

MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM
SOUTHEAST SERVICE AREA (SERVICE AREA 3)
LATERAL PIPELINE PROJECT
PORTERVILLE IRRIGATION DISTRICT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed Southeast Service Area (Service Area 3) Lateral Pipeline Project (Project) consists of installing new water pipelines and associated pumping facilities. The Project includes constructing water distribution pipelines, water pipeline appurtenances, and pump station facilities.

The Service Area 3 pipeline improvements are to be constructed within Tulare County road rights-of-ways and areas covered by executed easements. Easements and permits are required to be obtained to accommodate construction, operation and maintenance of the Project improvements.

A Biological Evaluation of the Project area was completed on September 11, 2025, that established the need for mitigation measures to minimize construction related impacts to the biological resources of the area.

SPECIAL STATUS PLANTS

The Biological Evaluation conducted for the Project established the presence of Sanford's Arrowhead in the District's delivery channel at the Friant-Kern Canal near Olive Avenue. The Biological Evaluation also established that the potential for Sanford's Arrowhead to exist in the Project area's agricultural basins and ditches. Construction activities such as dewatering, grading and excavation may result in the loss of plant populations. The following impact avoidance preventative measures are incorporated into the Project:

SSP #1. Surveys. Preconstruction surveys will be conducted during appropriate times of year prior to construction to ensure that potential local populations of the target species are in bloom and readily identifiable. The surveys will target affected channels, ditches and other areas of suitable habitat subject to construction activities. A qualified biologist will conduct protocol-level rare plant surveys follow California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) *2018 Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities*, or most current agency guidance.

SSP #2. Avoidance. If individuals or populations of the target species are identified in proposed Project impact areas, Project design will be modified, if at all feasible, to avoid the plants. A qualified biologist will identify an appropriate buffer around the plants and no developments or other Project-related activities will be permitted within. No dewatering or other activities that introduce hydrological changes will be permitted.

SSP #3. Salvage Plan. If it is not feasible to avoid individuals or populations that are found on site, the affected population(s) will be salvaged in accordance with a plan prepared by a qualified biologist that will include contingencies for an unsuccessful salvage effort. Elements of the plan will describe the timing and methods of salvage/relocation and identify a suitable and feasible relocation site(s). The plan will also include relocation success criteria, methods for monitoring the success of the relocation, and contingencies if relocation is unsuccessful.

Because species within the *Sagittaria* genus are most commonly propagated through collection and replanting of roots and/or tubers, not all onsite Sanford's Arrowhead plants will require salvaging. Only enough plant material will need to be collected in order to populate an area equal or greater than the area of Sanford's arrowhead impacted by the project, at transplanted plant spacing recommended in the salvage plan.

NESTING BIRDS AND THEIR NESTS

Nesting birds, their eggs and their nests could potentially inhabit fields, field edges and adjacent lands and could potentially be negatively impacted by construction of the Project unless preventive measures are incorporated into the Project design. No nesting birds or nests were observed on the Project site during the conducted reconnaissance survey, however, the survey was conducted outside of the avian nesting period of February 1 through August 31.

To protect and preserve nesting birds, including the tricolored blackbird, and their nests, to avoid any impacts to them and their nests and to meet CDFW and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) requirements, the following impact avoidance preventive measures are incorporated into the Project:

NB #1. Construction Timing. If feasible, the Project will be constructed outside of the avian nesting season, typically defined as February 1 to August 31.

NB #2. Preconstruction Surveys. If Project construction occurs between the period of February 1 and August 31, preconstruction (one-day) surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist for nesting birds on the Project site within 10 days prior to any construction activity. The survey area will encompass the work area and surrounding lands with 500 feet for raptors, 300 feet for tricolored blackbirds, and 250 feet for other nesting birds. Results of any such

preconstruction survey shall be prepared and transmitted to the District prior to initiation of any construction activities; and

- NB #3. Avoidance of Active Nests. If any active nests are observed within or near a construction site, a biologist will establish a suitable construction free buffer around the nest. A buffer will be established on the ground with flagging or fencing. The buffer distance will be determined based on species biology site-specific conditions, and the level of project-related disturbance that is anticipated near the nest(s) in question. The buffer will be maintained until the biologist determines that the young birds have fledged and are capable of foraging independently.

SWAINSON'S HAWK

The Biological Evaluation established that the Swainson's Hawk could nest in the vicinity of and forage within the Project area. Suitable nesting sites within the Project area do not exist, but can be found on surrounding lands. The possibility exists that construction activities may affect nesting Swainson's Hawks. To protect the Swainson's Hawk from construction-related disturbances, the following impact avoidance preventative measures are incorporated into the Project:

- SH#1. Construction Timing. If feasible, Project construction will occur entirely outside the Swainson's Hawk nesting season, typically defined as March 1 through September 15.
- SH #2. Preconstruction Surveys. If Project construction occurs between the period of March 1 and September 15, a qualified biologist will conduct a pre-construction survey for Swainson's Hawk nesting on and within ½ mile of the Project site. Any such pre-construction survey will be conducted within 10 days prior to the start of construction activities; and
- SH #3. Establishment of Buffer Zone. Upon discovery of an active nest, the biologist will identify a suitable disturbance-free buffer zone around any such nest. The buffer zone will be established with flagging, fencing or other visible means. The buffer zone will be maintained until a biologist establishes that the young birds have fledged and are capable of foraging independently.