, and fire flow. An existing water tank on the school site would be removed.

The APE for the Project is defined as the area of potential ground disturbance resulting from project activities based upon the project description. The total horizontal APE includes a 50-foot-wide corridor centered on the proposed 12,150 linear feet of new water mains, and also includes

1.2 REGULATORY SETTING

In this report "cultural resources" are defined as prehistoric or historical archaeological sites as well as historical objects, buildings, or structures. In accordance with 30 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §60.4, "historical" in this report applies to cultural resources which are at least 50 years old. The significance or importance of a cultural resource is dependent upon whether the resource qualifies for inclusion at the local or state level in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or at the federal level in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Cultural resources that are determined to be eligible for inclusion in the CRHR are called "historical resources" (California Code of Regulations [CCR] 15064.5[a]). Under this statue the determination of eligibility is partially based on the consideration of the criteria of significance as defined in 14 CCR 15064.5(a)(3). Cultural resources eligible for inclusion in the NRHP are deemed "historic properties".

1.2.1 CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

Pursuant to CEQA, a historical resource is a resource listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the CRHR. Historical resources may include, but are not limited to, "any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically or archaeologically significant" (PRC §5020.1[j]). In addition, a resource included in a local register of historical resources or identified as significant in a local survey conducted in accordance with the state guidelines are also considered historic resources under California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5020.1.

CEQA details appropriate measures for the evaluation and protection of cultural resources in §15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines. According to CEQA guidelines §15064.5 (a)(3), criteria for listing on the CRHR includes the following:

> *(A) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage.*
> *(B) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.*
> *(C) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.*
> *(D) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.*

According to CEQA guidelines §21074 (a)(1), criteria for tribal cultural resources includes the following:

> *(1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:*
> *(A) included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources.*
> *(B) included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.*

Protection of cultural resources within California is additionally regulated by PRC §5097.5, which prohibits destruction, defacing, or removal of any historic or prehistoric cultural features on land under the jurisdiction of State or local authorities.

1.2.2 NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT OF 1966

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C. 470 ET SEQ.) was enacted in 1966 and created a national policy of historic preservation. The law established several programs, administered by the Secretary of the Interior, to encourage the achievement of preservation goals at local, state, and federal levels. The NHPA authorized the creation and expansion of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), formed the position of State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), allowed for the creation of State Review Boards to set up methods for local governments to enact the NHPA at a local level, assisted Native American tribes with preserving their heritage, and established the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP).

The NHPA established criteria for determining if a historic property is eligible for inclusion in the NRHP. These criteria are set forth in 36 CFR 60.4 as follows:

> *The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and*
>
> *(a) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or*
>
> *(b) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or*
>
> *(c) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or*
>
> *(d) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.*

1.2.3 SECTION 106 OF NHPA

Section 106 of NHPA states that any federal agency with direct or indirect jurisdiction over federally assisted or proposed federal action will take into account the effect the action will have on any historic property that is on, or eligible to be included in, the NRHP. The NHPA provides the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the relevant SHPO the opportunity to provide comments on the federal action in regard to potential impacts to historic properties.

1.3 PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Archaeologist Consuelo Y. Sauls (M.A.), a Registered Professional Archaeologist (RPA 41591505), managed the assessment and compiled this report for the Project. Ms. Sauls also conducted the records search, literature review, requested Sacred Lands File and performed the pedestrian field survey of the APE. Ms. Sauls meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Professional Qualifications in Archaeology. Statement of Qualifications for key personnel is provided in Appendix A.



Figure 1-1 Project vicinity in Tulare County, California.

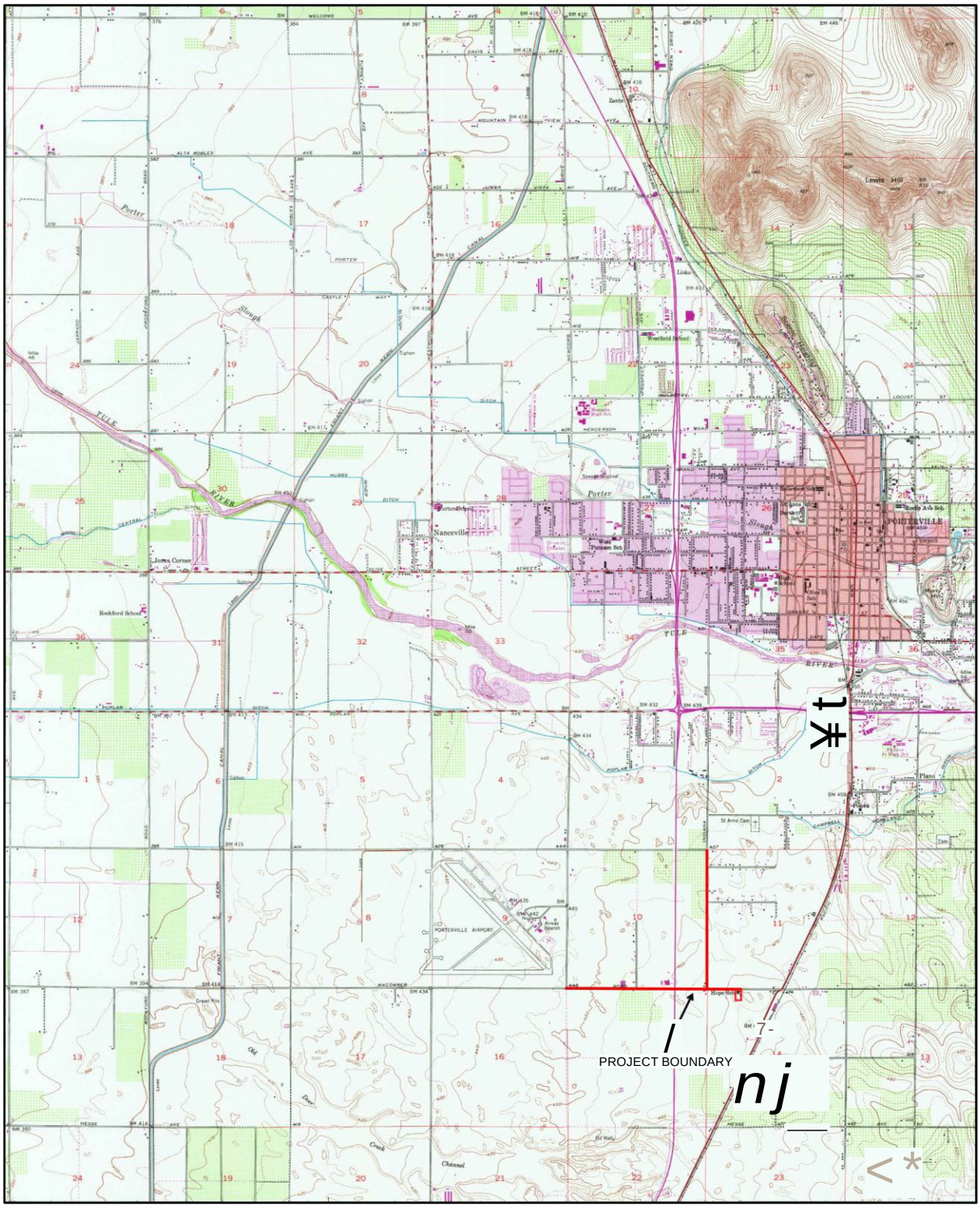


Figure 1-2 Project location on the USGS Porterville, CA 7.5-minute quadrangle.

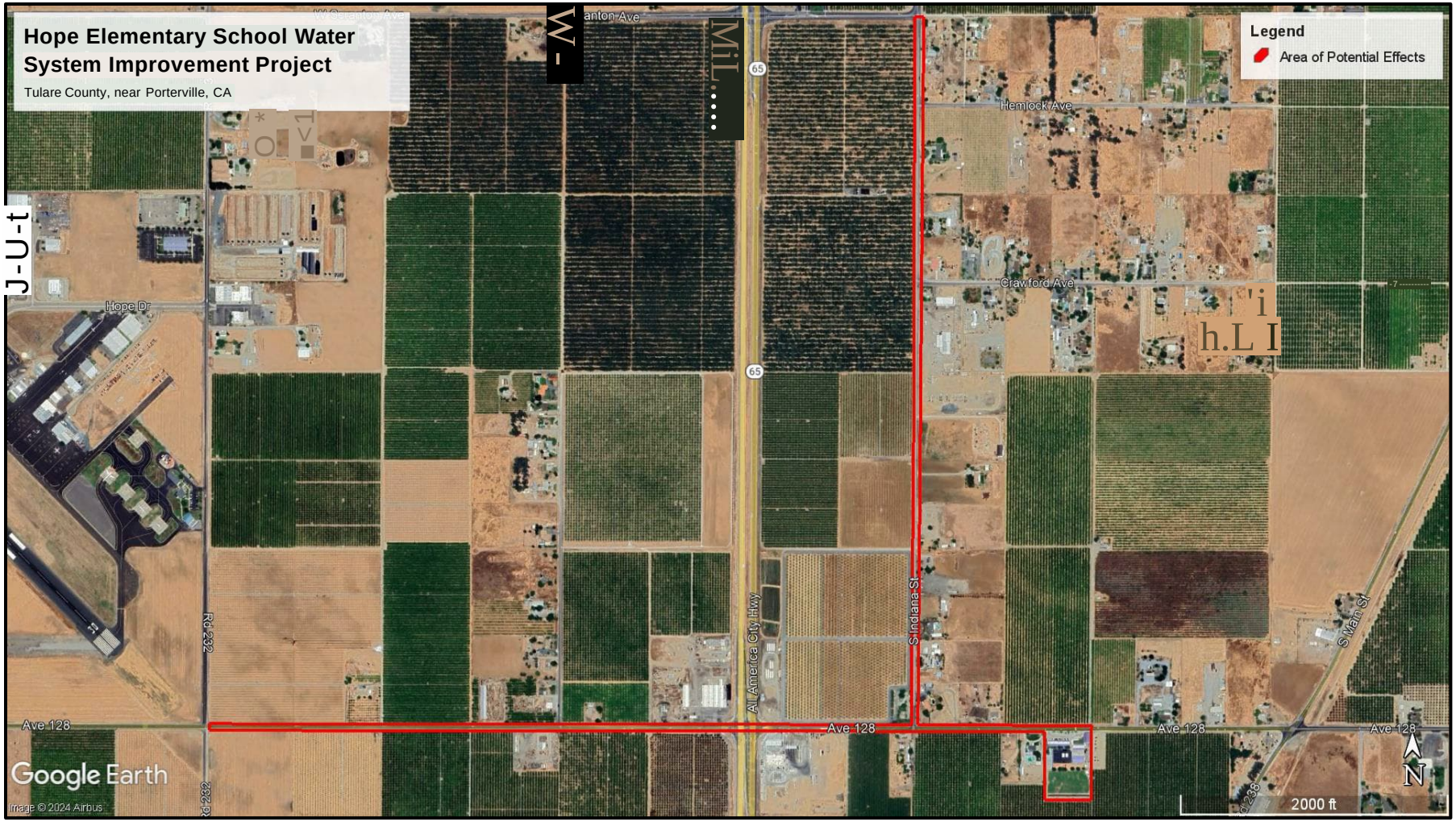


Figure 1-3 Aerial view of the APE showing survey coverage.

1.4 REPORT STRUCTURE

This report documents the results of an archaeological survey report of the proposed Project area. In order to assess potential project impacts to archaeological and historical resources pursuant to CCR §15064.5, the following specific tasks were completed: (1) requesting a records search from the Southern San Joaquin Information Center (SSJVIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), at California State University, Bakersfield; (2) requesting a Sacred Lands File Search from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC); (3) archival research; and (4) conducting an archaeological pedestrian survey.

Taylored Archaeology prepared this report following the California Office of Historic Preservation standards in the 1990 Archaeological Resources Management Report Recommended Contents and Format. Chapter 1 describes the introduction of the Project and its location, and identifies the key personnel involved in this report. Chapter 2 summarizes the Project setting, including the natural, prehistoric, historic, and ethnographic background for the Project area and surrounding area. Chapters 3 details the methods used for cultural records search, archival research, local Native American outreach, and archaeological pedestrian survey. Chapter 4 summarizes the results of the cultural resource investigation. Chapter 5 discusses the Project results and offers management recommendations. Chapter 6 is a bibliography of references cited within this report. The report also contains the following appendices: Qualifications of key personnel (Appendix A), the CHRIS records search results (Appendix B), and the NAHC letter of the SLF results (Appendix C).

2
PROJECT SETTING

2.1 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Project area lies in the Central Valley of California, which is approximately 450 miles from north to south, and ranges in width east to west from 40 to 60 miles (Prothero 2017). The Central Valley is divided into two subunits, the Sacramento Valley in the north and the San Joaquin Valley in the south, which are each named after the primary rivers within each valley (Madden 2020). The Project is located approximately 470 feet above sea level on the open flat plains of the Southern San Joaquin Valley. Climate within the San Joaquin valley is classified as a 'hot Mediterranean climate', with hot and dry summers, and cool damp winters characterized by periods of dense fog known as 'tule fog' (Prothero 2017).

The San Joaquin Valley is a comprised of a structural trough created approximately 65 million years ago and is filled with nearly six miles of sediment (Bull 1964). The San Joaquin Valley ranges from Stockton and the San Joaquin-Sacramento River Delta in the north to Wheeler Ridge to the south, ranging nearly 60 miles wide at its widest (Zack 2017). It is split by late Pleistocene alluvial fans between the San Joaquin River hydrologic area in the north and the Tulare Lake Drainage Basin in the south (Rosenthal et al 2007). The Project site is located within the latter of the two hydrologic units. The Kaweah, Tule, Kern, and Kings rivers flowed into large inland lakes with no outflow except in high flood events, in which the lakes would flow through the Fresno Slough into the San Joaquin River. The largest of these inland lakes was the Tulare Lake, which occupied a vast area of Tulare and Kings Counties and was the largest freshwater lake west of the Mississippi. These four rivers in the Tulare Lake Drainage Basin accounted for more than 95 percent of water discharged into Tulare Lake, with the remaining five percent sourced from small drainages originating in the Coast Ranges to the west (Adams et al. 2015).

The Project area is in central Tulare County on the valley floor of the San Joaquin Valley within the greater Tule River alluvial fan. Before the appearance of agriculture in the nineteenth century, the Project location would have been comprised of prairie grasslands with scattered oak tree savannas near the foothills, and along the various streams and drainages (Preston 1981). Riparian environments would also have been present along various waterways, including drainages and marshes. Native vegetation likely would have consisted of needle grasses and other perennial bunchgrasses before the introduction of non-native species in the 1800s.

The valley floor of the region was largely dominated by marshlands, lakes, and annual grasslands. Historically, these habitats provided a lush environment for large animals, including various migratory birds and other waterfowl, grizzly bear, tule elk, pronghorn, mule deer, black bear, and mountain lion (Preston 1981). Native trees and plants observed in the Project vicinity include various blue, live, and white oaks, cottonwood, and willow. The introduction of agriculture to the region resulted in large animals being forced out of their habitat. Common land mammals now include valley coyote, bobcat, gray fox, kit fox, and rabbits. Rivers and lakes throughout the valley

provide habitat for freshwater fish, including rainbow trout, Sacramento sucker, and Sacramento perch (Preston 1981).

2.2 PREHISTORIC SETTING

Research into San Joaquin Valley prehistory began in the early 1900s with several archaeological investigations (Rosenthal et al. 2007). The Southern San Joaquin Valley is of one of the least understood areas within California due to a lack of well-grounded chronologies for large segments of the valley (Rosenthal et al. 2007). This is largely due to the valley floor being filled with thick alluvial deposits, and from human activity largely disturbing much of the valley floor due to a century and a half of agricultural use (Dillon 2002; Siefken 1999). Mound sites may have occurred as frequently as one every two or three miles along major waterways but studying such mounded occupations sites is difficult as most surface sites have been destroyed (Schenck and Dawson 1929). Much of the early to middle Holocene archaeological sites may be buried as deep as 10 meters due to millennia of erosion and alluvial deposits from the western Sierras (Moratto 1984).

Mass agricultural development has heavily disturbed and changed the landscape of the Southern San Joaquin Valley, from the draining of marshes and the vanishing of the extensive Tulare Lake, to grading nearly the entire valley for agricultural operations (Garone 2011). These activities have impacted or scattered much of the shallow surface deposits and mounds throughout the valley (Rosenthal et al 2007). Some researchers have suggested that potentially as much as 90 percent of all Central California archaeological sites have been destroyed from these activities (Riddell 2002).

The cultural traits and chronologies which are summarized below are largely based upon information discussed in multiple sources, including Bennyhoff and Fredrickson (1973, 1974), Garfinkel (2015), McGuire and Garfinkel (1980), Moratto (1984), and Rosenthal et al. (2007). The most recent comprehensive approach to compiling a chronology of the Southern San Joaquin Valley prehistory is by Garfinkel in 2015, which builds off Rosenthal's 2007 previous work. Both Garfinkel's and Rosenthal's chronologies are calculated in years B.C. In the interest of maintaining cohesiveness with modern anthropological research, the dates of these chronologies have been adapted into years before present (B.P.).

The Paleo-Indian Period (13,500-10,600 cal B.P.) was largely represented by ephemeral lake sites which were characterized by atlatl and spear projectile points. Around 14,000 years ago, California was largely a cooler and wetter place, but with the retreat of continental Pleistocene glaciers, California largely experienced a warming and drying period. Lakes filled with glacial meltwater were located in the valley floor and used by populations of now extinct large game animals. A few prehistoric sites were discovered near the southwestern shore of Tulare Lake (Garfinkel 2015). Foragers appear to have operated in small groups which migrated on a regular basis.

During the Lower Archaic Period (10,500-7450 cal B.P.), climate change created a largely different environment which led to the creation of larger alluvial fans and flood plains. Most of the

archaeological records of the prior period wound up being buried by geological processes. During this time, cultural patterns appear to have emerged between the foothill and valley populations of the local people. The foothill sites were often categorized by dense flaked and ground stone assemblages, while the valley sites were instead characterized by a predominance of crescents and stemmed projectile points. Occupation within the area is represented mostly by isolated discoveries and along the former shoreline of Tulare Lake. Archaeological finds are typically characterized by chipped stone crescents, stemmed points, and other distinctive flakes stone artifacts (Rosenthal et al. 2007). Variations in consumption patterns emerged as well, with the valley sites more marked by consumption of waterfowl, mussels, and freshwater fish, while the foothills sites saw an increase in nuts, seeds, and a more narrowly focused diet than the valley sites.

The Middle Archaic (7450-2500 cal B.P.) saw an increase in semi-permanent villages along river and creek settings, with more permanent sites located along lakes with a more stable supply of water and wildlife. Due to the warmer and drier weather of this period, many lakes within the valley dramatically reduced in size, while some vanished completely (Garone 2011). Cultural patterns during this time saw an increase in stone tools, while a growth in shell beads, ornaments, and obsidian evidence an extensive and ever-growing long-distance trade network. Little is known of cultural patterns in the valley during the Upper Archaic (2500-850 B.P.), but large village structures appeared to be more common around local rivers. An overall reduction of projectile point size suggests changing bow and arrow technologies. Finally, the Emergent Period (850 cal B.P. - Historic Era) was generally marked by an ever-increasing specialization in tools, and the bow and arrow generally replaced the dominance of the dart and atlatl. Cultural traditions ancestral to those recorded during ethnographic research in the early 1900s are identifiable.

2.3 ETHNOGRAPHY

The APE is in the Southern Valley Yokuts ethnographic territory of the San Joaquin Valley. The Yokuts were generally divided into three major groups, the Northern Valley Yokuts, the Southern Valley Yokuts, and the Foothill Yokuts. The Yokuts are a sub-group of the Penutian language that covers much of coastal and central California and Oregon (Callaghan 1958). The Yokuts language contained multiple dialects spoken throughout the region, though many of them were mutually understandable (Merriam 1904).

The Yokuts have been extensively researched and recorded by ethnographers, including Powers (1877), Kroeber (1925), Gifford and Schenck (1926, 1929), Gayton (1930, 1945), Driver (1937), Harrington (1957), Latta (1977), and Wallace (1978). Much of the research from these ethnographers focuses on the central Yokuts tribes due to the northernmost tribes being impacted by Euro-Americans during the California Gold Rush of the mid 1800s, and by the southernmost tribes often being removed and relocated by the Spanish to various Bay Area or coastal missions. The central Yokuts tribes, and especially the western Sierra Nevada foothill tribes, were the most intact at the time of ethnographic study.

The most detailed ethnographic information gathered regarding Native American group territories in Central California is located within maps prepared by Kroeber. The information presented in Kroeber's map of Southern and Central Yokuts shows the Project area within the Koyeti Yokuts territory (1925: Plate 47). The main village for this area was *Chokowisho*, which was approximately 2 miles to the northeast of the APE along the Tule River (Kroeber 1925). Primary Yokuts villages were typically located along lakeshores and major stream courses, with scattered secondary or temporary camps and settlements located near gathering areas in the foothills. Yokuts were organized into local tribes, with one or more linked villages and smaller settlements within a territory (Kroeber 1925).

Each local tribe was a land-owning group that was organized around a central village and shared common territory and ancestry. Most local tribe populations ranged from 150 to 500 people (Kroeber 1925). These local tribes were often led by a chief, who was often advised by a variety of assistants including the winatum, who served as a messenger and assistant chief (Gayton 1930). Early studies by Kroeber (1925), Gifford and Schenck (1926), and Gayton (1930) concluded that social and political authority within local tribes was derived from male lineage and patriarchy. However, more recent reexaminations (Dick-Bissonnette 1998) argue that this assumption of patriarchal organization was based on male bias by early 20th century researchers, and instead Yokuts sociopolitical authority was matriarchal in nature and centered around matrilineal use-rights and women's work groups.

Prior to Euro-American contact, there was abundance of natural resources within the greater Tulare Lake area. Due to these resources, Yokuts maintained some of the largest populations in North America west of the continental divide (Cook 1955a).

2.4 HISTORIC SETTING

2.4.1 California History

European contact in modern-day California first occurred in 1542 with the arrival of a Spanish expedition lead by Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo into San Diego Bay (Engstrand 1997). Expeditions along the California coast continued throughout the sixteenth century and primarily focused on finding favorable harbors for further expansion and trade across the Pacific. However, rocky shorelines, unfavorable currents, and wind conditions made traveling north from New Spain to the upper California coast a difficult and time-consuming journey (Eifler 2017). The topography of California, with high mountains, large deserts, and few natural harbors lead to European expansion into California only starting in the 1760s. As British and Russian expansion through fur trading encroached on California from the north, Spain established a system of presidios, pueblos, and missions along the California coast to defend its claim, starting with Mission San Diego de Alcalá in 1769 (Engstrand 1997).

2.4.2 Central California History

The San Joaquin Valley did not experience contact with Europeans until the late 1700s (Starr 2007). Life at the California missions was hard and brutal for Native Americans, with many dying of disease, poor conditions, and many fleeing to areas not under direct Spanish control (Jackson and Castillo 1995). The earliest exploration of the San Joaquin Valley by Europeans was likely by the Spaniards when in the fall of 1772 a group known as the Catalonian Volunteers entered the valley through Tejon Pass in search of deserters from the Southern California Missions (Zack 2017). However, the group only made it as far north as Buena Vista Lake in modern day Kern County before turning around due to the extensive swamps. Additional excursions to the valley were for exploration such as those led by Lieutenant Bariel Moraga in 1806, but also to find sites for suitable mission sites and to track down Native Americans fleeing the coastal missions (Cook 1958).

Subsequent expeditions were also sent to pursue outlaws from the coast who would often flee to the valley for safety. One of the subsequent explorations was an expedition in 1814 to 1815 with Sargent Juan Ortega and Father Juan Cabot, who left the Mission San Miguel with a company of approximately 30 Spanish soldiers and explored the San Joaquin Valley (Smith 2004). This expedition passed through the Kaweah Delta and modern-day Visalia and made a recommendation to establish a mission near modern-day Visalia. However, with European contact also came European disease. Malaria and other new diseases were brought by Europeans, and in 1833 an epidemic of unknown origin traveled throughout the Central Valley. Some estimates place the Native American mortality of the epidemic as high as 75 percent (Cook 1955b). Combined with the rapid expansion of Americans into California in 1848 during the Gold Rush, Native American populations within the valley never fully recovered (Eifler 2017).

Initial settlement within the valley by Europeans in the 1830s was largely either by trappers or horse thieves (Clough and Secrest 1984). In fact, horse and other livestock theft was so rampant that ranching operations on the Rancho Laguna de Tache by the Kings River and Rancho del San Joaquin Rancho along the San Joaquin River could not be properly established (Cook 1962). With the end of the Mexican American War and the beginning of the gold rush in 1848, the San Joaquin Valley became more populated with ranchers and prospectors. Most prospectors traveled by sea to San Francisco and used rivers ranging from the Sacramento River to the San Joaquin River to access the California interior (Eifler 2017). Most areas south of the San Joaquin River were less settled simply because those rivers did not connect to the San Francisco Bay area except in wet flood years. By 1850, California became a state and Tulare County was established in 1853.

2.4.3 Local History

The city of Porterville, located north of the Project area, was founded in 1854, and initially served as the Tule River Station stop for the Butterfield Overland Mail state route as it traveled north from Los Angeles to Stockton (Helmich 2008). The location eventually became known in Porterville in 1864 named after Royal Porter Putnam who purchased 40 acres to start the town after the Tule River permanently changed course after flooding in 1862 (Holloway 2021). The

Southern Pacific Railroad was extended from Fresno into Tulare County in the early 1870s (Small 1926). By 1874, branch railroad connections were built to agricultural communities, (Mitchell 1974). The construction of the rail line also brought an increase in agriculture and farms, which clashed with existing ranching operations in the local area. Escalating conflicts and livestock disputes between ranchers and farmers lead to the "No Fence Law" in 1874, which forced ranchers to pay for crop and property damage caused by their cattle (Ludeke 1980). With the passage of this law and the expansion of irrigation systems, predominant land use in the 1870s switched from grazing to farming (Mitchell 1974). This led to the beginning of the vast change of the San Joaquin Valley from native vegetation and grasslands to irrigated crops (Varner and Stuart 1975).

Water rights within California originally arose from the 'first come first serve' policy of the Gold Rush era. Diverting surface water to farms became big business but was a convoluted mess of customs, traditions, and conflicting claims (Zack 2017). Fed up with the situation, small farmers gathered behind Modesto lawyer C.C. Wright, who was elected to the California legislature in 1887 on the platform of taking water rights from large estates and putting it in the power of community-controlled irrigation districts (Hundley 1992). To solve this mess, the Wright Act of 1887 was passed that allowed residents to petition a local county board of supervisors to create irrigation districts that had the power to issues bonds, and tax land within the district boundaries to pay for the creation and maintenance of canals and ditches for irrigation purposes.

At the same time as the Wright Act, an important step forward was made in ditch-digging technology that allowed irrigation systems to be built at a faster pace. From the 1840s to 1890s, farm ditches and canals were largely constructed through the use of buckboards and slip-scoops, which involved the use of a board pulled by horses in an uprights position in order to level ground (Bulls 2010). Between 1883 and 1885, Scottish immigrant James Porteous had moved to Fresno and made significant improvements to the buckboard style scraper that allowed the new scraper to be pulled by two horses and scrape and move soil while dumping it at a controlled depth. This new design was patented and sold as the "Fresno Scraper", which lead to an explosion of ditch digging efforts within the San Joaquin Valley (Zack 2017).

3
METHODS

3.1 RECORDS SEARCH

On January 25, 2024, Taylored Archaeology requested a cultural resource records search from the SSJVIC of the CHRIS at California State University in Bakersfield, California. The purpose of this request was to identify and review prior cultural resource investigations completed in or near the APE and identify any prehistoric or historical resources that had been previously recorded within the APE and a 0.5-mile radius of the surrounding area. SSJVIC staff researched historical USGS topographic maps, reports of previous cultural resource investigations, archaeological site and survey base maps, cultural resource records (DPR forms) as well as listings of the Historic Properties Directory of the Office of Historic Preservation, General Land Office Maps, Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility, and the California Inventory of Historic Resources (Appendix B).

3.2 ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

Archival research was conducted to investigate the historical background for any potential archaeological deposits, historical deposits or built environment properties that may exist in the APE. Historical maps, historical aerial photographs, historical US Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps, Google Street View photos, books, scholarly articles, and other records were used to better understand the prehistory and history of the APE and surrounding area. Research data was used to identify potential areas within the APE where archaeological deposits may exist, or historical buildings, structures or objects may exist. The results of this research are presented in Chapter 4.

3.3 NATIVE AMERICAN OUTREACH

Taylored Archaeology sent a request to the NAHC as part of this archaeological survey report for a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search on January 25, 2024. The objective of the SLF search was to identify any known places of spiritual, sacred activity or traditional use or gathering areas are present in or near the APE. The NAHC responded via email on February 5, 2024, with a letter including contact information for local Native American tribal representatives who may have knowledge or interest in sharing information about the APE and surrounding area. Each Native American representative listed was sent a nongovernmental outreach letter via email or certified mail to those who may not have an email address and a map notifying them of the Project and asking if they had any knowledge of the Project area or surrounding vicinity. Follow-up communication was performed via email or phone call as appropriate. The SLF results are in Chapter 4.

3.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL PEDESTRIAN SURVEY

A pedestrian survey was conducted by archaeologist Consuelo Sauls on February 10, 2024, of all exposed ground along the entire length of the APE. Ms. Sauls walked a 4 meter transect on both sides of all roadways in all unpaved areas within the APE. She additionally walked a meandering 3 meter transect within the well site at Hope Elementary School. All portions of the APE were accessible and surveyed.

The survey started at the southeast end of the APE at the Hope Elementary School well site. The survey then proceeded west along the south side of West Teapot Dome Avenue within the APE until she reached the southwestern corner of the APE at Newcomb Street. Ms. Sauls then walked east along the north side of West Teapot Dome Avenue until she reached South Indiana Street, and proceeded north along South Indiana Street on the west side until she reached the north end of the APE at West Scranton Avenue/Avenue 136. She then proceeded south on the east side of South Indiana Street until she reached West Teapot Dome Avenue, then walked east on the north side of West Teapot Dome Avenue until she again reached Hope Elementary School.

The APE was checked for both prehistoric deposits and historical features, structures, and artifacts more than 50 years old that may be present on the ground surface. The entire APE was accessible. Ms. Sauls photographed the survey area using an iPhone 11 Pro digital camera.

4
RESULTS

4.1 RECORDS SEARCH

An archaeological records search results for the project were provided by the SSJVIC in a letter dated February 5, 2024 (Records Search File No. 24-040; Appendix B). The results of this search identified no cultural resources within the APE, and two cultural resources within a 0.5-mile radius of the APE (Table 4-1). These two resources are a historical structure and a historical site. The first resource, P-54-002208, is a segment of the Poplar Ditch recommended in 2016 to be eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criterion 1 (Azpitarte and Escamilla 2020). The second resource, P-54-004626, is a segment of the Southern Pacific Railroad that was recommended to not be eligible for the NRHP nor the CRHR in 2020 (Azpitarte and Escamilla). Neither resource will be impacted by the proposed Project.

The records search results also indicated that one cultural resources study was previously conducted within the APE (Table 4-2) and three cultural resources studies were previously conducted within a 0.5-mile radius of the APE (Table 4-3).

Table 4-1 Previous Recorded Cultural Resources within 0.5-mile radius of the APE

Resource Number	Age Association	Resource Type	Resource Description	Resource Within APE
P-54-002208	Historic	Structure	A short segment of the late 19th century Poplar Ditch	No
P-54-004626	Historic	Site	A long segment of the Southern Pacific Railroad	No

Table 4-2 Previous Cultural Resources Studies within the APE

Report Number	Author(s)	Date	Report Title	Study
TU-01970	Dorothy D. Margo and Willetta Regan	1963	How Porterville Came To Be	Pamphlet

Table 4-3 Previous Cultural Resources Studies within 0.5-mile radius of the APE

Report Number	Author(s)	Date	Report Title	Study
TU-00489	Nelson Siefkin	1994	An Archaeological Assessment of Case No. PSP 94-036: A 22.87	Archaeological Field Survey

Report Number	Author(s)	Date	Report Title	Study
			Acre Parcel near Porterville, Tulare County	
TU-01015	Kevin Hovey and Will Tackett	1999	Negative Archaeological Survey Report to Make Operational Improvements to State Route 65 at Its Intersection with Scranton Avenue	Archaeological Field Survey
TU-01886	David S. Whitley and Peter A. Carey	2020	Class III Inventory/Phase I Survey, Butterfield Corridor Project, Porterville, Tulare County, California	Archaeological and Architectural/Historical Field Study

4.2 ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

A search of historical USGS topographic maps from 1926 to present and historic aerial imagery from 1946 to present covering the APE resulted in Hope Elementary School first appearing in topographic maps in 1952 (NETROnline 2024). The tank on the school well site first appears in 2014 aerial imagery. West Teapot Dome Avenue and South Indianna Street appear first in the 1926 topographic maps in their present-day configuration. Land use surrounding the APE consists primarily of agricultural fields and orchards from 1929 to present day with increasing rural residential development between 1984 and present day. State Route 65 first appears in aerial imagery from 1956 and appears in its current divided street configuration starting in 2018.

4.3 NATIVE AMERICAN OUTREACH

The NAHC responded on February 5, 2024, via letter regarding Taylored Archaeology's request. The letter stated a search of the SLF was negative. The NAHC supplied a list of Native American representatives to contact for information or knowledge of cultural resources in the APE and the surrounding area (Appendix C).

The following Native American organizations/individuals were contacted from the list provided by NAHC below:

1. Tribal Member Monitor Brandy Kendricks of Kern Valley Indian Community;
2. Chairperson Robert Robinson of Kern Valley Indian Community;
3. Chairperson Robert Gomez of the Tubatulabals of Kern Valley;
4. Chairperson Neil Peyron of the Tule River Indian Tribe;
5. Environmental Department Kerri Vera of the Tule River Tribe;
6. Tribal Archaeologist Joey Garfield of the Tule River Indian Tribe; and
7. Chairperson Kenneth Woodrow of the Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band.

The outreach letters were sent to all the Native American representatives on the contact list on February 13, 2024 (Appendix C). The letters included a description of the proposed Project and a topographic map of the location. Follow-up by emails were sent on February 21, 2024. As of the date of this report, no responses were received by the Native American representatives, nor was any information shared regarding tribal cultural resources pertaining to the APE.

4.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL PEDESTRIAN SURVEY RESULTS

On February 10, 2024, Taylored Archaeology conducted an archaeological pedestrian survey within the APE. Within the APE, West Teapot Avenue and South Indiana Street consisted of a paved asphalt two lane road with no sidewalks, gutters, curbs, or other improvements (Figure 4-1). Also, a small portion of the APE intercepts with State Route 65. On the east part of the APE is Hope Elementary school with a well site (Figure 4-2). According to the aerial maps, the well is less than 50 years old.

Ground visibility ranged from excellent to poor in nonpaved areas of the APE (Figures 4-3 and 4-4). Soil consisted of a medium brown sandy loam. The natural topography of the area within the APE was altered by asphalt roads. The surrounding land uses included stone fruit orchards, a vineyard, rural residences and some commercial development. The ground visibility ranges from 0 percent in areas with asphalt paving and dense ruderal vegetation to 100 percent in areas with unvegetated soil. No archaeological sites, isolated artifacts, or features were identified within the Project's APE during the survey. While past agricultural and development activities may have potential destroyed or obscured ground surface evidence of archaeological resources within the APE, intact archaeological resources may potentially exist below the ground surface.



Figure 4-1 Eastern portion of APE on south side of West Teapot Dome Ave, facing west.



Figure 4-2 Well site at Hope Elementary. Tank in foreground.



Figure 4-3 Northern portion of APE on east side of South Indiana Street, facing south.



Figure 4-4 Western portion of APE on south side of West Teapot Dome Ave, facing west.

5
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Taylored Archaeology performed a Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment for the Hope Elementary School Water Systems Improvement Project. The SSJVIC reported one prior cultural resources study conducted within the APE and no cultural resources recorded within the APE. The SSJVIC also reported that three previous cultural resources studies were conducted, and two historical resources were recorded, within a 0.5-mile radius of the APE. The first resource, P-54-002208, is a segment of the Poplar Ditch. The second resource, P-54-004626, is a segment of the Southern Pacific Railroad. Neither resource will be impacted by the proposed Project.

The NAHC's Sacred Lands File search results and outreach to the Native American representatives did not identify archaeological sites or tribal cultural resources in the APE. The pedestrian survey results did not identify any prehistoric or historic-period cultural resources within the APE. The absence of cultural material on the ground surface does not, however, preclude the possibility of Project construction unearthing buried archaeological deposits.

Taylored Archaeology additionally recommends the following:

In the event that previously unidentified archaeological remains are encountered during development or ground-moving activities in the APE, all work should be halted until a qualified archaeologist can identify the discovery and assess its significance. In the event of accidental discovery of unidentified archaeological remains during development or ground-moving activities in the APE, all work shall be halted in the immediate vicinity until a qualified archaeologist can identify the discovery and assess its significance.

If human remains are uncovered during construction, the Tulare County Coroner is to be notified to investigate the remains and arrange proper treatment and disposition. If the remains are identified on the basis of archaeological context, age, cultural associations, or biological traits to be those of a Native American, California Health and Safety Code 7050.5 and PRC 5097.98 require that the coroner notify the NAHC within 24 hours of discovery. The NAHC will then identify the Most Likely Descendent who will be afforded an opportunity to make recommendations regarding the treatment and disposition of the remains.

6
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APPENDIX A

Personnel Qualifications

Consuelo Sauls, M.A., RPA 41591505
Archaeologist
csaulsarchaeo@gmail.com
559.797.1572

Areas of Expertise

- Cultural Resource Management
- CEQA and Federal regulations
- Prehistoric Archaeology
- Laboratory Management
- Technical Writing
- Phase I Assessments

Years of Experience

- 14

Education

- M.A., Archaeology, University of Durham, 2014
- B.A., Anthropology, California State University, Fresno, 2009

Registrations/Certifications

- Registered Professional Archaeologist 41591505

Professional Affiliations

- Coalition for Diversity in California Archaeology
- Society for American Archaeology
- Society for California Archaeology
- Society of Black Archaeologists

Professional Experience

2019 –Present Principal Investigator, Taylored Archaeology, Fresno, California

2018 – 2019 Staff Archaeologist, Applied EarthWorks, Inc., Fresno, California

2016 – 2018 Principal Investigator, Soar Environmental Consulting, Inc., Fresno, California

2015 Archivist/Database Technician, Development and Conservation Management, Inc., Laguna Beach, California

2013 Laboratory Research Assistant, Durham University Archaeology Department and Archaeology Museum, Durham, England, UK

2011 – 2012 Laboratory Technician, University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

2008 – 2009 Laboratory Technician, California State University, Fresno

2008 Field School, California State University, Fresno

Technical Qualifications

Ms. Sauls meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards as an archaeologist. She has conducted pedestrian surveys, supervised Extended Phase I survey, authored technical reports, and completed the Section 106 process with the State Historic Preservation Officer and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer. Her experience includes data recovery excavation at Western Mono sites and processing recovered artifacts in the laboratory as well as conducting archival research about prehistory and ethnography of Central California. Ms. Sauls has authored and contributed to technical and letter reports in compliance with of the National Historical Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). She also has supported NHPA tribal consultation and responded to Assembly Bill 52 tribal comments. Ms. Sauls also has an extensive background supervising laboratory processing, cataloging, and conservation of prehistoric and historical archaeological collections. In addition, she worked with the Rock Art Heritage Group in the management, preservation, and presentation of rock art in museums throughout England, including a thorough analysis of the British Museum's rock art collections. At Durham University Archaeology Museum, Ms. Sauls processed the excavated skeletal remains of 30 individuals from the seventeenth century.

APPENDIX B

Records Search Results

California Historical Resources Information System



Fresno
Kern
Kings
Madera
Tulare

Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center
California State University, Bakersfield
Mail Stop: 72 DOB
9001 Stockdale Highway
Bakersfield, California 93311-1022
(661)654-2289
E-mail: ssjvic@csub.edu
Website: www.csub.edu/ssjvic

2/5/2024

Consuelo Sauls
Taylored Archaeology
6083 N. Figarden Drive, Suite 616
Fresno, CA 93722

Re: Hope Elementary School Water Systems Improvement Project
Records Search File No.: 24-040

The Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center received your record search request for the project area referenced above, located on the Porterville USGS 7.5' quad. The following reflects the results of the records search for the project area and the 0.5 mile radius:

As indicated on the data request form, the locations of resources and reports are provided in the following format: ☒ custom GIS maps ☐ GIS data

Resources within project area:	None
Resources within 0.5 mile radius	P-54-002208, 004626
Reports within project area:	TU-01870
Reports within 0.5 mile radius:	TU-00489, 01015, 01886

Resource Database Printout (list):	☒ enclosed	☐ not requested	☐ nothing listed
Resource Database Printout (details):	☒ enclosed	☐ not requested	☐ nothing listed
Resource Digital Database Records:	☒ enclosed	☐ not requested	☐ nothing listed
Report Database Printout (list):	☒ enclosed	☐ not requested	☐ nothing listed
Report Database Printout (details):	☒ enclosed	☐ not requested	☐ nothing listed
Report Digital Database Records:	☒ enclosed	☐ not requested	☐ nothing listed
Resource Record Copies:	☒ enclosed	☐ not requested	☐ nothing listed
Report Copies:	☒ enclosed	☐ not requested	☐ nothing listed
OHP Built Environment Resources Directory:	☒ enclosed	☐ not requested	☐ nothing listed
Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility:	☒ enclosed	☐ not requested	☐ nothing listed
CA Inventory of Historic Resources (1976):	☐ enclosed	☐ not requested	☒ nothing listed

Caltrans Bridge Survey: Not available at SSJVIC; please see https://dot.ca.gov/programs/environmental-analysis/cultural-studies/california-historical-bridges-tunnels

Ethnographic Information: Not available at SSJVIC

Historical Literature: Not available at SSJVIC

Historical Maps: Not available at SSJVIC; please see http://historicalmaps.arcgis.com/usgs/

Local Inventories: Not available at SSJVIC

GLO and/or Rancho Plat Maps: Not available at SSJVIC; please see http://www.glorecords.blm.gov/search/default.aspx#searchTabIndex=0&searchByTypeIndex=1 and/or http://www.oac.cdlib.org/view?docId=hb8489p15p;developer=local;style=oac4;doc.view=items

Shipwreck Inventory: Not available at SSJVIC; please see https://www.slc.ca.gov/shipwrecks/

Soil Survey Maps: Not available at SSJVIC; please see http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx

Please forward a copy of any resulting reports from this project to the office as soon as possible. Due to the sensitive nature of archaeological site location data, we ask that you do not include resource location maps and resource location descriptions in your report if the report is for public distribution. If you have any questions regarding the results presented herein, please contact the office at the phone number listed above.

The provision of CHRIS Data via this records search response does not in any way constitute public disclosure of records otherwise exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act or any other law, including, but not limited to, records related to archeological site information maintained by or on behalf of, or in the possession of, the State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation, State Historic Preservation Officer, Office of Historic Preservation, or the State Historical Resources Commission.

Due to processing delays and other factors, not all of the historical resource reports and resource records that have been submitted to the Office of Historic Preservation are available via this records search. Additional information may be available through the federal, state, and local agencies that produced or paid for historical resource management work in the search area. Additionally, Native American tribes have historical resource information not in the CHRIS Inventory, and you should contact the California Native American Heritage Commission for information on local/regional tribal contacts.

Should you require any additional information for the above referenced project, reference the record search number listed above when making inquiries. Invoices for Information Center services will be sent under separate cover from the California State University, Bakersfield Accounting Office.

Thank you for using the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS).

Sincerely,

JUMU-

Celeste M. Thomson
Coordinator

APPENDIX C

Native American Outreach

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

CHAIRPERSON
Reginald Pagaling
Chumash

VICE-CHAIRPERSON
Buffy McQuillen
Yokayo Pomo, Yuki, Nomlaki

SECRETARY
Sara Dutschke
Miwok

PARLIAMENTARIAN
Wayne Nelson
Luiseño

COMMISSIONER
Isaac Bojorquez
Ohlone-Costanoan

COMMISSIONER
Stanley Rodriguez
Kumeyaay

COMMISSIONER
Laurena Bolden
Serrano

COMMISSIONER
Reid Milanovich
Cahuilla

COMMISSIONER
Vacant

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Raymond C. Hitchcock
Miwok, Nisenan

NAHC HEADQUARTERS
1550 Harbor Boulevard
Suite 100
West Sacramento,
California 95691
(916) 373-3710
nahc@nahc.ca.gov
NAHC.ca.gov

February 5, 2024

Consuelo Sauls
Taylored Archaeology

Via Email to: ***csaulsarchaeo@gmail.com***

Re: Hope Elementary School Water Systems Improvement Project, Tulare County

Dear Mr. Sauls:

A record search of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File (SLF) was completed for the information you have submitted for the above referenced project. The results were negative. However, the absence of specific site information in the SLF does not indicate the absence of cultural resources in any project area. Other sources of cultural resources should also be contacted for information regarding known and recorded sites.

Attached is a list of Native American tribes who may also have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area. This list should provide a starting place in locating areas of potential adverse impact within the proposed project area. I suggest you contact all of those indicated; if they cannot supply information, they might recommend others with specific knowledge. By contacting all those listed, your organization will be better able to respond to claims of failure to consult with the appropriate tribe. If a response has not been received within two weeks of notification, the Commission requests that you follow-up with a telephone call or email to ensure that the project information has been received.

If you receive notification of change of addresses and phone numbers from tribes, please notify me. With your assistance, we can assure that our lists contain current information.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at my email address: Cameron.vela@nahc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Cameron Vela

Cameron Vela
Cultural Resources Analyst

Attachment

Native American Heritage Commission
Native American Contact List
Tulare County
2/13/2024

County	Tribe Name	Fed (F) Non-Fed (N)	Contact Person	Contact Address	Phone #	Fax #	Email Address	Cultural Affiliation	Counties	Last Updated
Tulare	Kern Valley Indian Community	N	Brandy Kendricks, Tribal Member Monitor	30741 Foxridge Court Tehachapi, CA, 93561	(661) 821-1733		krazykendricks@hotmail.com	Kawaiisu Tubatulabal	Inyo,Kern,Los Angeles,San Bernardino,Tulare	1/29/2024
	Kern Valley Indian Community	N	Robert Robinson, Chairperson	P.O. Box 1010 Lake Isabella, CA, 93240	(760) 378-2915		bbutterbredt@gmail.com	Kawaiisu Tubatulabal	Inyo,Kern,Los Angeles,San Bernardino,Tulare	1/29/2024
	Tubatulabals of Kern Valley	N	Robert Gomez, Chairperson	P.O. Box 226 Lake Isabella, CA, 93240	(760) 379-4590	(760) 379-4592		Tubatulabal	Kern,Tulare	
	Tule River Indian Tribe	F	Kerri Vera, Environmental Department	P. O. Box 589 Porterville, CA, 93258	(559) 783-8892	(559) 783-8932	kerri.vera@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov	Yokut	Alameda,Amador,Calaveras,Contra Costa,Fresno,Inyo,Kern,Kings,Madera,Mariposa,Merced,Monterey,Sacramento,San Benito,San Joaquin,San Luis Obispo,Stanislaus,Tulare,Tuolumne	7/22/2016
	Tule River Indian Tribe	F	Joey Garfield, Tribal Archaeologist	P. O. Box 589 Porterville, CA, 93258	(559) 783-8892	(559) 783-8932	joey.garfield@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov	Yokut	Alameda,Amador,Calaveras,Contra Costa,Fresno,Inyo,Kern,Kings	7/22/2016
	Tule River Indian Tribe	F	Neil Peyron, Chairperson	P.O. Box 589 Porterville, CA, 93258	(559) 781-4271	(559) 781-4610	neil.peyron@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov	Yokut	Alameda,Amador,Calaveras,Contra Costa,Fresno,Inyo,Kern,Kings	
	Wuksachi Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band	N	Kenneth Woodrow, Chairperson	1179 Rock Haven Ct. Salinas, CA, 93906	(831) 443-9702		kwood8934@aol.com	Foothill Yokut Mono	Alameda,Calaveras,Contra Costa,Fresno,Inyo,Kings,Madera,Marin,Mariposa,Merced,Mono,Monterey,San Benito,San Francisco,San Joaquin,San Mateo,Santa Clara,Santa Cruz,Stanislaus,Tulare,Tuolumne	6/19/2023

This list is current only as of the date of this document. Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resource Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources assessment for the proposed Hope Elementary School Water Systems Improvement Project, Tulare County.

Record: PROJ-2024-000541
Report Type: List of Tribes
Counties: Tulare
NAHC Group: All

Native American Outreach Log

Hope Elementary School Water Systems Improvement Project, Tulare County, California

Organization	Name	Position	Address	Phone Number	Email Address	Letter	E-Mail	Summary of Contact
Native American Heritage Commission	Cameron Vela	Culutral Resources Analyst	1550 Harbor Boulevard Suite 100 West Sacramento, California 95691	(916) 373-3710	nahc@nahc.ca.gov		2/5/2024	In a letter dated February 5, 2024, the NAHC stated that the results were negative and suggested to contact the local Native American representatives on the list provided.
Kern Valley Indian Community	Brandy Kendricks	Tribal Member Monitor	30741 Foxridge Court, Tehachapi, CA 93561	(661) 821-1733	krazykendricks@hotmail.com	2/13/2024	2/21/2024	No response.
Kern Valley Indian Community	Robert Robinson	Chairperson	P.O. Box 1010 Lake Isabella, CA 93240	(760) 378-2915	bbutterbredt@gmail.com	2/13/2024	2/21/2024	No response.
Tubatulabals of Kern Valley	Robert Gomez	Chairperson	P.O. Box 226 Lake Isabella, CA 93240	(760) 379-4590		2/13/2024		Letter phisically mailed certified. No email provided. Called on February 21 at 10:15 am to follow up. No answer and no voice mail to leave a message.
Tule River Indian Tribe	Neil Peyron	Chairperson	P.O. Box 589 Porterville, CA 93258	(559) 781-4271	neil.peyron@tulrivertribe-nsn.gov	2/13/2024	2/21/2024	No response.
Tule River Indian Tribe	Kerri Vera	Environmental Department	P.O. Box 589 Porterville, CA 93258	(559) 783-8892	kerri.vera@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov	2/13/2024	2/21/2024	No response.
Tule River Indian Tribe	Joey Garfield	Tribal Archaeologist	P.O. Box 589 Porterville, CA 93258	(559) 783-8932	joe arfield@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov	2/13/2024	2/21/2024	No response.
Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band	Kenneth Woodrow	Chairperson	1179 Rock Haven Ct. Salinas, CA 93906	(831) 443-9702	kwood8934@aol.com	2/13/2024	2/21/2024	No response.

Taylored Archaeology

EXAMPLE

February 13, 2024

Brandy Kendricks, Tribal Member Monitor
Kern Valley Indian Community
30741 Foxridge Court
Tehachapi, CA 93561

RE: The Hope Elementary School Water Systems Improvement Project, City of Porterville, Tulare County, California

Dear Brandy Kendricks,

Taylored Archaeology is currently under contract to Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group to provide cultural resource services for the proposed Hope Elementary School Water Systems Improvement Project in the City of Porterville, Tulare County, California. The proposed project will be consolidating with the City's existing water system. The project would include installing a new water main connecting the school to the City's water system. The project proposes to construct approximately 2.3 miles of a 12-inch water main along South Indiana Avenue and West Teapot Dome Avenue. The project site is located south of Porterville, along South Indiana Avenue and West Teapot Dome Avenue, intercepting Highway 65. This project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The project boundary is in Sections 10, 11, 14, and 15, Township 22 South, Range 27 East, Mount Diablo Meridian of Porterville, California 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle (see attached map).

A search of the Native American Heritage Commission's (NAHC) Sacred Lands File did not indicate the presence of tribal or cultural resources in the immediate project area. Taylored Archaeology also requested a records search of the project area at the California Historic Resources Information System (CHRIS), Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) located at the California State University, Bakersfield. The records search results did not identify any previously recorded cultural resources within the project boundary. An archaeological pedestrian survey of the project was conducted on February 10, 2024. No cultural resources were encountered during the pedestrian survey.

The NAHC provided your name and address as someone who may have interest in sharing information regarding sacred sites, tribal cultural resources, or other resources of importance in the project area. Please note this outreach letter is research for a cultural resources investigation and is not government-to-government consultation under Assembly Bill 52 or Section 106. Taylored Archaeology understands and takes measures to protect the confidentiality of archaeological site locations, cemeteries, or sacred places, as required by law. Taylored Archaeology will not disclose locational information in any document available to the general public.

6083 N Figarden Dr., Ste. 616, Fresno, CA 93722
559.797.1572 / csaulsarchaeo@gmail.com

Taylored Archaeology

If you have information that you would like to share, please feel free to contact me by email at csaulsarchaeo@gmail.com, or send a letter to my attention at 6083 N. Figarden Dr., Ste. 616, Fresno, CA 93722. Any response by February 28, 2024, would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Consuelo Sauls

Consuelo Y. Sauls, M.A., RPA # 41591505
Archaeologist

6083 N Figarden Dr., Ste. 616, Fresno, CA 93722
559.797.1572 / csaulsarchaeo@gmail.com

Best | S 1 hr24... | © 16 hr | ft 1 day | c5o 7 hr | X

6083 N Figarden Dr, Fresno, CA 93722

Hope Junior High School, 613 W Teapot

(+) Add destination

Leave now | Options

We don't have the most recent timetables for this area.

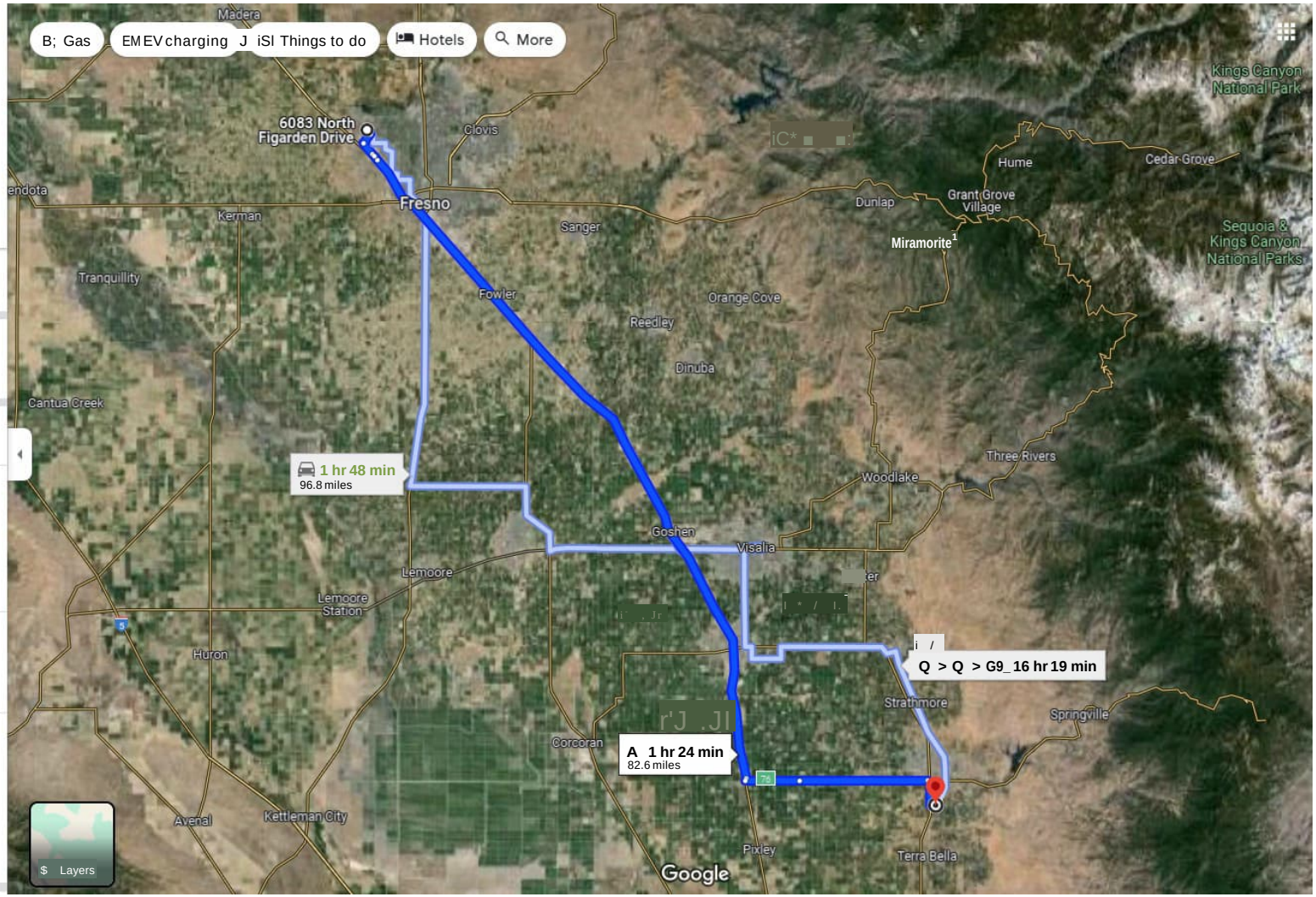
Send directions to your phone | CO Copy link

Q via CA-99 S — 1 hr 24 min
Fastest route now due to traffic conditions — 82.6 miles
Details

Q via CA-41 S/Yosemite Fwy and CA-99 S — 1 hr 48 min — 96.8 miles

§ 5:50 PM (Sunday)—10:09 AM (Monday) — 16 hr 19 min

ft > H E| > Q 26 > ft > H VLINE > H 1A > 0 f4!!> C40SB > Q C80 C80 LOOP > ft



Cultural survey on February 10, 2024. Round trip mileage of 165 miles from Fresno Office to Project site at Hope Elementary School in Porterville, CA.