

County of Madera
California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
Initial Study

- 1. Project title:** CUP #2025-005 – Wastewater Treatment Facility
- 2. Lead agency name and address:** County of Madera
Community and Economic Development Department
200 West 4th Street, Suite 3100
Madera, California 93637
- 3. Contact person and phone number:** Samuel J. Rashe, Senior Planner
559-675-7821

Samuel.Rashe@maderacounty.com
- 4. Project Location & APN:** The properties are located on the northwest and northeast corner of Avenue 18 and Road 24 (23865 Avenue 18), Madera.

APN(s): 029-280-054; 029-290-011; 014
- 5. Project sponsor's name and address:** Azteca Milling LP
23865 Ave 18
Madera CA 93638
- 6. General Plan Designation:** AE (Agriculture Exclusive) and HI (High Industrial)
- 7. Zoning:** IL (Industrial, Urban or Rural, Light District) and ARE 40 (Agriculture Rural Exclusive 40 acre) District

8. Description of project:

The applicant is requesting a Conditional Use Permit on APN(s): 029-280-054; 029-290-011;014, located on the northwest and northeast corner of Avenue 18 and Road 24 (23865 Avenue 18), Madera, to allow for the construction of two wastewater treatment facultative ponds, one storage pond, one stormwater basin, one mechanical building and three worm beds to process and reclaim wastewater from corn washing operations. The reclaimed water will be used for irrigation purposes. The parcels are approximately 409 total acres and rectangle in shape. Parcel 029-280-054 is separated from parcels 029-290-011 and 029-290-014 by Road 24. Parcels 029-290-011 and 029-290-014 are connected near the intersection of Road 24 and Avenue 18.

Currently, the parcels are being used for agricultural uses related to Azteca Milling operations. Operations on the parcel are focused on processing corn and washing corn. The topography of the parcels are relatively low elevations and flat, consistent with the Central Valley floor's characteristics.

The project proponent proposes to implement two types of wastewater treatment – a facultative pond (combination of anaerobic and aerobic treatment) and BioFiltro BIDA biofilter worm system. Each type of treatment will have the capacity to completely treat the wastewater prior to storage. Azteca also requested

that the two types also work in parallel or in series. The existing pipe delivery system from the facility to the current field area will be altered slightly. Stormwater runoff from the main buildings and plant area, currently comingled with wastewater, will generally be routed separately to the treatment area and sent directly to the storage pond, bypassing treatment systems. Azteca plans to improve solids separation with some additional equipment before sending the wastewater out to the treatment area in the existing pipeline.

Facultative Pond 1 will receive the wastewater from the facility. The anaerobic and aerobic treatment will occur in both ponds. Water will gravity flow out of Facultative Pond 1 into Facultative Pond 2 where it will be treated further. After Facultative Pond 2, water will gravity flow out and into the storage pond. Gravity flow pond to pond ensures that if there is a pump issue or power outage, water will safely arrive at the storage pond.

Due to higher water temperatures from the facility that the worms cannot take, water for the worm beds will be drawn off at the head end of Facultative Pond 1. This water will be pumped to an equalization tank. This pump will be variable flow and by that can operate at 100% flow (independent system) or partial flow to operate as a parallel system. If water is not pumped to the worm beds, then the facultative ponds will be operating independently. Post worm bed water treatment, water that is not pumped to the facultative ponds for further treatment (for series operation) will gravity flow to the storage pond providing that safety mechanism.

Following water treatment, the water will be stored in a pond until it is needed for crop irrigation. The 20.0 MG (million gallons) is sized for storing the water generated in the non-irrigation periods of the Nutrient Management Plan plus a 100-year rainfall year collecting rainwater from the facility, treatment area, and the ponds directly.

The treated water will be used to irrigate two fields on either side of the treatment area. East of Road 24, 40 acres of almonds will be removed, and another field will be created to irrigate forage crops in that area. A supply pipe from the storage pond will need to be routed underneath Road 24. In the future, treated water irrigation may continue into the remainder of the crop land (APNs 029-290-011 and -014). To accomplish this a remote storage pond may be needed and is shown in the site plan. In this potential scenario, water will be pumped from the main storage pond to the orchard pond to stage the water for the orchard irrigation system.

Approximately every one (1) to three (3) years, the wood chips will be replaced on a worm bed, typically spring or summer. Approximately 35 to 70 trucks will stage the new chips in the storage area to the east of the beds. Old chips will be moved to the side of a bed in a windrow, new chips will be placed on the bed, the worms will be transferred back to the bed, and the old chips will be allowed to dry before hauling away. Approximately 20 to 40 trucks will haul away the used chips. Alternatively, wood chips could be applied as a soil amendment to the land application area.

The maintenance building will provide space for the blowers needed for the facultative ponds, a room for electrical panels and controls, a shop area, and an office with a restroom.

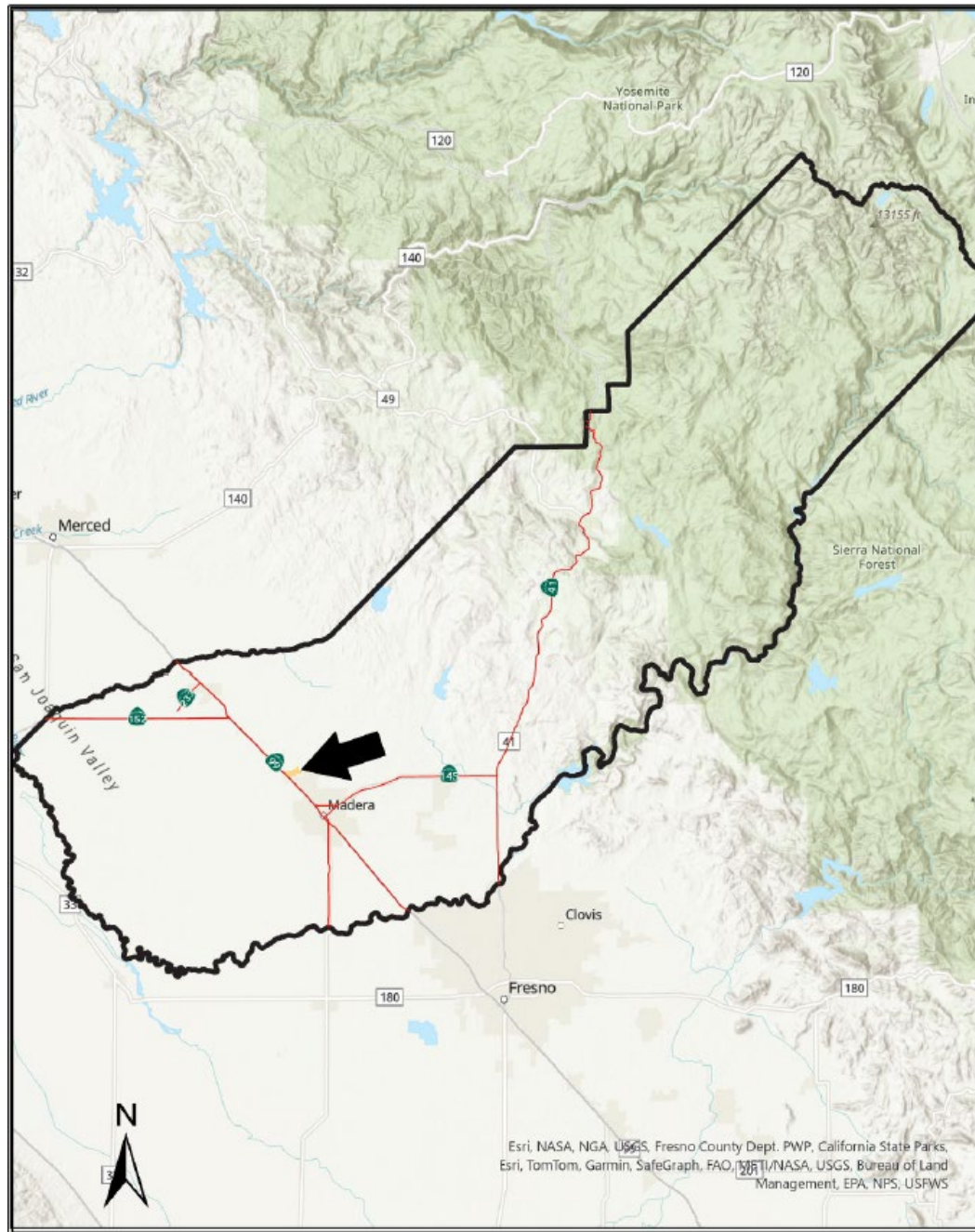


FIGURE 1 AREA MAP



Figure 1 Area Map

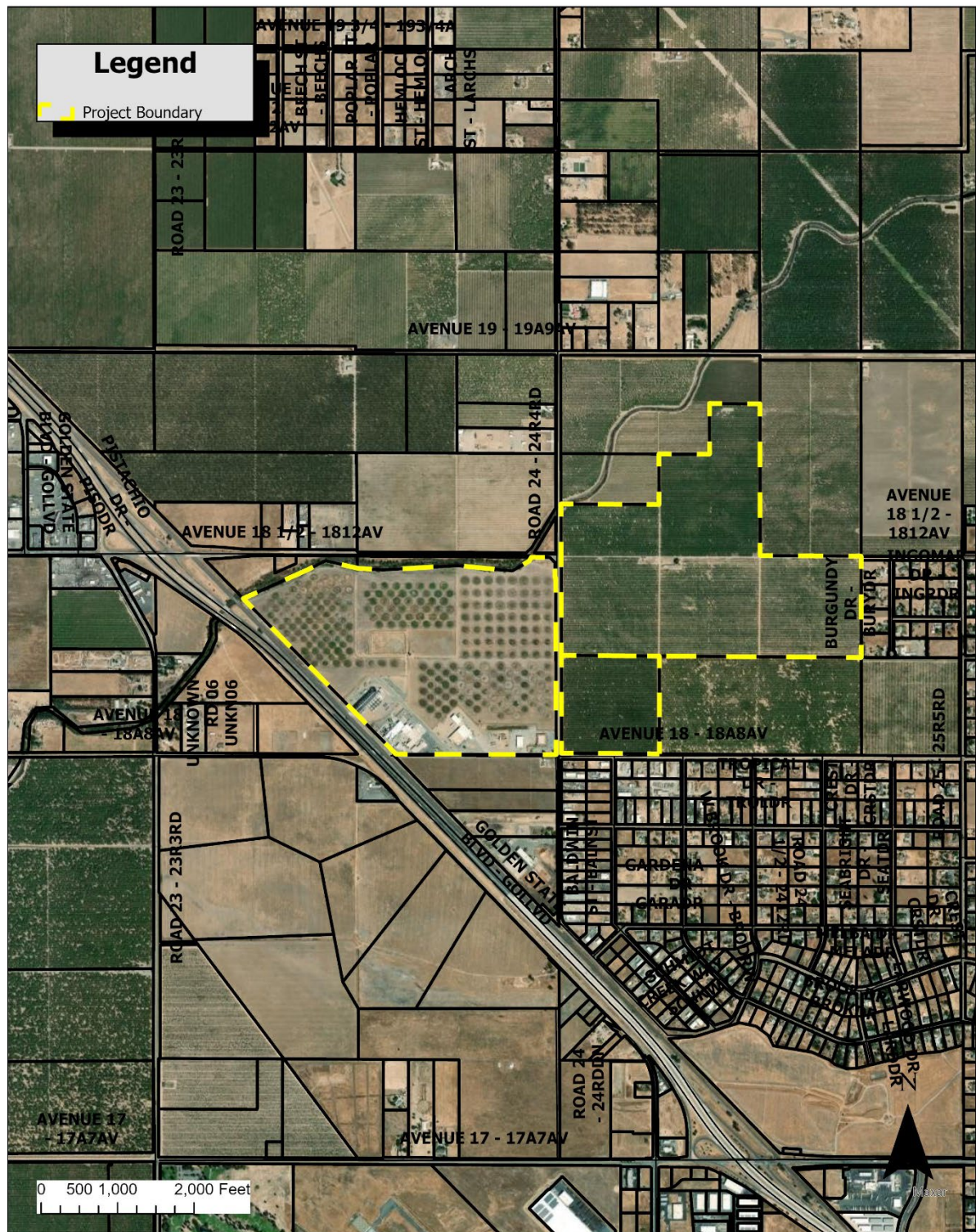


Figure 2 Project Boundary

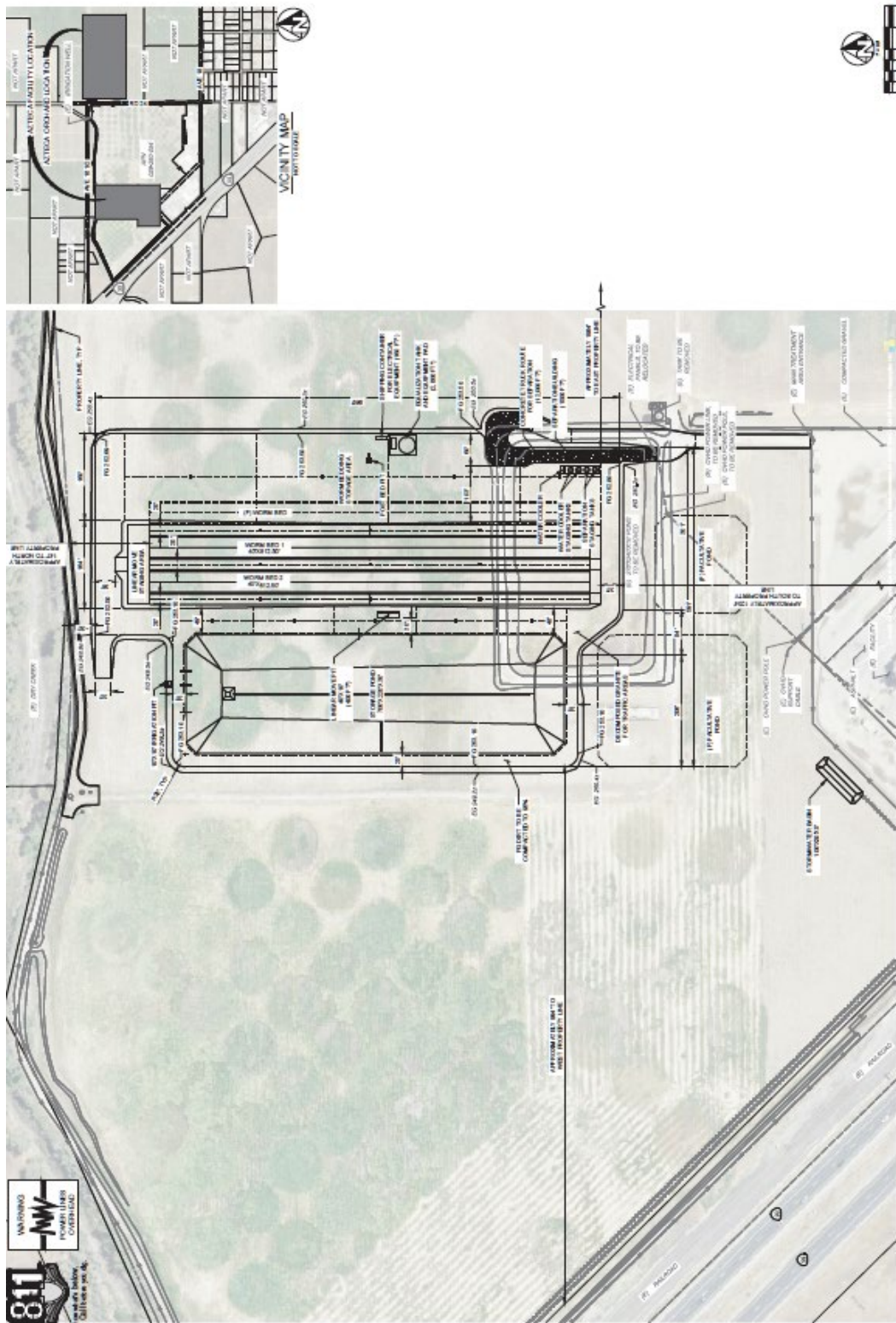


Figure 3A Site Plan



9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

The surrounding area is zoned Agriculture Rural Exclusive 40 (ARE-40), Agricultural, Rural, Five Acre (AR-5) and Industrial, Urban or Rural, Light (IL).

10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required:

None.

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

In accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1, notification letters were sent to tribal representatives of California Native American tribes that have requested to be notified of projects within the Project area of Madera County. Tribal representatives were advised of the Project and invited to request formal consultation with the County regarding the Project within 30 days of receiving the notification letters. Five notification letters were sent to representatives of the following tribes on July 3rd, 2025:

- Table Mountain Rancheria
- Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians
- Dumna Wo Wah Tribal Government
- Chowchilla Yokuts Tribe

As for the preparation of this Initial Study, more than 30 days following the County's transmittal of notification letters, no letters were received. Section XVIII of this Initial Study provides additional discussion of tribal cultural resources and outreach.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

DETERMINATION (to be completed by Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

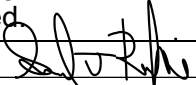
☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

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

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

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation 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.

Signed:  Date: 10/10/2025

I. AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

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

Responses:

(a) No Impact. The project site is not within the view of any areas designated as or having the characteristics of scenic vistas, therefore, the project would not have the potential to adversely affect a scenic vista.

(b) No Impact. The project is situated on the east side of Highway 99, south of Avenue 18½. As of 1992, there are no officially designated scenic highways. The only eligible scenic highway is Highway 49, from its intersection with Highway 41, approximately 33 miles from the project site. Consequently, there would be no impact (Madera County, 1995).

(c) Less Than Significant Impact. The project is zoned ARE-40 (Agriculture 40 Acre) District and IL (Industrial Light) District. The area is surrounded by agricultural uses with industrial uses to the south of the property. Currently, the parcel is used for water treatment and industrial operations. This project aims to refine current operations and reclaim wastewater for irrigation on the adjacent parcel (APN: 029-290-014), which would be used for agricultural purposes and align with the surrounding uses as designated by the general plan. The project is not expected to degrade the existing visual character or the quality of public views, resulting in a less than significant impact.

(d) Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated. There is potential for additional lighting resulting from the project; however, the additional lighting would be minimal. With the implementation of AES MM-1 it would have a less than significant impact.

AES MM-1 Lighting will be required to be hooded and directed down and away from neighboring parcels to maintain the visual character and mitigate any light disbursement during the evening

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

In determining whether agricultural impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the forest and Range Assessment Project and the forest Legacy Assessment Project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Responses:

(a) No Impact. The property involved in this project is designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farm land, Farmland of Local Importance, and Vacant or Disturbed land in the California Department of Conservation (DOC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program.

Properties to the north of the project have been designated as Prime Farmland. Prime Farmland is irrigated land with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for the production of irrigated crops at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date. Properties to the south of the project have been designated as Urban Built-Up Land, which is occupied by structures with a building density of at least one unit to one and a half acres or approximately six structures to a ten-acre parcel. Examples of Urban and Built-Up Land would be residential, industrial, and commercial. Therefore, the project would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to a non-agricultural use.

(b) No Impact. Parcels 029-280-054 and 029-290-014 are not located in an ag preserve and is not subject to the Williamson Act. Parcel 029-290-011 is under an agricultural preserve contract (1438-c-71, Doc 2612 recorded 3-3-71 Book 1084, pg. 110) and is subject to the Williamson Act. The parcel is to remain under agricultural purposes. The water reclaimed from parcel 029-280-054 will be used to water crops on parcel 029-290-014.

(c - d) No Impact. There is no forest land, or zoned for forest land, in the vicinity of the project site, and therefore, there is no impact.

(e) No Impact. The project is proposing to increase wastewater treatment in order to service the community of Madera. There is potential that in the distant future operations may need to increase however the growth would be minimal and as a result the project would have a less than significant impact.

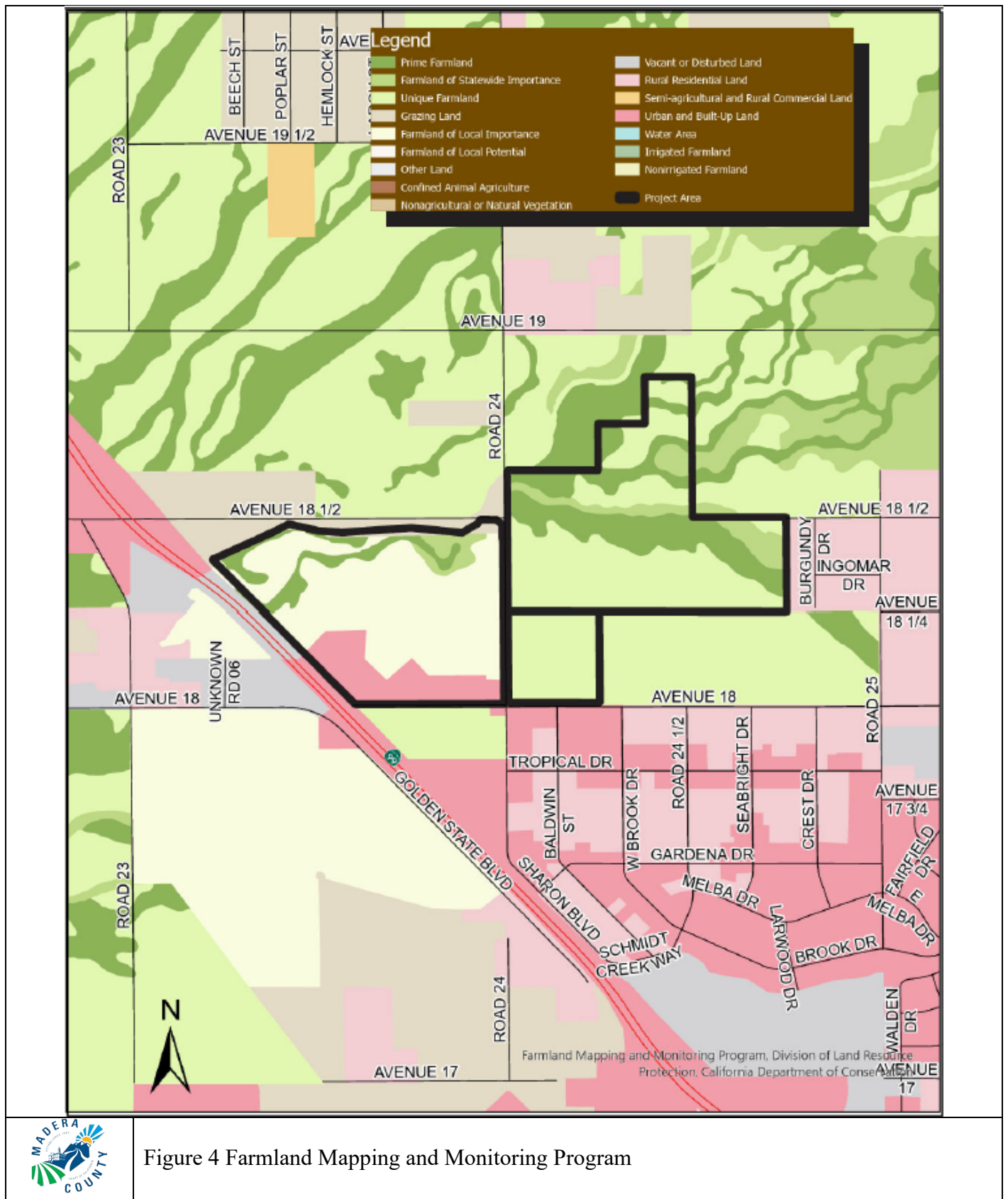


Figure 4 Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

III. AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Responses:

(a-d) Less Than Significant Impact. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (District) provides guidance for evaluating potential air quality impacts and associated mitigation measures in its Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts (GAMAQI). To ensure compliance with air quality standards, the District has established significance thresholds for criteria pollutant emissions, based on its New Source Review (NSR) offset requirements for stationary sources. By analyzing project characteristics such as type, size, and vehicle trip generation, the District has pre-determined emission levels that are unlikely to exceed significance thresholds, which are identified in the Small Project Analysis Levels (SPAL) (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District , 2022).

The proposed project

According to the SPAL table provided below, the project is anticipated to result in a less-than-significant impact.

Table 1a: Industrial

Land Use Type	Size	Unit	AND LESS THAN	Average Daily One-way Trips for all fleet types (except HHDT)	Average Daily One-way for HHDT Trips only (50 mile trip length)
General Light Industry	280,000	square feet		550	70
Heavy Industry	900,000	square feet			
Industrial Park	295,000	square feet			
Manufacturing	472,000	square feet			

Table 1b: Industrial (Warehouse)

Land Use Type	Size	Unit	AND LESS THAN	Average Daily One-way Trips for all fleet types (except HHDT)	Average Daily One-way for HHDT Trips only (146 mile trip length)
Refrigerated Warehouse - No Rail	190,000	square feet		140	15
Refrigerated Warehouse - Rail		square feet			
Unrefrigerated Warehouse - No Rail		square feet			
Unrefrigerated Warehouse - Rail		square feet			

Table 1c: Industrial (Warehouse)

Land Use Type	Size	Unit	AND LESS THAN	Average Daily One-way Trips for all fleet types (except HHDT)	Average Daily One-way for HHDT Trips only (146 mile trip length)
Refrigerated Warehouse - No Rail	190,000	square feet		N/A	25
Refrigerated Warehouse - Rail		square feet			
Unrefrigerated Warehouse - No Rail		square feet			
Unrefrigerated Warehouse - Rail		square feet			

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	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 Game 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 Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of a native wildlife nursery site?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Responses:

(a) Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is approximately 408 acres APN: 029-280-054 currently operates as a corn processing facility and parcels 029-290-011 and 014 are agricultural sites. The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) was reviewed to determine which special status species could be present within the area of the project site. The project is located in the Kismet quadrant according to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife with 9 species identified as endangered, threatened, Species of Special Concern (SSC) or Watch List (WL) (refer to table 1) (California Department of Fish and Wildlife , 2022).

Table 1 Species List (California Department of Fish and Wildlife , 2022)

Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CDFW Status
California tiger salamander - central California DPS	Threatened	Threatened	WL
California tiger salamander - Santa Barbara County DPS	Endangered	Threatened	WL
western spadefoot	None	None	SSC
Swainson's hawk	None	Threatened	-
American badger	None	None	SSC
San Joaquin Valley Orcutt grass	Threatened	Endangered	-
hairy Orcutt grass	Endangered	Endangered	-
Greenes tuctoria	Endangered	Rare	-

The project area has experienced some disturbance from different construction and farming activities. To the north and west, the properties are mainly used for agriculture, while the properties to the east are designated for light industrial activities. Most of the construction work will happen in the already developed parts of the project site, which means the impact is expected to be less than significant.

(b & c) Less Than Significant Impact. Wetlands are zones where water overlays the soil at or near the surface. Water may be present throughout the year or seasonally. These areas are capable of supporting both aquatic and terrestrial species. The National Wetland Inventory (NWI) Map was examined to identify any wetlands or drainage features within the project vicinity. The site contains two freshwater ponds; however, these are neither federally nor locally protected, thus the project is expected to have a less than significant impact.

(d) No Impact. The project area is not located in or around a body of water where migratory fish would be located. The project site is also in a developed area with agricultural activities. The project would not have an impact.

(e & f) No Impact. A Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan has not been adopted in the County of Madera, and therefore the project would have no impact.

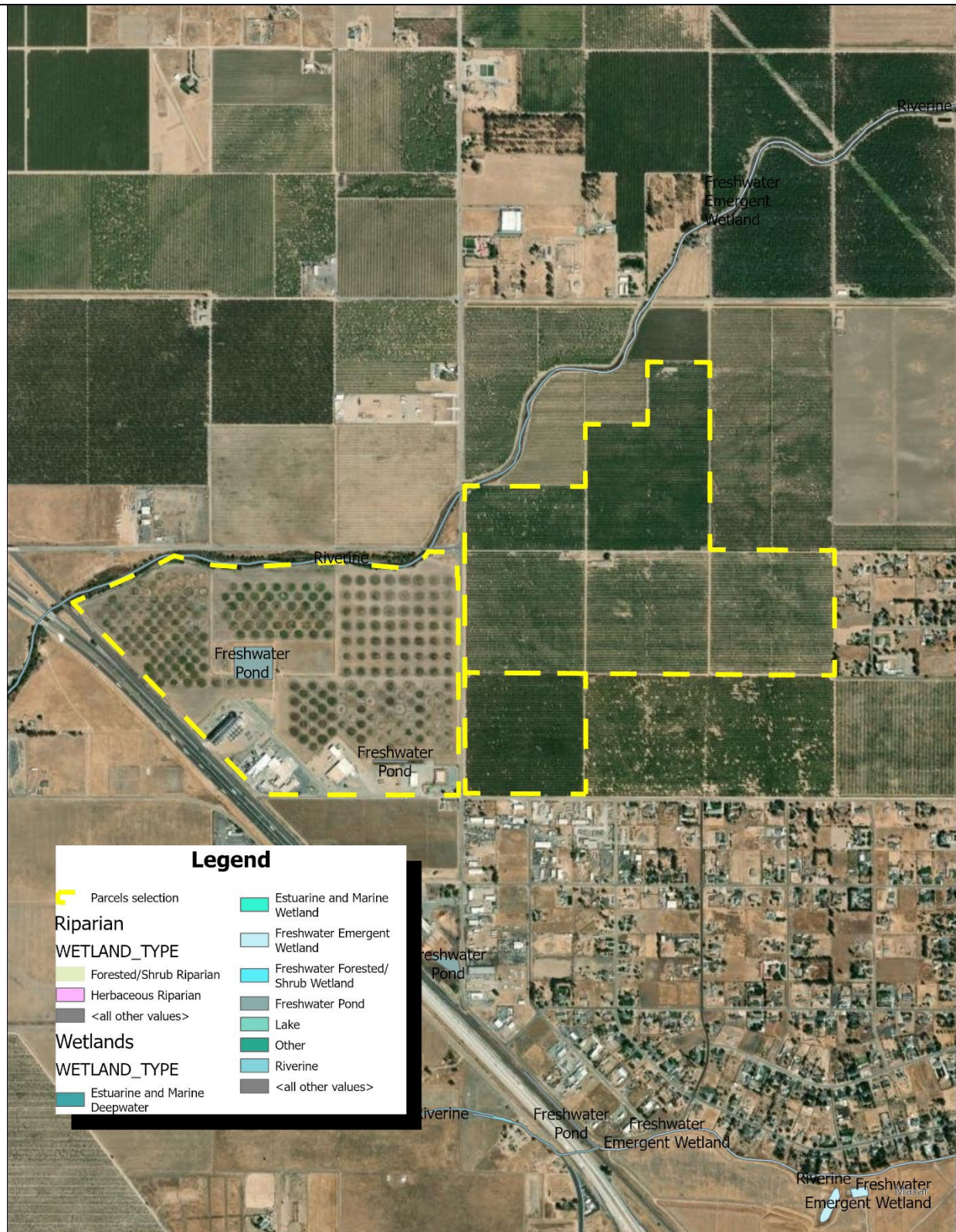


Figure 7 Wetlands

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Responses:

(a - c) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation. No impacts have been identified as a result of this project. The area surrounding the project site has been developed for agricultural purposes and light industrial for years with significant ground disturbances as a result it is highly unlikely any cultural resources exist on the property (infrastructure, roadways, agricultural uses, etc.). This does not mean however that there are no archaeological or cultural resources on, in or around the subject property. There is still the potential of finding previously unknown resources during any phase of this project. Most of the archaeological survey work in the County has taken place in the foothills and mountains. There are slightly more than 2,000 recorded archaeological sites in the County, most of which are located in the foothills and mountains. Recorded prehistoric artifacts include village sites, camp sites, and bedrock milling stations, pictographs, petroglyphs, rock rings, sacred sites, and resource gathering areas. Madera County also contains a significant number of potentially historic sites, including homesteads and ranches, mining and logging sites and associated features (such as small camps, railroad beds, logging chutes, and trash dumps). Per AB 52 Tribal Governments that request outreach have been alerted by the County. Since the notification 5/31/2023 the County has not been contacted by any of the tribes. Although it is unlikely that human remains will be distributed the implementation of CUL-1 will ensure the project will have a less than significant impact.

CUL-1 In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site, or any nearby area suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the Madera County Coroner has determined that the remains are not subject to any provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, or to his or her authorized representative. The coroner shall make his or her determination within two working days from the time the person responsible for the excavation, or his or her authorized representative, notifies the coroner of the discovery or recognition of the human remains. If the Madera County Coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and if the County Coroner recognizes the human remains to be those of a Native American or has

reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). After notification, the NAHC will follow the procedures outlined in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, that include notification of most likely descendants (MLDs), and recommendations for treatment of the remains. The MLDs will have 48 hours after notification by the NAHC to make their recommendations (PRC Section 5097.98)

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Responses:

(a - b) Less Than Significant Impact. California has implemented numerous energy efficiency and conservation programs that have resulted in substantial energy savings. The State has adopted comprehensive energy efficiency standards as part of its Building Standards Code, California Codes of Regulations, Title 24. In 2009, the California Building Standards Commission adopted a voluntary Green Building Standards Code, also known as CALGreen, which became mandatory in 2011. CALGreen sets forth mandatory measures applicable to new residential and non-residential structures and additions and alterations on water efficiency and conservation, building material conservation, interior environmental quality, and energy efficiency.

Additionally, California has adopted a Renewables Portfolio Standard, which requires electricity retailers in the state to generate 33 percent of the electricity they sell from renewable energy sources (i.e., solar, wind, geothermal, hydroelectric from small generators, etc.) by the end of 2020. In 2018, SB 100 was signed into law, which increases the electricity generation requirement from renewable sources to 60% by 2030 and requires all the state's electricity to come from carbon-free resources by 2045. The main sources of energy consumption would be construction activities and ongoing project operations. Project construction would involve fuel consumption and use of other nonrenewable resources. Construction equipment used for such improvements typically runs on diesel fuel or gasoline. The same fuels are typically used for vehicles transporting equipment and workers to and from a construction site. However, construction-related fuel consumption would be finite, short-term and consistent with construction activities of a similar character. This energy use would not be considered wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary. Equipment overtime would be more energy-efficient in order to assist with meeting State emissions reduction goals. Additionally, under California's Renewable Portfolio Standard, a greater share of electricity would be provided from renewable energy sources over time, so less fossil fuel consumption to generate electricity would occur. The project would be required to comply with the building energy efficiency standards of California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 6, also known as the California Energy Code. Compliance with these standards would reduce energy consumption associated with project operations, although reductions from compliance cannot be readily quantified at this time. Overall, project construction and operations would not consume energy resources in a manner considered wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary; the project would also not conflict or obstruct any state or local plans for renewable energy efficiency. project impacts related to energy consumption are considered less than significant.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

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

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone 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 geological unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

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

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

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

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Responses:

(a i - iv) Less than Significant Impact. According to the California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application (EQ Zapp) located on the Department of Conservation, the project is not within an Earthquake Fault Zone (Department of Conservation, 2022).

The Earthquake Shaking Potential for California Map located on the Department of Conservation website displays the Level of hazards regarding ground shaking for each county. According to the

map, the project site is located in a region where only weaker, masonry buildings would be damaged. However, very infrequent earthquakes could still cause strong shaking. The project does not consist of constructing masonry buildings and therefore the project would have a less than significant impact (Department of Conservation, 2016).

(b) Less Than Significant Impact. The parcel is subject to potential erosion due to rain events. Due to the flat nature of the project site, and given that the site has been previously developed, future development within the project site would result in a less than significant soil erosion impact.

(c) Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is not located in an earthquake fault zone and is in an area with a low probability of seismic activity. Lateral spreading, subsidence, and collapse are uncommon in Madera County. Since the project site is not located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable or would become unstable due to project activities, there is little to no potential for result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. Impacts from these criteria are considered less than significant.

(d-e) Less Than Significant Impact. The project intends to expand an already existing wastewater treatment facility. According to Table 18-1B of the Uniform Code (1994) soils meeting all four of the following provisions shall be considered expansive, except that tests to show compliance with Items 1, 2, and 3 shall not be required if the test prescribed in Item 4 is conducted (California Building Code , 2022) :

1. Plasticity index (PI) of 15 or greater, determined in accordance with ASTM D4318.
2. More than 10 percent of the soil particles pass a No. 200 sieve (75 µm), determined in accordance with ASTM D422.
3. More than 10 percent of the soil particles are less than 5 micrometers in size, determined in accordance with ASTM D422.
4. Expansion index greater than 20, determined in accordance with ASTM D4829.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Services Web Soil Survey, identified are as follows

- Alamo clay
- Atwater loamy sand
- Delhi sand
- Greenfield coarse sandy loam
- Greenfield sandy loam
- Hanford fine sandy loam
- Madera loam
- Pachappa fine sandy loam
- San Joaquin sandy loam
- Tujunga loamy sand

Alamo clay has a rating that exceeds the plasticity index of 15; however, it only makes up 2 percent of the project site and is broken up throughout the 400 acres, so as a result, the project would have a less than significant impact.

f) No impact. Refer to the discussion regarding Cultural Resources.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

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

Potentially
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Less Than
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Mitigation
Incorporation

☐

Less Than
Significant
Impact

☒

No
Impact

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

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Responses:

(a-b) Less than Significant Impact. The SJVAPCD has adopted a CCAP, which includes suggested BPS for proposed development projects. However, the SJVAPCD's CCAP was adopted in 2009 and was prepared based on the State's 2020 GHG targets, which are now superseded by State policies (i.e., the 2019 California Green Building Code) and the 2030 GHG targets, established in SB 32. Many of the SJVAPCD's BPS measures are intended for commercial, residential, and mixed-use projects and would not be applicable to the project. As such, absent any other local or regional Climate Action Plan, the project was analyzed for consistency with the goals of AB 32 and the AB 32 Scoping Plan. The following discussion evaluates the project according to the goals of AB 32, the AB 32 Scoping Plan, Executive Order B-30-15, SB 32, and AB 197.

AB 32 is aimed at reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. AB 32 requires the CARB to prepare a Scoping Plan that outlines the main State strategies for meeting the 2020 deadline and to reduce GHGs that contribute to global climate change. The AB 32 Scoping Plan has a range of GHG reduction actions, which include direct regulations, alternative compliance mechanisms, monetary and non-monetary incentives, voluntary actions, market-based mechanisms such as a cap-and-trade system, and an AB 32 implementation fee to fund the program.

Executive Order B-30-15 added the immediate target of reducing GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The CARB released a second update to the Scoping Plan, the 2017 Scoping Plan, to reflect the 2030 target set by Executive Order B-30-15 and codified by SB 32. SB 32 affirms the importance of addressing climate change by codifying into statute the GHG emissions reductions target of at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 contained in Executive Order B-30-15. SB 32 builds on AB 32 and keeps the State on the path toward achieving its 2050 objective of reducing emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels. The companion bill to SB 32, AB 197, provides additional direction to the CARB related to the adoption of strategies to reduce GHG emissions. Additional direction in AB 197 intended to provide easier public access to air pollutant emissions data that are collected by the CARB was posted in December 2016.

AB 32 Scoping Plan contains GHG reduction measures that work toward reducing GHG emissions, consistent with the targets set by AB 32, Executive Order B-30-15, and codified by SB 32 and AB 197. The measures applicable to the project include energy efficiency measures, water conservation and efficiency measures, and transportation and motor vehicle measures, as discussed below.

Energy efficient measures are intended to maximize energy efficiency building and appliance standards, pursue additional efficiency efforts including new technologies and new policy and implementation mechanisms, and pursue comparable investment in energy efficiency from all retail providers of electricity in California. In addition, these measures are designed to expand the use of green building practices to reduce the carbon footprint of California's new and existing inventory of buildings. The project would not include the construction of any new structures that would be subject to Title 24 standards. Therefore, the energy measures would not be applicable to the project.

Water conservation and efficiency measures are intended to continue efficiency programs and use cleaner energy sources to move and treat water. Increasing the efficiency of water transport and reducing water use would reduce GHG emissions. The project would be required to comply with the California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance. The project would use all high-efficiency irrigation methods for water the fields. Therefore, the project would not conflict with any of the water conservation and efficiency measures.

The goal of transportation and motor vehicle measures is to develop regional GHG emissions reduction targets for passenger vehicles. Specific regional emission targets for transportation emissions would not directly apply to the project. However, vehicles traveling to the project site would comply with the Pavley II (LEV III) Advanced Clean Cars Program. The second phase of Pavley standards will reduce GHG emissions from new cars by 34 percent from 2016 levels by 2025, resulting in a 3 percent decrease in average vehicle emissions for all current vehicles. Vehicles traveling to the project site would comply with the Pavley II (LEV III) Advanced Clean Cars Program. Therefore, the project would not conflict with the identified transportation and motor vehicle measures.

The project would comply with existing State regulations adopted to achieve the overall GHG emissions reduction goals identified in AB 32 and would be consistent with applicable plans and programs designed to reduce GHG emissions. Therefore, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs and would have a less than significant impact.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Responses:

(a – b) Less Than Significant Impact. The project is installing a wastewater treatment operation in order to provide treated irrigated water to the agricultural parcels which will allow them to increase their production located on the industrial side. The project will not be participating in the routine transport of hazardous materials. The project will treat waste instead of producing any hazardous material or waste. the project site is not located on a hazardous materials site as a result the project will have a less than significant impact.

(c) No Impact. The project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school

(d) No Impact. The project is not listed on or near a hazardous materials site. Therefore the project would have no impact.

(e) No Impact. The project area is approximately 1 mile from Madera Municipal Airport, however it is not in a An Airport land use compatibility zone and as a result will have no impact.

(f) No Impact. The project will ensure to comply with the emergency response plan therefore would not have an impact.

(g) Less Than Significant Impact. According to the Madera County General Plan, a Wildland is a nonurban, natural area that contains uncultivated land, timber, range, watershed, brush, or grasslands. Although the project area is regulated through either weed abatement or agricultural activities, the project will not expose people or structures, directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildfires, and therefore has a less than significant impact.

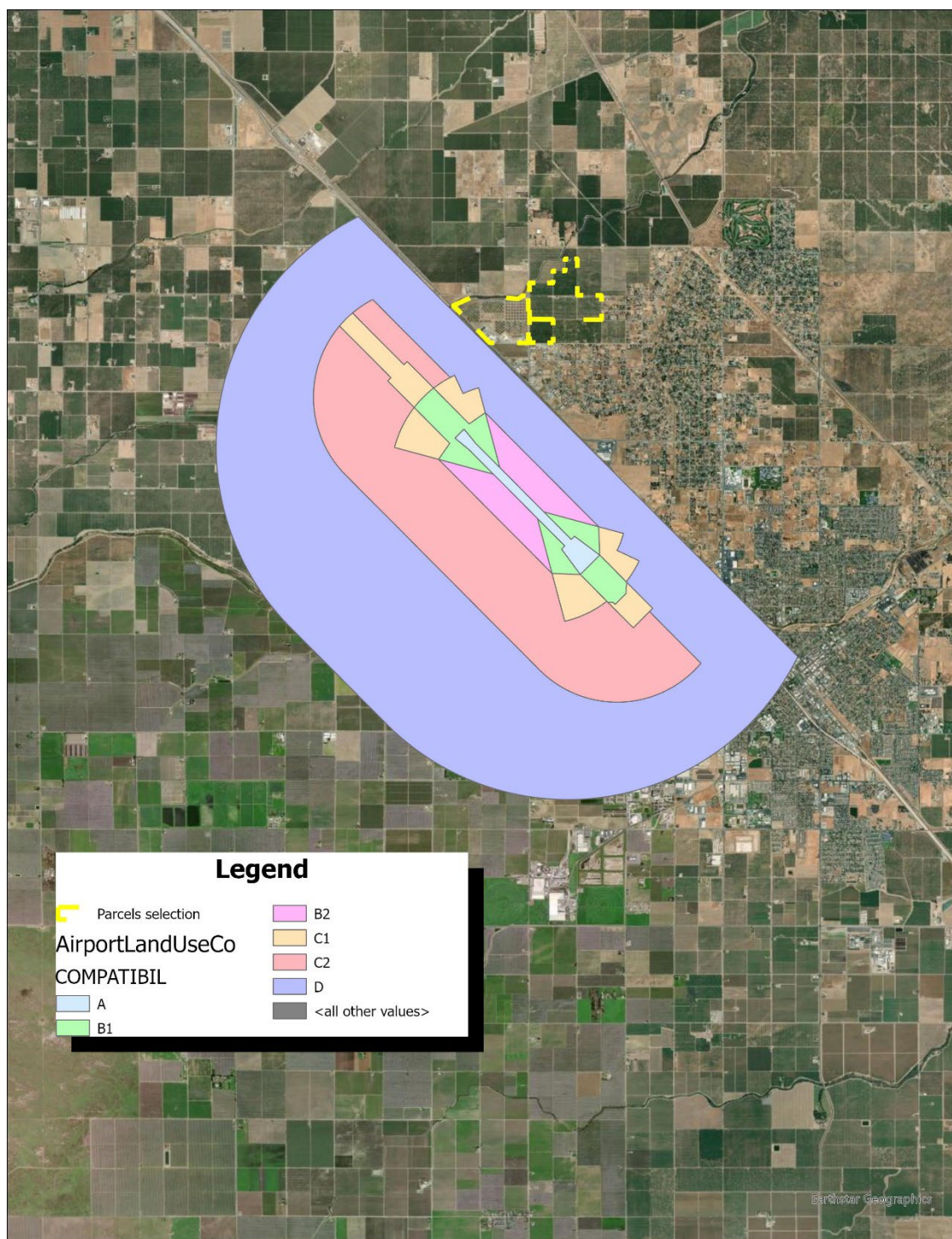


Figure 7 Airport Land Use Compatibility Zone

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

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

Responses:

(a) Less Than Significant Impact. A portion of the project involves the construction of a water treatment facility. Once the water has been treated, it will be discharged onto parcels located

eastward and utilized for irrigation of existing crops. This will enable the project proponent to expand their milling activities on the industrial side of the project.

(b) Less Than Significant Impact. In 2014, the State of California passed the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), allowing for local control of groundwater management with the mandate of sustainable management of the state's groundwater basins. SGMA required that all local agencies establish a Groundwater Sustainability Agency and to develop a Groundwater Sustainability Plan, to better manage the groundwater conditions and achieve sustainable groundwater management. (Madera Subbasin, 2023). The County of Madera requires large-scale developments to participate in the groundwater balance/replenishment project outlined in Chapter 13.110 of the Madera County Municipal Code. To be considered a large-scale development in the County of Madera, you must meet one of the following conditions:

- A. A proposed residential development of more than five hundred dwelling units.
- B. A proposed shopping center or business establishment employing more than one thousand persons or having more than five hundred thousand square feet of floor space.
- C. A proposed commercial office building employing more than one thousand persons or having more than two hundred fifty thousand square feet of floor space.
- D. A proposed hotel or motel, or both, having more than five hundred rooms.
- E. A proposed industrial, manufacturing, or processing plant, or industrial park planned to house more than one thousand persons, occupying more than forty acres of land, or having more than six hundred fifty thousand square feet of floor area.
- F. A mixed-use project that includes one or more of the projects specified in this subdivision.
- G. A project that would demand an amount of water equivalent to, or greater than, the amount of water required by a five-hundred dwelling unit project.

The proposed project does not meet any of the above criteria and, as a result, would not interfere with the County's sustainable groundwater management plan.

(c i - iv) Less Than Significant Impact. As previously stated, the project area intends to use the treated water into the adjacent parcels to the existing crops to the east of the project and construct an irrigation pond. As a result, the project would have a less than significant impact.

(d-e) No Impact. The project is not located in a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zone, and would not have the potential to release pollutants from flooding.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

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

Responses:

(a - b) No Impact. The project is located on the northwest and northeast corners of Avenue 18 and Road 24 (23865 Avenue 18), Madera. The project will occur on an existing parcel to include two adjacent parcels to the east, as a result the project would not have an impact.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Responses:

(a - b) No Impact. Mineral resources in Madera County include aggregate (sand, gravel, and crushed stone), asbestos, copper, gold, iron, and silver. There are no known minerals in the vicinity of the project area, which consists of agricultural land, and therefore the project would have no impact.

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	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 ordinances, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Responses:

(a-b) Less Than Significant Impact.

- Short-Term (Construction) Impacts Development or construction of the Project would temporarily increase ambient noise levels in the vicinity due to construction equipment use. However, the noise generation would be temporary in nature and, as a result, would have a less-than-significant impact.
- Ground-borne vibration impacts were evaluated by identifying potential vibration sources and measuring the distance between vibration sources and surrounding structure locations. The level of vibration generated by the Project's construction phase is considered less than significant based on vibration velocity levels. As a result, mitigation measures are not required.

c) Less Than Significant Impact. Refer to item g of the Hazards and Hazardous Materials discussion.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

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

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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☐	☐	☒	☐
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b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

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Responses:

(a - b) Less Than Significant Impact. The project is to reclaim wastewater for irrigation of an existing operation, and the impact will be nominal; therefore, the project will have a less than significant impact.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Responses:

(a – i-v) No Impact. The project involves the construction of a wastewater treatment facility intended for discharging into adjacent parcels. This includes the removal of an existing pond, the addition of two worm beds, and does not provide any additional services beyond those currently existing. Consequently, the project is assessed as having No Impact.

XVI. RECREATION

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?

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No
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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?

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Responses:

(a – b) No Impact. The project does not have a recreational component, nor do the operations require recreational facilities and as a result would have no impact.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	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) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g. sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Responses:

(a) Less Than Significant Impact. The project will not result in any traffic increase or require any changes to the current Right-of-Way infrastructure. As a result the project would have a less than significant impact.

(b) Less Than Significant Impact. Senate Bill 743 (SB 743) was approved September 27, 2013, and statewide implementation was targeted for July 1, 2020. SB 743 requires land use projects under CEQA to analyze the project's impacts and mitigation measures based on Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). A quantitative analysis of VMT utilizing CALEEMOD version 2022 was implemented when evaluating the proposed project. Madera County has not adopted a VMT threshold. The proposed Project may be developed in response to existing demand for services by services by users of the local roadway network. Therefore, if this site was not developed, an alternative site would likely not eliminate related VMT. In consideration of this, the Project is not anticipated to result in a significant impact under CEQA pursuant to SB 743.

This section documents the Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) analysis which was completed for the purpose of determining Senate Bill 743 (SB 743) compliance for the Project. With the passage of SB 743, VMT has become an important indicator for determining if new development will result in a "significant transportation impact" as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Based on the Project's land use information, the Project was categorized as a "Retail" land use and analyzed qualitatively. As Madera County has not adopted SB 743 guidance, the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) Technical Advisory (December 2018) was used as the basis for this analysis.

The Project is assumed not to increase any traffic over 100 average daily trips and therefore, the Project is not expected to generate a substantial amount of new demand.

(c) No Impact. The project will not result in a geometric design feature that will result in sharp curves or dangerous intersections.

(d) No Impact. The project will not result in inadequate emergency response and therefore have no impact.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

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

☐	☐	☐	☒
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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.

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Responses:

Cultural resources can be defined as buildings, sites, structures, objects, or places of importance that may have historical, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or scientific importance (including those associated with Native Americans or Native American activities). Preservation of the County's unique cultural heritage should be considered when planning for future development of the area.

The western area of the County was originally inhabited by the Northern Valley Yokuts. Ethnographic information about this group is sparse due to the early dissemination of the aboriginal populations in the lower San Joaquin Valley.

The Northern Valley Yokuts territory is defined roughly by the crest of the Diablo Range on the west, and the foothills of the Sierra Nevada on the east. The southern boundary is approximately where the San Joaquin River bends northwards, and the northern boundary is roughly halfway between the Calaveras and Mokelumne Rivers.

Principal settlements were located on the tops of low mounds, on or near the banks of larger watercourses. Settlements were composed of single-family dwellings, sweathouses, and ceremonial assembly chambers. Dwellings were small and lightly constructed, semi-subterranean and oval. The public structures were large, and earth covered. With the development of Spanish Ranchos throughout California, cattle husbandry was prevalent, while dairy farms remained crude and sparse.

As a result of AB 52, which requires jurisdictions to notify Tribal Governments that request such outreach, the County alerted Tribal Entities that requested initial review packets
(a – i, ii) No Impact. Per Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1 notification letters were sent to tribal representatives of California Native American Tribes with no comments and as a result the project would have a less than significant impact.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it had 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Responses:

(a - e) No Impact. The project plans to treat and reclaim approximately 210,00 gallons of water daily for irrigation purposes within existing orchards. Additionally, the project will participate in the Madera County Groundwater Sustainability Plan and adhere to the regulations of the Madera County Subbasin, which is responsible for the sustainable management of groundwater, thereby ensuring the availability of water

XX. WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

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

Responses:

(a - d) No Impact. The project is not located in a State Responsibility Area (SRA) nor does the project include occupiable structures. Further analysis of the project's potential impacts on wildfire is not warranted.

Madera County developed an Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan which, was updated in January of 2010 and a Multi-Hazard Functional Plan which, is responsible for establishing emergency management organization required to mitigate any emergency or disaster affecting Madera County. Both documents identify policies, responsibilities and procedures required to protect the health and safety of Madera County communities, public and private property and the environmental effects of natural and technological emergencies and disasters. And establish the operational concepts and procedures associated with Initial Response Operations (field response) to emergencies, the Extended Response Operations County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activities and the recovery process. Madera County also developed a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) which is responsible for evacuation procedures. The LHMP states the Sheriff's Department uses a system known as "MCALERT". There is nothing in both documents that indicate the project would impact a response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The project does not propose any actions or structures that expose people or structures to significant risks. Furthermore, the project would not generate runoff, post-fire slope instability, or negatively impact drainage.

XIX. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Responses:

CEQA defines three types of impacts or effects:

- Direct impacts are caused by a project and occur at the same time and place (CEQA §15358(a)(1).
- Indirect or secondary impacts are reasonably foreseeable and are caused by a project but occur at a different time or place. They may include growth inducing effects and other effects related to changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate and related effects on air, water and other natural systems, including ecosystems (CEQA §15358(a)(2).
- Cumulative impacts refer to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts (CEQA §15355(b)). Impacts from individual projects may be considered minor but considered retroactively with other projects over a period of time, those impacts could be significant, especially where listed or sensitive species are involved.

(a) Less Than Significant Impact. The analysis conducted in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration results in a determination that the project, with the incorporation of mitigation measures, would have a less than significant impact on the environment. As a result, the project would not have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment and, therefore will have a less than significant impact.

(b) 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. Implementation of the project would not result in significant cumulative impacts and all potential impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

(c) Less Than Significant Impact. Other than the previous mentioned activities and with the mitigations incorporated, the project does not contain an element that will affect the environment that could potentially affect human beings either directly or indirectly.

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