

**FINAL
INITIAL STUDY /
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**
for the
**Upper Mainstem Scott River
Habitat Enhancement Project: Phase II**



Lead Agency:
Siskiyou Resource Conservation District
P.O. Box 268
Etna, CA 96027

December 2025

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Siskiyou Resource Conservation District
P.O. Box 268
Etna, CA 96027

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December 2025

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Project Goal.....	1
1.2. CEQA Process.....	1
1.2.1. Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program.....	2
2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION.....	2
2.1. Project Background.....	2
2.2. Project Description.....	3
2.3. Project Location.....	4
2.4. Environmental Setting.....	7
2.5. Existing Conditions.....	7
2.6. Project Implementation.....	8
3. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST.....	12
4. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED.....	14
4.1. DETERMINATION.....	14
5. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.....	15
5.1. Aesthetics.....	15
5.2. Agricultural and Forestry Resources.....	16
5.3. Air Quality.....	20
5.4. Biological Resources.....	22
5.5. Cultural Resources.....	53
5.6. Energy.....	57
5.7. Geology and Soils.....	58
5.8. Greenhouse Gas Emissions.....	61
5.9. Hazards and Hazardous Materials.....	62
5.10. Hydrology and Water Quality.....	65
5.11. Land Use and Planning.....	70
5.12. Mineral Resources.....	71
5.13. Noise.....	72
5.14. Population and Housing.....	75
5.15. Public Services.....	76
5.16. Recreation.....	77
5.17. Transportation.....	78
5.18. Tribal Cultural Resources.....	80
5.19. Utilities and Service Systems.....	83

5.20.	Wildfire.....	84
5.21.	Mandatory Findings of Significance.....	87
6.	LIST OF PREPARERS.....	89
7.	REFERENCES.....	90

LIST OF FIGURES, TABLES, AND ATTACHMENTS

FIGURES

Figure 1.	Project Vicinity Map.....	5
Figure 2.	Project Area Map.....	6
Figure 3.	Aerial Image of Project Area.....	24

TABLES

Table 1.	Special-Status Wildlife.....	25
Table 2.	Special-Status Plants.....	39
Table 3.	Sensitive Natural Communities.....	41

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP).
- Attachment B: Preliminary Conceptual Designs
- Attachment C: Biological Resources Report
- Attachment E: Response to Comments on the Draft IS/MND
- Attachment D: List of Revisions to the Draft IS/MND

1. INTRODUCTION

This Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and assesses the potential environmental impacts of implementing the Siskiyou Resource Conservation District’s proposed Upper Mainstem Scott River Habitat Enhancement Project: Phase II (hereafter, referred to as the project).

1.1 PROJECT GOAL

The goal of the project is to improve ecological function through implementation of instream and floodplain restoration treatments on the Scott River, a tributary to the Klamath River, in Siskiyou County, California. The project site is located in the Scott Valley and covers an approximately 4-mile-long contiguous stretch of the Scott River, encompassing around 700 acres of the river channel and floodplain. Planned restoration treatments include side channel excavation, channel contouring, installation of instream large woody structures (e.g., engineered log jams), riparian planting, and other enhancements to improve instream and off-channel habitat, enhance floodplain connectivity, improve riparian health, establish drought resiliency, and reduce sediment and erosion affecting aquatic habitats as well as adjacent agricultural lands.

1.2 CEQA PROCESS

The Siskiyou Resource Conservation District (SRCD) is both the project proponent and the lead agency under CEQA for the proposed project. The SRCD intends to adopt a mitigated negative declaration for this project. As lead agency, the SRCD is required to circulate an IS/MND for public and agency review before adopting it. On 5 November 2025, SRCD filed a notice of intent (NOI) to adopt an IS/MND with the Governor’s Office of Land Use and Planning (State Clearinghouse) and the Siskiyou County Clerk’s Office. A draft IS/MND was then circulated for a 30-day review period beginning 5 November 2025 and ending 4 December 2025. The draft IS/MND was circulated to various agencies, including the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (NCRWQCB), California Department of Conservation (DOC), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). The draft IS/MND was also posted to SRCD’s website.

Before adoption of an IS/MND, SRCD must consider the IS/MND along with any comments received during the public and agency review process. This Final IS/MND incorporates comments received during the public review period and contains responses to those comments by SRCD, the CEQA lead agency (Attachment D). This Final

IS/MND also includes a description of revisions to the IS/MND (Attachment E). SVRCD has determined that these revisions do not require recirculation of the IS/MND. Under CEQA Guidelines section 15073.5(c)(1), recirculation of an IS/MND is not required if mitigation measures are replaced with equal or more effective measures. Also, under CEQA Guidelines section 15073.5(c)(1), recirculation is not required if project revisions are made in response to written or verbal comments on the project's effects identified in the draft IS/MND and do not constitute any new avoidable significant effects.

If SRCD finds, on the basis of the Final IS/MND including any comments received, that the IS/MND adequately addresses the environmental issues associated with the project and that no substantial evidence indicates that the project would have a significant effect on the environment, then the SRCD may adopt the IS/MND. Adoption of the Final IS/MND would not require implementation of the project. Future implementation of the project would be dependent on landowner interest and funding considerations.

1.2.1 MITIGATION, MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) is required under CEQA (Public Resources Code section 21081.6; State CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(d) and 15097). The CEQA lead agency must adopt an MMRP to track and verify compliance with mitigation measures. The MMRP for this project (Attachment A) identifies each mitigation measure, when it must be implemented, who is responsible, and how compliance will be verified. Thus, the MMRP provides a clear process for implementing, monitoring, and verifying mitigation.

Standard project requirements (SPRs) have been incorporated into the project design to avoid or minimize adverse effects. Where potentially significant impacts remain after application of SPRs, mitigation measures have been identified to further reduce and/or compensate for those potential impacts. While only mitigation measures are required to be covered in an MMRP, both SPRs and mitigation are included in the MMRP for this project to assist in implementation of all environmental protection measures.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Scott River was first included in the list of impaired waters under section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for excessive

suspended sediment in 1992, and for elevated water temperature in 1994 (NCRWQCB 2005). Water temperature is one of the most limiting factors for salmonid habitat suitability, and excessive sedimentation and stream aggradation can negatively impact habitat quality and carrying capacity throughout freshwater life stages (CDFG 2004, NMFS 2014, CDFW 2017a). To address these impairments, the Action Plan for the Scott River Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) was adopted by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board in 2005 (NCRWQCB 2005). The Action Plan identified the primary source of anthropogenic sediment loads as “Small Discrete Streamside Features, Other” (including streambank failures not associated with harvest or mining), and the primary cause of elevated water temperatures as increased solar radiation from the reduction of shade provided by riparian vegetation (NCRWQCB 2005).

The Action Plan for the Scott River provides an important regulatory and ecological framework for stream and riparian restoration projects in the watershed. The Action Plan established TMDL sediment and temperature targets and recommended implementation measures focused on restoring natural stream processes, improving riparian shading, and reducing sediment delivery (NCRWQCB). Restoration activities that stabilize eroding streambanks, reestablish floodplain connectivity, and enhance riparian vegetation directly support TMDL implementation by reducing sediment inputs and improving riparian shade, thereby lowering summer water temperatures. Such projects are consistent with the Action Plan’s goals for restoring natural geomorphic and hydrologic processes (NCRWQCB 2005; SWRCB 2018). These restoration efforts help achieve water quality standards and beneficial uses, supporting salmonid recovery and the long-term attainment of TMDL load and temperature targets for the Scott River.

2.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project will implement stream and riparian restoration activities along a high-priority reach of the Scott River. The project will restore approximately four contiguous miles of the upper mainstem Scott River and lower French Creek (Reaches 14 and 15, between Horn Lane and just downstream from French Creek) through riparian and aquatic habitat treatments aimed at improving ecological function. The project objectives are to:

- Restore natural stream processes to improve channel morphology, reduce sediment loading, and protect adjacent agricultural lands;
- Improve the extent, stability, and condition of the riparian corridor; and
- Increase the quantity and quality of instream habitat for salmonid species.

To achieve these objectives, the project will implement streambank stabilization and revegetation activities that directly address the primary anthropogenic sources of

sediment and elevated water temperatures in the Scott River. These measures will support water quality standards, identified beneficial uses, anadromous fish populations, and riparian-dependent wildlife. Planned restoration treatments include side channel excavation, channel contouring, installation of instream large woody structures (e.g., engineered log jams), riparian planting, and other enhancements to improve instream and off-channel habitat, enhance floodplain connectivity, strengthen riparian health, establish drought resiliency, and reduce sediment and erosion affecting aquatic habitat and adjacent agricultural lands. Specific treatments will depend on landowner interest and funding availability.

2.4 PROJECT LOCATION

The Scott River is located in Siskiyou County, California, and is a major tributary to the Klamath River, contributing about 5% of the entire Klamath's runoff, with a yearly average of 615,000 acre feet (SRWC 2005). The south and east forks of the Scott River begin in the Trinity Mountains. Downstream from their confluence at Callahan, the Scott River meanders through the Scott Valley, a wide, open, agricultural valley.

This project is located in the Scott Valley on a section of the Scott River approximately two miles west/southwest of the town of Etna (Figure 1). The project is within the McConaughy Gulch USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle (quad).

This IS/MND applies specifically to the approximately 4.0 river miles that form the project reach (Scott River reaches 14 and 15). The geographic center of the project is approximately located at: 41.435550N, -122.846060E (WGS 84). Horn Lane forms the northern boundary of the project area (41.457430N, -122.852550E; WGS 84), and the southern boundary lies approximately 0.4 river miles downstream of the confluence of French Creek and the Scott River (41.413700N, -122.845740E; WGS 84) (Figures 1 and 2). The project encompasses approximately 700 acres of river channel and floodplain habitats on a reach of the Scott River that flows through private agricultural lands. Within this area, the Siskiyou Resource Conservation District (SRCD) will be working to restore natural stream processes and arrest erosion through bioengineered bank treatments and revegetation.

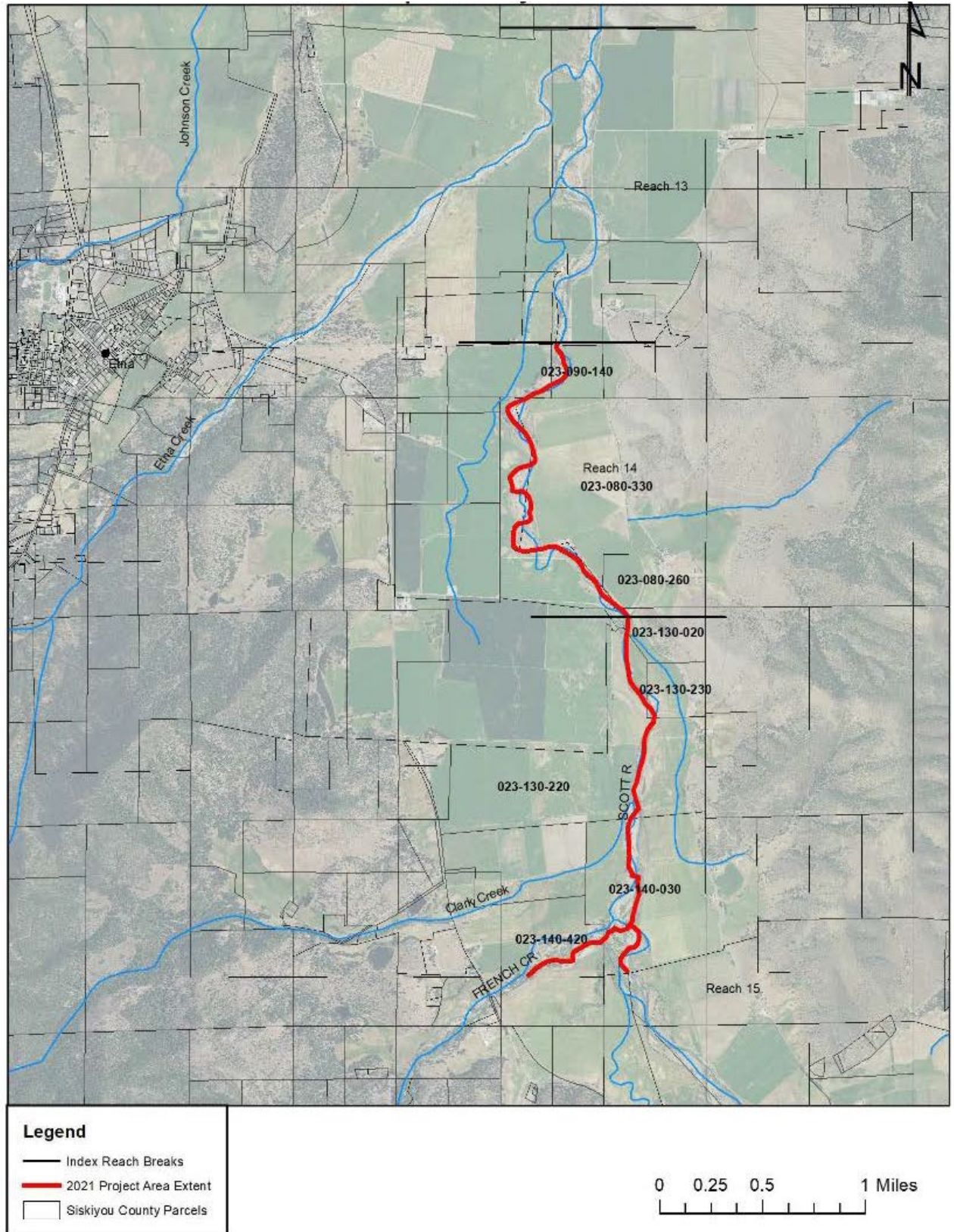


Figure 1. Map of the Scott River project vicinity, Siskiyou County, California.

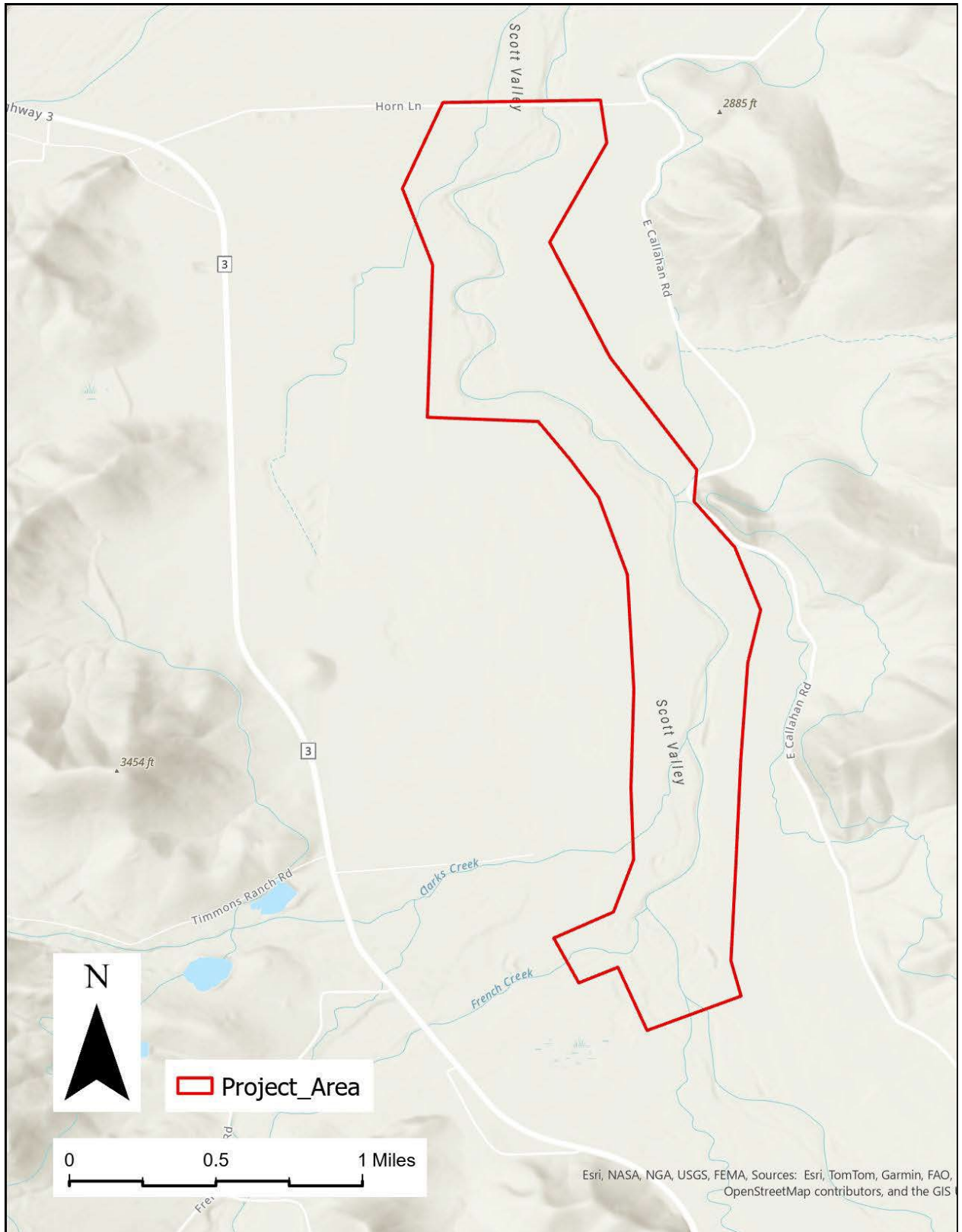


Figure 2. Map of the Scott River project area, Siskiyou County, California.

2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Project site is located on private property along reaches 14 and 15 of the Scott River mainstem and a small portion of French Creek near its confluence with the Scott River. Land use adjacent to the Scott River is irrigated pasture and hay fields, with some small residential parcels. Land use in the surrounding uplands is small residential, small private timber, large commercial timber, and Klamath National Forest land. The elevation of the project area is approximately 900 m asl (2,950 ft asl). Habitat types in the project area include riverine and montane riparian habitats flanked by irrigated pastures and hayfields.

2.6 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project site is located in a very channelized section of the Scott River. Current conditions are due primarily to historical land practices that manipulated the river morphology for flood control and agricultural interests. Subsequent geomorphological processes have exacerbated the condition of the site. Channel confinement and flood prevention activities have reduced the geomorphic floodplain and meander belt widths which have resulted in channel incision, the loss of riparian vegetation, and floodplain disconnection.

The river is disconnected from its flood plain, with the low flow channel/thalweg located between point bars and tall terraces. The river flows along the toe of the terrace slopes, and the saturation and shear force cause failures along the near vertical terrace banks. The site continues to undergo active erosion and mass wasting. The mass wasting events have altered the morphology of the banks significantly. These flow alterations have led to bank erosion, and in some areas have undermined the defending riprap and some mature vegetation.

Currently, both the eastern and western terraces are characterized by agricultural land and varying amounts of riparian forest or corridor. The density and width of the riparian forest is related to the amount of hydrologic disconnect and bank erosion. The hydrologic disconnect and extreme erosion along the banks in some sections preclude the establishment of riparian vegetation along the banks. Sparse vegetation in many areas consists primarily of weeds. Some bank sections are less disconnected and have experienced less erosion and therefore support more vegetation. Segments of the banks have relatively dense riparian vegetation; however, some is adjacent to areas of flow impingement generated by the current altered hydrologic conditions. In recent years, riparian vegetation and trees have been undermined and lost, and without intervention vegetation loss will continue.

2.7 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

2.7.1 RESTORATION

The restoration project will ameliorate the conditions at the site and promote functional ecological processes on the Scott River. The project will involve a series of bioengineered instream and bank enhancements (*See Attachment B: Preliminary Conceptual Designs*). Restoration treatments will include installing bioengineered structures, creating and recontouring side channels, recontouring segments of both terraces, and riparian planting; together, these elements are intended to realign the stream processes and stabilize sediment.

As part of the project, large wood structures in the form of engineered log jams (ELJs) will be installed to stabilize the banks. Some will be anchored into the toe of the bank. These are designed to reduce shear stress and erosion by deflecting the thalweg away from the bank itself. Furthermore, eddies forming just downstream of each structure will promote the deposition of sediment near the bank. Other ELJs will be apex jams that will be installed in the stream channel, dividing flow and slowing the velocity as the water approaches the eroding banks. High-flow alternative channels will be excavated through large gravel bars opposite eroding segments of banks. This will allow water to flow directly through and bypass the eroding meanders during high flow events. These elements will work to reduce shear stress on the banks by adjusting the angle of approach and reducing the velocity of the river, particularly during flood events.

These features have been designed to protect the banks. ELJs will be installed on the banks to protect the eroding segments from flows sent across the channel by the curve of the opposite banks. This will reduce the impact, deflect impinging flows away from the bank, induce sediment deposition in the slow water eddies created by the ELJs, and protect adjacent riprap.

To reduce river channel confinement and increase hydrologic access to the floodplain, banks will be regraded in some areas, reducing them to a lower gradient 3:1 slope. Recontouring the terraces will reduce subsequent meander curvature and improve flood conveyance. Removing material from some of the point bars will also reduce pressure (flow, velocity, and shear stress) against the banks. Excavation has been designed to work with existing topography and minimize disturbance to riparian vegetation.

Excavated materials will be utilized to construct berms approximately three to five feet high and 50 feet wide along the top of the terraces in the project site. These features will replace levees that have been eroded, continuing to protect productive agricultural land. Proposed levees are designed to be further apart than previous iterations, affording the Scott River additional space to disperse energy and meander.

Arresting erosion and stabilizing banks will allow for the development of a riparian corridor. Project design includes planting riparian vegetation, including willow species and cottonwood, across excavated and regraded areas (including where any newly excavated overflow channels reenter the main channel), along the constructed toe, in the ELJs, and across the banks, floodplain, and terraces. Plantings will be comprised of cuttings, rooted stock, and willows salvaged during construction activities. ELJs and the instream bank zones will be planted during the construction phase of the project. The floodplains and terraces will be planted during the late winter or early spring. Ultimately, more of the project site will be revegetated than will be removed during construction, increasing vegetation extent compared with prior to the project. Riparian plantings will initiate the establishment of native riparian vegetation communities, improve soil cohesion, and provide river shading.

The project has been designed, and will be constructed, to prevent and minimize adverse impacts to the environment. An engineer specializing in river restoration projects is developing the construction plans in coordination with the SRCD, and will be finalized in consultation with relevant agencies (e.g., CDFW, USFWS, NMFS). Project designs will utilize techniques detailed in the *Streambank Soil Bioengineering Field Guide for Low Precipitation Areas* (Hoag and Fripp 2002) as well as the *California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual* (Flosi et al. 2010). The improvement of stream channel morphology and anadromous fish habitat through the installation of instream large woody debris features, bank stabilization efforts, and riparian vegetation restoration is recommended in two of the most important recovery strategies for coho salmon in California: the *Recovery Strategy for California Coho Salmon* (CDFG, 2004), and the *Final Recovery Plan for the Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast Evolutionarily Significant Unit of Coho Salmon* (NMFS, 2014).

2.7.2 CONSTRUCTION METHODS

The SRCD will utilize appropriate protection measures to avoid and minimize adverse impacts to the environment during project implementation. A licensed, insured, and bonded construction subcontractor with extensive experience completing in-stream and riparian habitat construction will be secured to complete the work. To the extent feasible, construction will be completed within the seasonal low flow/streambed alteration work window (July 15th through October 1st) when the stream is at base-flow conditions. If work needs to be completed outside of this period, the SRCD will request prior approval from CDFW and/or NMFS.

There are existing roads near the agricultural fields adjacent to the river that will be used to access the project site. The terraces and agricultural fields will be employed as the

staging, storage, and refueling area for all machinery equipment and materials. During project implementation, the contractor will only clear vegetation where necessary for the installation of the project. This is anticipated to involve primarily willows. To the extent feasible, immediately impacted woody vegetation such as willows with intact root masses will be salvaged and relocated. In areas requiring excavation, the contractor will grub and remove material to the depth necessary to complete excavation. All excavation, filling, and backfilling will be done to the lines and grades indicated in the construction plans and will maintain benchmarks and reference points.

SRCD staff will be present during procurement and installation of the large woody debris features to ensure that materials are appropriate and the best techniques are utilized. Trees such as juniper, pine, or other appropriate native species will be acquired locally, as feasible, using heavy equipment so that the root masses and trunks are intact. Large wood will be obtained for use instream. The rootwads will consist of stout roots (a minimum of 2 inches in diameter) and will be in good condition, free from rot and damage such as fractures, and washed to remove soil. The general procedure for constructing ELJs will involve excavation of the structure footprint, installation of the base member, placement of key members (in layers where necessary), driving of batter piles, and placement of ballast boulders. Ballast rock will be angular to sub-rounded in shape and used in sufficient quantities, and as specified in construction plans, to secure the structures and prevent them from mobilizing during high flow events. Rootwad and ballast rock placement will be inspected by the Engineer and/or SRCD staff. Lastly, the structures will be backfilled with gravel and slash that will be added for instream habitat complexity. All fill material for embankment construction will be sourced onsite unless otherwise specified by the Engineer.

All areas disturbed by the contractor during construction operations will be bladed smooth, shaped, and compacted. All SRCD staff and project subcontractors will be familiar with and retain onsite a copy of all environmental compliance documents.

Materials to be utilized as part of the implementation include tree trunks with intact rootwads, boulders, cobble, galvanized steel cable, vegetative cuttings of native plant species (e.g., cottonwood and willow species), weed-free straw, native grass seed, and other appropriate native plant materials. Materials will be staged in the adjacent agricultural fields/terraces. It is intended that all excavated materials, consisting of alluvial materials sourced from the stream bed, bank, and floodplain, will be used in the construction of the terrace berms. However, should any excess material remain after implementation, it will be transported to a stable onsite location as specified by the Engineer or to a yard selected by the SRCD for use at another project site. All disturbed areas will be seeded with a native grass seed mix and mulched with weed-free straw to

prevent erosion into the waterways in the interim between project implementation and vegetation maturation.

Revegetation work will involve willows (whole willow clumps, willow bundles and poles), cottonwood (poles), and other native plant species (e.g., water birch, alder, dogwoods, rose, herbaceous plants, etc.). Willow and cottonwood will all be sourced locally, and will be harvested from the project area to the extent feasible. Other riparian species, will be sourced locally, to the extent feasible, and/or from a reputable native plant nursery. Willows located in areas to be graded will be removed with the roots intact using an excavator and replanted into the toe of the bank. Willow stems will be harvested, bundled, and buried within the ELJs along the toe of the bank and where the overflow channels re-enter the main channel. Additional plantings will be completed in the floodplain and on terraces. Revegetation will only consist of native plant species.

2.7.3 MAINTENANCE

The SRCD will perform maintenance of the project site as needed over the anticipated five-year term of the Streambed Alteration Agreement. Maintenance will involve hand labor where applicable, but may require heavy equipment to repair damaged or underperforming aspects of the project. Depending upon river response, maintenance activities may include, but are not limited to, modifying/installing large woody debris features, riparian planting, rock protection, and weed management. The SRCD will coordinate with CDFW if maintenance requires heavy equipment and will follow all project SPRs and mitigation measures to avoid environmental impacts, including organizing pre-construction biological surveys as needed to avoid impacts to special-status species.

The restoration work detailed in this document will stabilize the banks, regrade the high terraces, and restore and enhance riparian vegetation. These elements will work together to reduce erosion, thereby improving water quality and protecting sensitive aquatic habitat. In addition to stabilization, the ELJ features act as large woody debris, providing critical habitat features for salmonids. Maturation of the riparian vegetation will further stabilize the banks while providing protection from excessive water temperatures. This restoration project will directly improve water quality while increasing the amount and quality of aquatic and riparian habitats.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

1. Project Title: Upper Mainstem Scott River Habitat Enhancement Project: Phase II

2. Lead Agency Name and Address:

Siskiyou Resource Conservation District
PO Box 268
Etna, CA 96027

3. Lead Agency Contact Person:

Evan Senf – Acting District Manager
Siskiyou Resource Conservation District
450 Main Street
Etna, CA 96027
Phone: (530) 467-3975
Email: evan@siskiyougcd.com

4. Project Location:

The Scott River and lower French Creek in the Scott Valley, Siskiyou County, California. The northern project boundary is Horn Lane (41.457430N, -122.852550E; WGS 84) and the southern boundary is approximately 0.4 river miles downstream of French Creek (41.413700N, -122.845740E; WGS 84).

5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:

Siskiyou Resource Conservation District
PO Box 268
Etna, CA 96027

6. General Plan Designation(s):

Agricultural Cropland and Grazing (A-cg)

7. Zoning:

Agricultural (AG-1-B-80, AG-2-B-40)

8. Description of Project:

The project will restore approximately four contiguous miles of the upper mainstem Scott River and lower French Creek (Reaches 14 and 15, between Horn Lane and just downstream of French Creek) through riparian and aquatic habitat treatments aimed at improving ecological function. Planned restoration treatments include side channel excavation, channel contouring, installation of instream large woody structures (e.g.,

engineered log jams), riparian planting, and other enhancements to improve instream and off-channel habitat, enhance floodplain connectivity, strengthen riparian health, establish drought resiliency, reduce sediment, improve water quality, and reduce erosion affecting adjacent agricultural lands.

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

The Project site is located along reaches 14 and 15 of the Scott River mainstem. Land use adjacent to the Scott River is irrigated pasture and hay fields, with some small residential parcels. Land use in the surrounding uplands is small residential, small private timber, large commercial timber, and Klamath National Forest land. The elevation of the project area is approximately 900 m asl (2,950 ft asl). Habitat types in the project area include riverine and montane riparian habitats flanked by irrigated pastures and hayfields.

10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required (e.g., permits, approvals, agreements):

Public agency permits, approvals, or agreements that may be required prior to implementation include, but are not limited to:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (Section 1600 permit; CESA consultation)
- North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Clean Water Act 401 permit; waste discharge requirements)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Clean Water Act 404 certification)
- National Marine Fisheries Service (ESA Section 7 consultation)

Additionally, although not a public agency, Siskiyou Land Trust (SLT) holds conservation easements for multiple properties in the project area which were funded by public agencies. SLT must be consulted regarding activities on those conserved properties.

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.?

No California Native American tribes have requested consultation. Letters were sent to traditionally and culturally affiliated tribes on 10 February 2025. No responses had been received as of 7 October 2025. See the Tribal Cultural Resources section (Section 5.18) for further information.

3. Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

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

4.1 DETERMINATION (Based on 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.
X	I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will NOT be a significant effect in this situation because the Project Proponent made revisions. 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 effects that remain to be addressed.
	I find that although Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects: (1) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (2) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION , including revisions or mitigation measures imposed upon proposed Project, nothing further is required.
Signature	
Date	
Printed Name	
NOTE: Upon Signature of this Document as COULD NOT have been a significant impact on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION or MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared – see below.	

5. Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

5.1 AESTHETICS

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			X	
b.) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?			X	
c.) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?			X	
d.) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X

DISCUSSION:

a.) Although the project includes streams, riparian habitats, and agricultural fields that are part of the scenic landscape, the proposed project area does not include any officially designated scenic vistas. The project reach of the Scott River has not been designated as either a state or federal wild and scenic river (DWR 2025, NWSRS 2025). The project will result in some visual impacts during construction activities including the presence of work crews, vehicles, equipment, and materials; however, these impacts will be temporary. Project implementation will result in minor and temporary modifications to the existing landscape, and most of the activities will take place well away from public viewsheds and paved roads. The proposed activities will help protect and enhance riparian habitat in the Scott River. Over the long-term, the project is expected to enhance visual quality and plant species diversity, and increase riparian vegetation and habitat.

Less Than Significant Impact.

b.) The project will not substantially damage scenic resources such as, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings within a state scenic highway. The Project is not located within an officially designated scenic byway or scenic highway (Caltrans

2018, NSBF 2025). Although State Route 3 is approximately 0.5 miles west of the project area and is eligible to be designated as a scenic highway, project implementation will primarily occur out of view of State Route 3. Although some impacts to riparian vegetation will occur, these impacts are expected to be minor and temporary (See Biological Resources section). Over the long-term, the project is expected to increase riparian vegetation and habitat. **Less Than Significant Impact.**

- c.) The project will not substantially degrade existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. The project may temporarily degrade visual quality of the site during excavation of and construction. However, these activities will have only short-term negative visual impacts due to the presence of work crews/vehicles/equipment. The project’s minor and temporary modifications to the existing landscape will occur well away from any public view or paved road. Proposed activities will help protect and enhance riparian habitat in the Scott River. Over the long-term, the project is expected to enhance visual quality and plant species diversity and increase riparian vegetation and habitat. **Less Than Significant Impact**

- d.) The project will not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area. The project will not create light or glare as all construction work will be conducted during daylight hours. **No Impact**

5.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

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 maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?		X		
b.) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c.) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land or timberland?				X

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

DISCUSSION:

- a.) The project area contains prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, unique farmland, and locally important farmland (DOC 2020). The restoration project is generally anticipated to be consistent with these agricultural designations and uses, especially as it will improve erosion control and flood management that will benefit agricultural operations in addition to improving river channel habitats and biodiversity. Most of the proposed work will occur in riparian zones already enrolled in a Conservation Reserve Program or equivalent program, or in riparian zones not utilized for agriculture. The project will not remove significant portions of existing lands from agricultural production or convert farmland to non-agricultural use. The project will not affect any existing agricultural infrastructure within or adjacent to the project area, including irrigation infrastructure such as irrigation ditches, agricultural sump ponds, pump houses, or an adjacent irrigation diversion dam (Young’s dam).

Although, some minimal reduction in agricultural production or conversion of small areas of farmland to non-agricultural use may occur, the reductions will be temporary. In the long-term, the project will reduce erosion and harmful flooding of agricultural lands, thus benefitting agricultural uses within the project area. In order to avoid and minimize impacts to agriculture, the project will implement mitigation measures MM-AG-1, MM-AG-2, and MM-AG3. Additionally, erosion control best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented (*See Geology and Soils Section*). Following these mitigation measures will result in minimal project impacts to agricultural lands. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

- b.) The project area contains lands that are under Williamson Contracts. Contract enrollment status in the project area is mixed enrollment agricultural land (DOC 2025a). Enrolled lands contain a combination of Prime, Non-Prime, FSZ, or other contracted or enrolled lands not yet delineated by the county. Under the Williamson Act, certain "compatible uses" are allowed on contract land without compromising the land's primary purpose of commercial agriculture. However, the goal of these compatible uses must be either incidental to, or supportive, of the commercial agricultural operations on the property (SCPD 2024). To determine if this project’s restoration activities are permissible through

the Williamson Act, a compatible use determination will need to be obtained from Siskiyou County. To avoid potential conflicts with the Williamson Act, coordination with the landowner and Siskiyou County Planning Department will be implemented (SPR-AG-1). Furthermore, the project area contains lands protected under conservation easement agreements. To avoid any potential conflicts with the conservation easement agreements, coordination with the holder of the conservation easements (e.g., Siskiyou Land Trust) will be enacted (SPR-AG-2). **No Impact.**

- c.) The project is not located in forest land or timber land and would not affect existing zoning or cause rezoning of forest land or timber land. **No Impact.**
- d.) The project is not located in forest land and would not result in loss of or conversion of forest land to non-forest land. **No Impact.**
- e.) The restoration project is generally anticipated to be consistent with agricultural use, especially as it will improve erosion control and flood management that will benefit agricultural operations in addition to improving river channel habitats and biodiversity. Most of the proposed work will occur in riparian zones already enrolled in a Conservation Reserve Program or equivalent program, or in riparian zones not utilized for agriculture. The project will not remove significant portions of existing lands from agricultural production or convert significant areas of farmland to non-agricultural use. The project will involve minor changes in existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could potentially result in some minor conversion of farmland, to non-agricultural use although the non-agricultural use is expected to be consistent with, compatible with, and beneficial to agricultural uses. Although, some minimal reduction in agricultural production or conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use may occur, the reductions will generally be temporary. In the long-term, the project will reduce erosion and harmful flooding of agricultural lands, thus benefitting agricultural uses within the project area. In order to avoid and minimize impacts to agriculture, the project will implement mitigation measures MM-AG-1, MM-AG-2, and MM-AG3. Additionally, erosion control best management practices (BMPs) and erosion mitigation measures will be implemented (*See Geology and Soils section 5.7*). Following these mitigation measures will result in minimal project impacts to agriculture. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

STANDARD PROJECT REQUIREMENTS (SPRs) FOR AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

SPR-AG-1: Williamson Act Coordination

If project activities will occur on lands under Williamson Act contract, the project proponent shall coordinate with the landowner and with the Siskiyou County Planning Department prior to

project implementation to confirm that restoration activities are compatible uses and will not constitute a permanent conversion of contracted land.

SPR-AG-2: Conservation Easement Coordination

If project activities will occur on lands under a Conservation Easement, the project proponent shall coordinate with the landowner and with the holder of the easement (e.g., Siskiyou Land Trust) prior to project implementation to confirm that restoration activities are compatible with the conservation easement.

MITIGATION MEASURES (MMs) FOR AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

MM-AG-1: Minimize Disruption to Agricultural Operations Prior to construction, the project proponent shall coordinate with affected agricultural landowners to maintain access for irrigation, livestock movement, and farm roads. Construction scheduling shall avoid critical agricultural periods such as planting, irrigation, or harvest, to the extent feasible.

MM-AG-2: Minimize Impacts to Agricultural Lands During Construction

The project footprint shall be minimized within agricultural land to the extent feasible. To protect agricultural lands, the project proponent shall:

- Install and maintain temporary fencing or barriers, as needed, where construction areas are adjacent to active farmland to prevent encroachment into agricultural operations.
- Salvage and stockpile topsoil from disturbed agricultural areas, to the extent feasible, and reapply it following construction to maintain soil productivity.
- Restrict construction vehicles and equipment to designated access routes and staging areas to minimize soil compaction.

MM-AG-3: Agricultural Buffering

Where restored riparian areas are adjacent to active agricultural uses, the project shall incorporate vegetated buffers, setbacks, or fencing to reduce potential conflicts, including livestock intrusion into restored habitats.

5.3 AIR QUALITY

Would the Project (Where available, significance criteria established by applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make determinations):	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?				X
b.) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			X	
c.) 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 (including releasing emissions, which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			X	
d.) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
e.) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?			X	

DISCUSSION:

The project site is located in Siskiyou County, and is under the jurisdiction of the Siskiyou County Air Pollution Control District (APCD), California Air Resources Board (CARB), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region IX. The Siskiyou County APCD is responsible for implementation of state and federal air quality standards within Siskiyou County. Project activities will not conflict with the implementation of any applicable air quality plan for Siskiyou County APCD, CARB, or the EPA.

- a.) The project will comply with, and will not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Siskiyou County APCD’s air quality plans (SPR-AQ-1). **No Impact.**
- b.) The project will not violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. The project will lead to minor and temporary increases in fugitive dust and fuel combustion. The speed of vehicles and equipment traveling on unpaved areas within the project area will be less than 15 miles per hour to

reduce fugitive dust emissions, in accordance with the CARB fugitive dust protocol (CARB 2022) (SPR-AQ-2). Project implementation will not involve constructing any stationary sources of criteria pollutants and will not add significantly to any mobile sources of air pollution (e.g., fugitive dust, fuel combustion, miscellaneous other combustion). Compliance with all Siskiyou County APCD requirements will ensure that any adverse impacts to air quality are less than significant. **Less Than Significant Impact.**

- c.) The project will not result in a significant cumulative net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. Although restoration activities will involve use of construction equipment (e.g., backhoes, excavators) that will lead to temporary increases in equipment emissions and dust, potential impacts of equipment use would be minor and short-term and would not result in a cumulative net increase in air pollutants. **Less Than Significant Impact.**

- d.) The project will not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. The project is not located within 0.4 km (0.25 miles) of any schools or other sensitive receptors. Although the project will lead to temporary increases in equipment emissions and dust, potential impacts of equipment use would be minor and short term, and will not lead to significant exposure to pollutants by sensitive receptors. **Less Than Significant Impact.**

- e.) The project will not result in other emissions or create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. Although the project will lead to temporary increases in equipment emissions and odors from those emissions, potential impacts of equipment use would be minor and short term. **Less Than Significant Impact.**

STANDARD PROJECT REQUIREMENTS (SPRs) FOR AIR QUALITY

SPR-AQ-1: Compliance with Air Quality Regulations

The project will comply with the applicable air quality requirements of air districts with jurisdiction over the project area. This SPR applies to all project activities, including project maintenance activities.

SPR-AQ-2: Minimize Dust To minimize dust during project activities, the speed of vehicles and equipment traveling on unpaved areas will be limited to 15 miles per hour, in accordance with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) Fugitive Dust protocol. This SPR applies to all project activities, including project maintenance activities.

5.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

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 special-status wildlife species?		X		
b. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any special-status plant species?		X		
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community?		X		
d. 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?				X
e. Interfere substantially with 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?		X		
f. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				X
g. Conflict with provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X

DISCUSSION:

In accordance with SPR-BIO-1, a data review was conducted for biological resources with potential to occur in the project area, including habitat and vegetation types, special-status wildlife and plants, and sensitive habitats. Lists of special-status wildlife species, plant species, and sensitive natural vegetation communities with potential to occur within the project area and vicinity were compiled as part of the data review (*See Attachment C: Biological Resources*

Report). The data review involved checking the following databases for known records of endangered, threatened, and other special status wildlife, plant species, and natural vegetative communities potentially occurring in or near the project area: the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB; CDFW 2025b), US Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) database (USFWS 2025a), the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants online database (CNPS 2025), and CDFW's list of sensitive natural vegetation communities (CDFW 2025c). The database records were reviewed for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) quadrangle (quad) centered on the project area and the surrounding quads (9 quads total).

Consistent with SPR-BIO-1, the data review was followed by biological resource reconnaissance surveys, which were conducted in May 2025 coinciding with plant flowering and bird nesting seasons. The reconnaissance surveys were conducted to identify and document sensitive resources (e.g., aquatic habitat, riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities) and to assess the suitability of habitat in the project area for special-status plant and wildlife species. Vegetation and habitat characteristics were evaluated, and all wildlife and plant species observed were recorded. Results of the data review and reconnaissance survey were compiled in a biological resources report (Attachment C).

Habitat types in the project area included riverine and montane riparian habitats flanked by irrigated pastures and hayfields (Figure 3). Altogether, based on the data review and biological reconnaissance surveys, nineteen special-status wildlife species and ten special-status plant species were identified as either occurring or having the potential to occur in the project area. For two of the wildlife species, both listed anadromous salmonids, designated essential fish habitat exists within the project area (NMFS 2024). The project area also contains four sensitive vegetation communities, all of which are montane riparian habitats. These special-status species and sensitive vegetation communities are discussed in detail, below, under impacts to: a) special-status wildlife, b) special-status plants, and c) riparian habitats and other sensitive plant communities.

Due to the presence of or potential for occurrence of special-status species and sensitive natural communities, biological resource training will be provided to staff and construction crews prior to project implementation (SPR-BIO-2). Training will include information on biological resources (e.g., special-status species, sensitive habitats, wetlands, nesting birds), applicable environmental regulations, protection and mitigation measures, and procedures for halting work and notifying the biologist if sensitive resources are encountered.

a.) Based on the results of the database review and biological reconnaissance survey, nineteen special-status wildlife species occur, or have potential to occur, in the project area (Table 1). The project could result in direct or indirect adverse effects to special-status wildlife species and habitat suitable for these species within the project area. Suitable habitats for special-status species will be avoided to the extent feasible while also accomplishing the habitat restoration goals of the project (SPR-BIO-3). During the biological reconnaissance survey (SPR-BIO-1), it was determined that suitable habitats for special-status species are present and cannot be avoided; therefore, focused or protocol surveys for the species will be conducted prior to project implementation (SPR-BIO-4). If focused surveys identify the presence of special-status wildlife species and it is determined that they could be impacted by the project, mitigation measures will be implemented to protect the special-status wildlife species. Species-specific habitat requirements and life-history characteristics, and the potential for project impacts to special-status wildlife species are described in the species accounts, below. Also described below are species-specific avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures. With the implementation of the standard project requirements and mitigation measures, potential impacts of the project on endangered, threatened, and special-status wildlife species are expected to be less than significant. **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.**

Table 1. Special-status wildlife species that occur or may occur in the project area.

Species	Listing Status ¹ Federal	Listing Status ¹ State	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ²
Amphibians and Reptiles				
Northwestern Pond Turtle <i>Actinemys marmorata</i>	PT	SSC	Ponds, marshes, rivers, streams and irrigation ditches, usually with aquatic vegetation, below 6000 ft elevation. Needs basking sites and suitable upland habitat (sandy banks or grassy open fields) up to 0.5 km from water for egg-laying.	<i>May occur.</i> Although there are no known nearby records, the Scott River and nearby agricultural ponds contain habitat potentially suitable for northwestern pond turtle.
Foothill Yellow-legged Frog (North Coast DPS) <i>Rana boylei</i> pop. 1	—	SSC	Partly-shaded, shallow streams and riffles with a rocky substrate in a variety of habitats. Need at least some cobble-sized substrate for egg-laying. Need at least 15 weeks to attain metamorphosis.	<i>May occur.</i> The project area and adjacent areas contain habitat potentially suitable for the species. The species has been documented 6.3 miles northwest of the project area.

Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
 Upper Mainstem Scott River Habitat Enhancement Project: Phase II

Species	Listing Status ¹ Federal	Listing Status ¹ State	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ²
Cascades Frog <i>Rana cascadae</i>	—	SSC	Standing water required for reproduction in temporary or permanent ponds, lakes, marshes, streams, and wet meadows. Hibernates in mud on the bottom of lakes and ponds during the winter. Requires water year-round and cannot tolerate water that freezes solid in winter.	<i>May occur.</i> The project area and adjacent areas contain habitat potentially suitable for the species. The species has been documented 7.0 miles southwest and southeast of the project area.
Birds				
Greater Sandhill Crane <i>Antigone canadensis tabida</i>	—	T, FP	Occurs in meadow, seep, marsh, and wetland habitats. Nests in wetland habitats in northeastern California; winters in the Central Valley. Prefers grain fields within 4 miles of a shallow body of water used as a communal roost site; irrigated pasture used as loafing sites.	<i>May occur.</i> The project area contains habitat potentially suitable for nesting and foraging for this species. The species has been documented 5.6 miles northwest of the project area (CDFW 2025b).
Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	—	FP, WL	Occurs in valley and foothill grasslands, mountain areas, sage-juniper flats, and desert. Cliff-walled canyons provide nesting habitat in most parts of range; also, large trees in open areas.	<i>May occur.</i> The project area contains potentially suitable foraging habitat for this species. The species has been documented 8.6 miles north of the project area (CDFW 2025b)
Prairie Falcon <i>Falco mexicanus</i>	—	WL	Great basin grassland; great basin scrub; Mojavean desert scrub; Sonoran desert scrub; valley & foothill grassland. Inhabits dry, open terrain, either level or hilly. Breeding sites located on cliffs. Forages far afield, even to marshlands and ocean shores.	<i>May occur.</i> The project area contains potentially suitable foraging habitat for this species. The species has been documented 5.7 miles east of the project area (CDFW 2025b).

Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
 Upper Mainstem Scott River Habitat Enhancement Project: Phase II

Species	Listing Status ¹ Federal	Listing Status ¹ State	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ²
Yellow-breasted Chat <i>Icteria virens</i>	—	SSC	Riparian forests; riparian scrub; riparian woodland. Summer (breeding) resident. Inhabits riparian thickets of willow and other brushy tangles near watercourses. Nests in low, dense riparian, consisting of willow, blackberry, and wild grape. Forages and nests within 10 feet of ground.	Known to occur. One male observed and heard singing in riparian vegetation in the project area during surveys in May 2025.
Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	—	WL	Ocean shore, bays, freshwater lakes, and larger streams. Uses riparian forests. Builds large nests in treetops, power poles, communication towers, and nesting platforms. Nests are located within 15 miles of good fish-producing bodies of water.	Known to occur. A breeding pair with an active nest was observed in the southern part of the project area during surveys in May 2025.
Bank Swallow <i>Riparia riparia</i>	—	T	Riparian scrub; riparian woodland. Colonial nester; nests primarily in riparian and other lowland habitats west of the desert. Requires vertical banks/cliffs with fine-textured/sandy soils near streams, rivers, lakes, ocean to dig nesting hole.	Known to occur. Nesting and foraging habitat suitable for bank swallow is present in the riparian areas along the Scott River and the species has been documented within the project area. In 1987, a nesting colony was recorded in the southern part of the project area near French Creek (CDFW 2025b). During the May 2025 surveys, two individual bank swallows were recorded in the project area; although no suitable breeding habitat was observed, visibility was limited.
Yellow Warbler <i>Setophaga petechia</i>	—	SSC	Riparian plant associations in close proximity to water. Also nests in montane shrubbery in open conifer forests in the Cascades and Sierra Nevada. Frequently found nesting and foraging in willow shrubs and thickets, and in other riparian plants including cottonwoods, sycamores, ash, and alders.	Known to occur. One male observed and a second male heard singing in riparian vegetation in the project area during surveys in May 2025.
Fish				
Pacific Lamprey <i>Entosphenus tridentatus</i>	—	SSC	Occurs in Klamath/North Coast, South Coast, and Sacramento/San Joaquin flowing waters.	Known to occur. There are known occurrences of Pacific lamprey from the Scott River (CDFW 2017a).

Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
 Upper Mainstem Scott River Habitat Enhancement Project: Phase II

Species	Listing Status ¹ Federal	Listing Status ¹ State	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ²
Coho Salmon – Southern Oregon / Northern California ESU <i>Oncorhynchus kitutch</i> pop. 2	T	T	Occurs in Klamath/North Coast and Sacramento/San Joaquin flowing waters.	Known to occur. There are known occurrences of coho salmon from the Scott River (CDFW 2017a).
Steelhead Trout <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus</i> pop. 1	—	SSC	Occurs in Klamath/North Coast flowing waters.	Known to occur. There are known occurrences of steelhead trout from the Scott River (CDFW 2017a).
Chinook Salmon – Upper Klamath and Trinity Rivers ESU <i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i> pop. 30	C	T	Occurs in Klamath/North Coast flowing waters.	Known to occur. There are known occurrences of chinook salmon from the Scott River (CDFW 2017a).
Invertebrates				
Crotch bumble bee <i>Bombus crotchii</i>	—	CE	Coastal California east to the Sierra-Cascade crest and south into Mexico. Food plant genera include <i>Antirrhinum</i> , <i>Phacelia</i> , <i>Clarkia</i> , <i>Dendromecon</i> , <i>Eschscholzia</i> , and <i>Eriogonum</i> .	May occur. Habitat suitable for Crotch bumble bee (open areas with suitable floral resources for foraging) is present in the project area. The species has been documented 2.7 miles northwest of the project area (CDFW 2025b).
Western bumble bee <i>Bombus occidentalis</i>	—	CE	Once common throughout much of its range, in California, this species is currently largely restricted to high elevation sites in the Sierra Nevada and the northern California coast. Habitat includes open grassy areas, chaparral, scrub, and meadows. Requires suitable nesting sites for the colonies, availability of nectar and pollen from floral resources throughout the duration of the colony period (spring, summer, and fall), and suitable overwintering sites for the queens.	May occur. Habitat suitable for western bumble bee (open areas with suitable floral resources for foraging) is present in the project area. The nearest known record is from 1.0 mile west of the project area (CDFW 2025b).

Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
 Upper Mainstem Scott River Habitat Enhancement Project: Phase II

Species	Listing Status ¹ Federal	Listing Status ¹ State	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ²
Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee <i>Bombus suckleyi</i>	PE	CE	Occurs on the Pacific coast from Alaska to far northern California, east to Nebraska. An inquiline in the colonies of other bumblebees. Adult food plant genera include: Aster, Centaurea, Cirsium, Trifolium, Chrysothamnus, Helichrysum.	<i>May occur.</i> Open areas with suitable floral resources for foraging are present in the project area, and other bumble bee species may occur, which it may utilize colonies of. The species has been documented 9.4 miles southeast of the project area (CDFW 2025b).
Monarch <i>Danaus Plexippus</i>	C	—	Overwintering habitat is only on the Coast. Needs milkweed (<i>Asclepias</i> spp.) for breeding. Uses a variety of floral resources for foraging.	<i>May occur.</i> Although there are no known nearby records, suitable habitat and floral resources occur in the project area. Milkweed is present in the project area.

Mammals

Townsend's Big-eared Bat <i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	—	SSC	Occurs throughout California in a wide variety of habitats, including broadleaved upland forest, upper and lower montane coniferous forests, riparian habitats, meadow & seep, and valley & foothill grassland. Most common in mesic sites. Roosts in the open, hanging from walls and ceilings. Roosting sites limiting. Extremely sensitive to human disturbance.	<i>May occur.</i> Habitat potentially suitable for Townsend's big-eared bat is present in riparian habitats in the project area. The nearest known occurrence is 8.5 miles northwest of the project area (CDFW 2025b).
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Notes:

¹ Legal Status Definitions

- E Listed as Endangered
- T Listed as Threatened
- D Delisted
- CE Candidate for Listing as Endangered
- CT Candidate for Listing as Threatened
- PE Proposed for Listing as Endangered

PT Proposed for Listing as Threatened
FP Fully Protected
WL Watch List
SSC Species of Special Concern

² Potential for Occurrence Definitions

Not expected to occur: Species is unlikely to be present because of poor habitat quality, lack of suitable habitat features, or restricted current distribution of the species.

May occur: Suitable habitat is available; however, there are little to no other indicators that the species might be present.

Known been documented within the project area.to occur: Species has

Sources: CDFW 2025b; USFWS 2025a

Special-Status Reptiles and Amphibians

Northwestern Pond Turtle

Aquatic habitat potentially suitable for northwestern pond turtle *Actinemys marmorata* is present within ponds and streams in and adjacent to the project area, and this species may also use upland habitat within the project area in the vicinity of these features (Table 1). Western pond turtle can be found in streams, ponds, rivers, and lakes with standing or slow-moving water, underwater shelter sites, and abundant basking sites. Northwestern pond turtles use upland habitat for nesting and overwintering, and they may be present in upland habitat up to 1,500 feet from suitable aquatic habitat. Suitable upland areas for western pond turtle have short vegetation, little to no overstory canopy cover, direct sunlight exposure, and dry soils, and that are within 1,500 feet of water (USFWS 2023b). This species is proposed for federal threatened status under the ESA (USFWS 2023b).

If pond turtles are present in the vicinity of the project area, project implementation has the potential to result in adverse effects on the species. Per SPR BIO-3, if it is determined that adverse effects on western pond turtles can be clearly avoided by physically avoiding the habitat suitable for these species, then no mitigation would be required. However, because western pond turtles may be present within river channel project areas as well as relatively large distances (up to 1,500 feet) from aquatic habitat in the project area, avoidance of all habitat potentially suitable for the species is unlikely. As a result, SPR-BIO-4 would apply, and focused visual encounter surveys for western pond turtle would be conducted by a qualified biologist within aquatic and upland habitat areas suitable for the species before implementation activities that could potentially kill or remove vegetation or disturb the soil. Upland habitat suitable for western pond turtle overwintering or nesting exists within the project area. If northwestern pond turtle is identified during focused surveys (SPR-BIO-4), because habitat cannot be feasibly avoided, mitigation measure MM-BIO-1 for this species would be implemented to protect individual pond turtles and pond turtle nests. Under Mitigation Measure BIO-1, pond turtles would be allowed to move out of the project area of their own volition or they would be moved out of the project area by a qualified biologist, and any pond turtle nest

that is discovered will be protected with a no-disturbance buffer. However, pond turtle exhibits high site fidelity. If found, and relocated, the likelihood of pond turtles returning to the construction zone is high. Therefore, a qualified biological monitor, experienced with the pond turtle, will be present in the construction areas where there is a high probability that pond turtle could be present. The project will revegetate riparian areas at a ratio of 2:1, which will increase the density and quantity of riparian vegetation. In areas occupied by pond turtles, revegetation plans will be modified to provide gaps in riparian planting areas to allow pond turtles to easily move between aquatic and upland habitats. In the longer term, the project is likely to improve habitat for northwestern pond turtle by slowing down water and increasing the amount of basking habitat structures as a result of installing ELJs. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

Special-Status Frogs

Potentially suitable habitats for foothill yellow-legged frog *Rana boylei* and Cascades frog *Rana cascadae* are present within the project area. Breeding habitat for foothill yellow-legged frog consists of partly-shaded, shallow streams and riffles with a rocky substrate. Foothill yellow-legged frog is known to occur within both aquatic habitat as well as upland habitat up to 200 feet away, but typically no more than 50 to 70 feet away, from aquatic habitat (CDFW 2018). Cascades frog is primarily aquatic. It breeds in shallow ephemeral and perennial lentic (still or slow moving) habitats including lake margins, ponds, and wet meadows, including human-modified habitats (e.g., dammed springs, roadside ditches). To avoid predation by fish, Cascades frog typically breeds in water bodies without fish. As ephemeral sites dry after breeding, Cascades frogs move to more permanent waters, where they frequent shorelines, rocks, and logs. In winter, they overwinter in aerobic sediments at the bottoms of lakes, ponds, springs, and streams (USFWS 2022).

If special-status frog species are present in the vicinity of the project area, project implementation has the potential to result in adverse effects on these species. Per SPR BIO-3, if it is determined that adverse effects on these special-status frogs can be clearly avoided by physically avoiding the habitat suitable for these species, then no mitigation would be required. However, because frogs may be present within river channel project areas as well in nearby upland habitats within in the project area, avoidance of all habitat potentially suitable for these species is unlikely. As a result, SPR-BIO-4 would apply, and focused visual encounter surveys for foothill yellow-legged frog and Cascades frog would be conducted by a qualified biologist within aquatic and upland habitat areas suitable for these species before implementation activities that could potentially kill or remove vegetation or disturb the soil.

If foothill yellow-legged frogs or Cascades frogs are identified during focused surveys

(SPR-BIO-4), because habitat cannot be feasibly avoided, mitigation measure MM-BIO-2 would be implemented to protect these special-status frog species. Under MM-BIO-2, frog egg masses and tadpoles would be protected through project modifications, and adult frogs would be allowed to move out of the project area of their own volition or they would be moved out of the project area by a qualified biologist, in coordination with CDFW. Additionally, erosion control best management practices (BMPs) and mitigation measures will be implemented (*See* Geology and Soils section 5.7) which will reduce impacts to aquatic habitats. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

Special-Status Birds

Greater Sandhill Crane

The Scott Valley is located along the greater sandhill crane *Antigone canadensis tabida* migratory flyway, and potentially suitable breeding and foraging habitat exists in the project area. Greater sandhill crane breeds in meadow, seep, marsh, and wetland habitats (Table 1). In addition to natural wetlands, irrigated pastures are also used for breeding and foraging, especially pastures with nearby natural or artificial wetlands (Smith 1999, Ivey & Herziger 2001).

If greater sandhill crane is present in the vicinity of the project area, project implementation has the potential to result in adverse effects on this species. The project will have a minor and less than significant effect on habitat of greater sandhill cranes. The primary potential impact is disturbance to individuals from project noise and activity, and potential impacts to nests during project implementation. Per SPR BIO-3, if it is determined that adverse effects on cranes can be clearly avoided by physically avoiding the habitat suitable for the species, then no mitigation would be required. However, because cranes may be present within river channel project areas as well in adjacent agricultural habitats in the project area, avoidance of all habitat potentially suitable for the species is unlikely. As a result, SPR-BIO-4 would apply, and focused surveys for cranes and crane nests would be conducted in areas suitable for the species before implementation activities begin. If greater sandhill cranes or nests are identified during focused surveys (SPR-BIO-4), because habitat cannot be feasibly avoided, mitigation measures MM-BIO-3 and MM-BIO-4 would be implemented to protect this special-status avian species. Under Mitigation Measures MM-BIO-3 and MM-BIO-4, avoidance buffers will be established to protect individual cranes and crane nests from disturbance. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

Osprey

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* nest in large trees and on manmade structures (e.g., electrical transmission towers) and forages for fish in large bodies of water, including rivers and lakes (Table 1). The project area contains suitable breeding and foraging habitat and

osprey is known to occur in the project area. In May 2025, during the biological reconnaissance survey, a pair with an active nest constructed on a power pole was observed in the southern portion of the project area. The project will result in less than significant effects on osprey habitat. No breeding habitat will be affected. Foraging habitat is expected to improve, as osprey are fish-eaters and the project's primary goal is to improve aquatic habitat for fish species. However, disturbance from construction and other project activities may potentially result in adverse effects on osprey, especially during the breeding season. Osprey have relatively large ranges and avoidance of all habitat potentially suitable for the species is unlikely. If osprey is identified during focused surveys, because habitat cannot feasibly be avoided, mitigation measure MM-BIO-4 would be implemented to protect the nests of this special-status avian species.

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

Other Special-Status Raptor Species:

The project area contains potentially suitable foraging habitat for golden eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* and prairie falcon *Falco mexicanus* (Table 1). These species forage in open habitats. As the project is focused on stream channel and riparian restoration, the project will not have a significant adverse effect on foraging habitats of these species. However, disturbance from project implementation could affect breeding golden eagles and prairie falcons. Golden eagles nest on cliffs and manmade structures (e.g., electrical transmission towers) (Pagel et al. 2010). Although natural cliffs do not occur within the project area, there are some potentially suitable cliffs within the vicinity of the project and there are manmade structures (i.e., power poles) in the project area that could potentially be used for nesting by golden eagles. Prairie falcon nests on natural cliffs and rocky outcrops (CDFW 2005), which do not occur in the project area, but do occur in the vicinity. If any nests of these special-status raptor species are found in or near the the project area, they will be protected by implementing mitigation measure MM-BIO-4. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

Bank Swallow

Bank swallow nests in colonies, the size of which are dependent on the amount of suitable nesting habitat. It is primarily a riparian species and nests are built in vertical banks with friable, fine-textured or sandy soils along streams and rivers, although it will sometimes nest along lakes and ocean coasts. The height of the vertical banks at nesting colonies is typically at least 1.0 m tall, with most burrows excavated in the top third of the bank (Garrison 1998, CDFW 1999). Bank swallow nesting habitat along streams and rivers is maintained through natural erosion and fluvial processes that create and maintain steep banks along river channels. The decline of suitable habitat is the primary cause of bank swallow population declines. Bank swallow populations in California and elsewhere have been adversely impacted by bank stabilization projects (CDFG 1992).

Bank swallow *Riparia riparia* is known to occur within the project area and suitable breeding and foraging habitat exist within and adjacent to the project area. Single bank swallows were observed foraging in the project area during the biological reconnaissance survey in May 2025, although no nests were observed; however, visibility of banks from the land-based pedestrian survey was poor due to dense riparian vegetation (See Attachment A – Biological Survey Report). In mid-August 2025, a wading survey of the Scott River identified evidence of recently occupied nests within the project area (C. Jankowski and N. Howington, SRCD, personal communication, 21 August 2025).

The project has the potential to adversely impact bank swallows by directly impacting nesting habitat and by causing disturbance to nesting swallows. The project will recontour banks and will install ELJs which will require excavation of streambanks. Project goals of bank stabilization conflict with erosion processes that create and maintain steep riverbanks that bank swallows use for nesting. Not all eroding banks will be tall enough or have the appropriate soils or configuration to provide suitable nesting habitat for bank swallows, but focused surveys will be needed prior to project implementation to identify areas that may be suitable bank swallow nesting habitat. Construction activities may also impact nesting bank swallows by creating disturbance and by creating noise above ambient levels.

The project has the potential to cause indirect as well as direct impacts to bank swallow nesting habitat. It is anticipated that ELJs will reduce lateral scour and will capture and store sediment, which over time will promote the establishment of riparian vegetation. This process, along with the proposed plantings along the toe of the banks, could have an indirect impact on suitable nesting habitat as riparian vegetation may prevent or reduce future erosion at these locations. However, uncertainties including the frequency and magnitude of high-water events, and how natural fluvial processes will affect the project reach over time, make quantifying these effects difficult.

Impacts to bank swallows from the project will be avoided through implementation of mitigation measure MM-BIO-4 for bird nest protection, and MM-BIO-5 for bank swallow protection. These measures will protect bank swallow nests and nesting habitat, including documented, as well as potentially suitable nesting habitat. Implementation of these measures will reduce impacts to less than significant levels. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

Special-Status Riparian Songbirds

Two riparian songbirds that are State Species of Special Concern (SSC) occur in riparian habitats within the project area: yellow-breasted chat *Icteria virens* and yellow warbler *Setophaga petechia*. These species are neotropical migrants that winter in Latin America

and breed in riparian habitats in North America. Yellow-breasted chat and yellow warbler may be impacted by project construction as a result of impacts to riparian habitat and increased noise and disturbance from baseline levels. Although some impacts to riparian vegetation will occur, these impacts are expected to be minor and temporary. Over the long-term, the project is expected to increase riparian vegetation and habitat. Impacts to these special-status riparian songbird species are expected to be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures MM-BIO-4 to protect nests and MM-BIO-12 to protect riparian habitat. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

Special-Status Fish

The Scott River mainstem supports four special-status anadromous fish species, including Pacific lamprey *Entosphenus tridentatus* and three salmonids: coho salmon *Oncorhynchus kitutch* (Southern Oregon/Northern California evolutionary significant unit (ESU)), steelhead trout *Oncorhynchus mykiss*, and chinook salmon *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha* (Upper Klamath and Trinity Rivers ESU). All four special-status fish species migrate through and spawn in the Scott River watershed and are known to use the project reach (CDFW 2017a, USFWS 2025b). The project area is located within designated essential fish habitat (EFH) for the coho and chinook salmon (NMFS 2021, NMFS 2024).

Aquatic habitat for anadromous fish in the Scott River basin has been heavily modified by human activities that affect instream, riparian, and upland conditions. Contributing factors include historic beaver trapping, agriculture, road building, channelization, dams and diversions, timber harvest, mining and gravel extraction, groundwater pumping, rural development, and high-severity fire. Combined with natural stressors such as floods, erodible soils, and the basin's warm, dry climate, these impacts have degraded, fragmented, and simplified habitat needed for migration, spawning, and rearing (NMFS 2014, CDFW 2017a).

The project has the potential to adversely impact special-status fish species as a result of project implementation, including from mortality of individual fish, increases in erosion and sediment delivery, and reductions in riparian cover and shading post-construction. However, impacts are expected to be temporary. In the long term, the restoration project is expected to have a positive effect and provide benefits to special-status fish species by improving the quality, and increasing the quantity and stability of their aquatic habitat. Over time, stabilization of the streambanks will protect water quality and habitat conditions for special-status fish through reduced sedimentation and greater, more stable, riparian cover and shading. The ELJs will also create large woody debris features, which are integral to functional aquatic habitat for special-status fish.

Due to the presence of suitable aquatic habitat within the project area that cannot be avoided during project implementation and the potential presence of special-status fish

species which may be impacted by the project, measures to protect special-status species will be implemented. Should water be present and temperature conditions necessitate it, water will be temporarily diverted around the active work areas to protect fish and water quality from being impacted by construction activities. Fish will be excluded from the work area and, if necessary, and under the proper permits, salmonids and Pacific lamprey will be relocated to the closest suitable habitat. Flow and migratory corridors will be maintained while diverting water away from construction activities. Project implementation will have no significant negative impact on the functionality of the Scott River migratory corridor for anadromous fish. The installation of cofferdams with turbidity barriers will be used as needed to prevent water quality degradation. The movement of equipment around the work area, installation of ELJs, and revegetation efforts along the toe of the bank will involve disturbances and alteration to the streambed; however, due to the water diversion and fish relocation efforts, fish will not be present during this period.

Implementation of SPRs and mitigation measures will help protect special-status fish from potential impacts of the project. SPRs that will help protect special-status fish include those that require implementation of erosion control BMPs (Geology and Soils section 5.7), reducing risk of hazardous materials (Hazards and Hazardous Materials section 5.9), and maintaining water quality (Hydrology and Water Quality section 5.10). Mitigation measure MM-BIO-6 would be implemented to further protect special-status fish species. Additionally, as per MM-HYD-1 described in the Hydrology and Water Quality section (Section 5.10), a Dewatering and Turbidity Control Plan will be prepared which will ensure protection of aquatic resources and water quality through implementation of appropriate dewatering procedures, fish and aquatic species protection, turbidity and sediment control measures, monitoring, emergency provisions, and post-construction restoration. Furthermore, special-status fish will also be protected through mitigation measures for riparian habitat protection (MM-BIO-12).

Implementation of these measures will reduce impacts of the project to individuals, migration, and aquatic habitat of special-status fish species to less than significant levels.

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

Special-Status Invertebrates

Special-Status Bumble Bees

Three special-status bumble bee species may potentially occur within the project area: Crotch bumble bee *Bombus crotchii*, western bumble bee *Bombus occidentalis*, and Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee *Bombus suckleyi* (Table 1). Bumble bees have three basic habitat requirements: suitable nesting sites for the colonies, availability of nectar and pollen from floral resources during the colony period (spring through fall), and suitable overwintering sites for the queens. In California, these special-status bumble bees

typically inhabit open grassland, meadows, and scrub habitats. Bumble bees are generalist foragers and utilize a variety of floral resources (Xerces 2018). Bumble bees generally nest underground and may use abandoned rodent burrows and similar features within suitable habitat to establish colonies. The period when colonies are most active is April through September for western bumble bee and April through August for Crotch bumble bee (CDFW 2023). Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee is an obligate parasite whose survival is dependent on the colonies of other social bumble bee species, especially western bumble bee (Xerces 2018). Solitary queens of both typical and cuckoo bumble bees may overwinter under leaf litter or in small cavities a few centimeters deep in loose soil (Xerces 2018).

The project area contains habitat potentially suitable for Crotch's bumble bee, western bumble bee, and Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee nesting, foraging, and overwintering. Project implementation activities within suitable habitat could result in temporary removal of floral resources, as well as injury and mortality through inadvertent destruction of bumble bee nests or overwintering sites, if present in the project area, through trampling, crushing, or removal of nesting or overwintering substrate (e.g., downed woody debris). The removal of floral resources will be small-scale and temporary, as replanting will be completed following project implementation. Thus, the removal of floral resources is expected to be a less than significant impact. Adverse impacts to nesting colonies will be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure MM-BIO-7 to protect bumble bee nesting colonies. Although bumble bee overwintering habitat requirements are not well understood, the project will not substantially affect areas of leaf litter or woody debris that could potentially provide overwintering habitat, and project activities are not expected to significantly overlap with the bumble bee overwintering season. Project impacts on overwintering bumble bees are expected to be less than significant. Overall, the project impact on special-status bumble bees is expected to be **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated**.

Monarch Butterfly

The project area contains suitable breeding and foraging habitat for the monarch *Danaus plexippus* (Table 1). The monarch requires floral resources for nectar which the adults forage on. The monarch also requires its host plant, milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.), upon which it lays its eggs and which provides the sole food source for the developing monarch larvae (caterpillars). Showy milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*), was observed in the project area during the biological reconnaissance survey conducted in May 2025 (See Attachment C: Biological Resources Report). The project area is outside of the monarch overwintering range; however, it is within the breeding and foraging range and contains various natural habitats, floral resources, and milkweed which may provide foraging or breeding habitat suitable for the species.

Project implementation activities could result in temporary removal of floral and vegetative resources, including monarch host plants (i.e., milkweed). The removal of

floral and vegetative resources will be small-scale and temporary as replanting will be completed following project implementation. Thus, the removal of floral resources is expected to be a less than significant impact. Impacts to monarch breeding habitat, eggs, and larvae will be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure MM-BIO-8 to protect milkweed. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

Special-Status Mammals

Townsend's Big-eared Bat

Habitat potentially suitable for one special-status mammal species, Townsend's big-eared bat *Corynorhinus townsendii*, is present within the project area. The species occurs throughout California in a wide variety of habitats, including broadleaved upland forest, montane coniferous forests, riparian habitats, meadows, and valley and foothill grassland habitats (Table 1). It is most common in mesic sites. Townsend's big-eared bat requires caves, mines, tunnels, buildings, bridges, or other human-made structures for roosting, and may use separate sites for night, day, hibernation, or maternity roosts (nursery sites) (CDFW 2000). The availability of roosting sites is a limiting factor for the species. Over 80% of maternity roosts in California are in mine shafts and natural caves, with less than 20% in buildings and other manmade structures (Harris et al. 2019).

The project contains riparian and meadow habitats, and open pastures that are suitable foraging habitat for Townsend's big-eared bat. The project area does not contain any mines or caves, but there is a bridge (Horn Rd. bridge) at the north end of the project area that could potentially provide roosting habitat. The project will not substantially affect foraging habitat, and impacts to foraging habitat are expected to be less than significant. However, the project could adversely impact roosting bats by causing disturbance and noise. The most sensitive life-history stage for Townsend's big-eared bat and other bat species is the maternity season (April-August) when female bats are nursing young (CDFW 2000, Harris et al. 2019). If project activities are implemented during the bat maternity season, maternity colonies will be protected by implementation of mitigation measure MM-BIO-9. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

- b.) Although no rare plant species were detected during the biological reconnaissance survey conducted in May 2025, special-status plant species have the potential to occur in the project area. The database review identified ten special-status plant species that have been known to occur in the project area in the past or that have the potential to occur and may be found in the project in the future (Table 2). Project implementation could potentially result in direct or indirect adverse effects on special-status plant species through direct removal of sensitive plants during vegetation and soil removal, or from direct damage or ground disturbance from vehicles, equipment, and foot traffic. Focused surveys for special-status plant species will be conducted prior to project implementation (SPR-BIO-4). If any special-status plant species are identified during the pre-construction surveys, they will be protected by implementing mitigation measure MM-BIO-10 which

establishes a no-disturbance buffer around the special-status plants. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

Table 2. Special-status plant species that occur or may occur in the project area. The project area elevation is approximately 900m.

Species	Listing Status ¹ Federal	Listing Status ¹ State	CRPR	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ²
rattlesnake fern <i>Botrypus virginianus</i>	—	—	2B.2	Bog & fen; lower montane coniferous forest; meadow & seep; riparian forest; upper montane coniferous forest; wetland. 710-1405m.	<i>May occur.</i> The project area is within the elevational range of the species, and riparian habitats that may potentially be suitable for the species are present. The nearest known occurrence is 6.8 miles southwest of the project area (CDFW 2025b).
Shasta chaenactis <i>Chaenactis suffrutenscens</i>	—	—	1B.3	Lower montane coniferous forest; upper montane coniferous forest; ultramafic. Sandy or serpentine soils. 730-2255m.	<i>May occur.</i> Although the project is within the elevational range of this species, the project area does not contain coniferous forest habitat. However, the species may potentially occur as the nearest known occurrence is only 1.0 mile west of the project area.
bunchberry <i>Cornus unalaschensis</i>	—	—	2B.2	Bog & fen; meadow & seep; north coast coniferous forest. 75-1920m.	<i>May occur.</i> The project area is within the elevational range of the species, and suitable meadow habitat may potentially occur within the project area. The nearest known occurrence is 7.7 miles southwest of the project area (CDFW 2025b).
Scott Valley buckwheat <i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i> var. <i>lautum</i>	—	—	1B.1	Cismontane woodland; lower montane coniferous forest. Sandy to gravelly flats. 880-990m.	<i>May occur.</i> The project area is within the elevational range of the species, and potentially suitable sandy or gravelly areas occur within the project area. The nearest known occurrence is only 0.5 miles west of the project area (CDFW 2025b).
Holzinger's bristle moss <i>Lewinskya holzingeri</i>	—	—	1B.3	Cismontane woodland; lower montane coniferous forest; pinon & juniper woodlands; upper montane coniferous forest. Usually on rock in and along streams; rarely on tree limbs. 710-1860m.	<i>May occur.</i> The project area is within the elevational range of the species, and suitable habitat may potentially occur within the project area. The nearest known occurrence is 12.4 miles southeast of the project area (CDFW 2025b).

Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
 Upper Mainstem Scott River Habitat Enhancement Project: Phase II

Species	Listing Status ¹ Federal	Listing Status ¹ State	CRPR	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ²
Pickering's ivesia <i>Ivesia pickeringii</i>	—	—	1B.2	Lower montane coniferous forest; meadow & seep; ultramafic; wetland. Mesic clay; usually serpentine seeps. 850-1525m.	<i>May occur.</i> The project area is within the elevational range of the species, and suitable meadow habitat may potentially occur within the project area. The nearest known occurrences are 8.7 miles south and southeast of the project area (CDFW 2025b).
Cascade grass-of-Parnassus <i>Parnassia cirrata</i> var. <i>intermedia</i>	—	—	2B.2	Bog & fen; meadow & seep; wetland. Rocky serpentine soil. 775-2000m.	<i>May occur.</i> The project area is within the elevational range of the species, and suitable habitat may potentially occur within the project area. The nearest known occurrence is 12.3 miles southeast of the project area (CDFW 2025b).
Scott Valley phacelia <i>Phacelia greenei</i>	—	—	1B.2	Closed-cone coniferous forest; lower montane coniferous forest; subalpine coniferous forest; upper montane coniferous forest; ultramafic. Bare serpentine ridges and openings in yellow pine and red fir forest communities. 850-2380m. Blooms April-June.	<i>Known to occur.</i> There is a known record of the species from 1980 from the north end of the project area (CDFW 2025b). However, the species was not found during May 2025 surveys.
coast checkerbloom <i>Sidalcea oregana</i> ssp. <i>Eximia</i>	—	—	1B.2	Lower montane coniferous forest; meadow & seep; North Coast coniferous forest; wetland. Near meadows, in gravelly soil. 5-1805m. Blooms from July-August.	<i>Known to occur.</i> There is a known record of the species from 1955 near the northeast corner of the project area (CDFW 2025b). However, the species was not found during May 2025 surveys.
Siskiyou clover <i>Trifolium siskiyouense</i>	—	—	1B.1	Meadow & seep; wetland. Mesic sites. 880-1500 m.	<i>May occur.</i> The project area is within the elevational range of the species, and suitable habitat may potentially occur within the project area. The nearest known occurrence is 6.1 miles northwest of the project area (CDFW 2025b).

Notes: CRPR = California Rare Plant Rank; CEQA = California Environmental Quality Act; ESA = Endangered Species Act

1 Legal Status Definitions

- E Listed as Endangered
- T Listed as Threatened

California Rare Plant Ranks (CRPR):

- 1B Plant species considered rare or endangered in California and elsewhere (protected under CEQA, but not legally protected under ESA or CESA).
- 2B Plant species considered rare or endangered in California but more common elsewhere (protected under CEQA, but not legally protected under ESA or CESA).

CRPR Threat Ranks:

Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
 Upper Mainstem Scott River Habitat Enhancement Project: Phase II

- 0.1 Seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened; high degree and immediacy of threat)
- 0.2 Moderately threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened; moderate degree and immediacy of threat)
- 0.3 Not very threatened in California (less than 20% of occurrences threatened / low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)

2 Potential for Occurrence Definitions

Not expected to occur: Species is unlikely to be present because of poor habitat quality, lack of suitable habitat features, or restricted current distribution of the species.

May occur: Suitable habitat is available and there have been nearby recorded occurrences of the species.

Known to occur: The species has been observed within the treatment areas.

Sources: CDFW 2025b, Calflora 2025.

c.) The project will impact riparian habitat or other sensitive natural vegetation communities identified during the project scoping and biological survey. Vegetation classification mapping and a botanical survey have been conducted at the project site and surrounding area (See Attachment A – Biological Resources Report). As discussed in the previous section, no rare plant species were detected during the botanical survey, although several special-status plant species have the potential to occur (Table 2). However, four sensitive vegetation communities were identified within the project area: Black Cottonwood Forest and Woodland, Gooding’s Willow – Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest, Red Osier Thicket, and Shining Willow Groves (Table 3). Impacts to these sensitive vegetation communities will be less than significant through implementation of MM-BIO-11. Additionally, if any special-status plant species are identified within the project area during pre-construction surveys (SPR-BIO-4), impacts to these species will be avoided by implementing no-disturbance buffers as described in mitigation measures MM-BIO-10.

Table 3. Sensitive natural communities that occur or may occur in the project area.

Sensitive Natural Community ¹	Rarity Rank ²	Habitat Type
Black Cottonwood Forest and Woodland	S3	Montane Riparian
Gooding’s Willow – Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest	S3	Montane Riparian
Red Osier Thicket	S3?	Montane Riparian
Shining Willow Groves	S3	Montane Riparian

¹ These are designated sensitive natural communities with a state rarity rank of S1 (critically imperiled), S2 (imperiled), or S3 (vulnerable)(CDFW 2025c). A question mark (?) denotes an inexact numeric rank because there are insufficient samples over the full expected range of the type, but existing information points to this rank.

Although the project has been designed to have minimal, short-term impacts to existing riparian vegetation, some components of project implementation, particularly re-grading

through the floodplain and terrace, will involve the disturbance and removal of some riparian vegetation. Although all four of the sensitive communities identified are riparian habitats, most riparian vegetation within the project area consists primarily of sandbar willow and Pacific willow, neither of which are ranked as rare (CDFW 2025c).

Although there will be temporary impacts to riparian vegetation, the project will involve the planting of native riparian species and improving river-floodplain connectivity in the long term. Wherever possible, impacted willows will be salvaged and replanted within the project reach. Some willows (primarily sandbar willow and Pacific willow), will be removed and/or thinned and used as planting stock for bare areas within the floodplain and terrace. No more than 25% of existing riparian vegetation in the project area will be removed; at least 75% of the riparian overstory and 50% of the understory will be retained. Vegetation removal that could reduce stream shading and increase stream temperatures will be avoided. Salvaged willows/root stock will be planted between ELJs, across regraded banks and berms, and along newly constructed channels through gravel bars. Minimization/avoidance measures will be implemented, along with revegetation, which will result in a net increase in the quantity of riparian vegetation through the project reach.

- Compensatory mitigation will be implemented so that riparian vegetation that is lost as a result of the project will be replaced such that there will be an overall increase in riparian vegetation. At a minimum, the SRCD will mitigate at a ratio of 2:1 through creation of habitat (as measured in square feet), with the goal of creating at least twice as much habitat as was affected by project construction. A riparian vegetation plan will be developed prior to riparian planting. The plan will include a plant palette of species to be used in revegetation, success criteria, monitoring and reporting, and corrective actions to be taken when replanting does not meet proposed success criteria. Plantings will primarily consist of native dormant stock (black cottonwood poles and bundles of willow cuttings) planted in the early spring to the depth of the low-flow water table, where possible. If necessary, plantings will be caged to prevent browse. Larger-diameter willows will be salvaged and replanted to the extent possible. Removed willows will also be used as rooted planting stock. Planting efforts will occur across excavated and regraded areas (including where newly excavated overflow channels reenter the main channel), along the constructed toes of banks, within the ELJs, and through the banks, floodplain, and terraces. Riparian plantings will be maintained through the life of the grant term for the project. Monitoring of riparian planting will be monitored for five years post planting, as feasible. At a ratio of at least 2:1, these compensatory mitigation revegetation efforts will more than replace the vegetation disturbed during project construction. Ultimately, this project will increase the extent of riparian vegetation within the project area.

Over the long-term, the restoration work is intended to improve the extent, stability, and condition of the riparian corridor. Banks within the project area have been aggressively eroding for many years. This has led to continuous vegetation loss and exacerbated the hydrologic disconnect between the river and the riparian corridor. Project treatment will arrest erosion and stabilize the banks, allowing for riparian vegetation recruitment. Revegetation efforts throughout the treatment area are integral to ensuring long-term stability of the streambanks and to the development of a functional riparian corridor through the project reach. Long-term, riparian plantings will increase the extent and density of riparian habitat and result in greater age-class diversity within the riparian species that are planted.

Although the project will have some short-term, temporary impacts on riparian vegetation, implementation of mitigation measures MM-BIO-11 and MM-BIO-12 will reduce impacts to sensitive natural communities and riparian vegetation to a less than significant level. Additionally, Best Management Practices will be followed to prevent the spread of noxious weeds (SPR-BIO-5). **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.**

- d.) The project will not have any impact on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, and coastal areas) through direct fill or removal, hydrological interruption, or other means. As indicated in National Wetlands Inventory maps (USFWS 2025) and verified during biological field surveys, all non-riverine wetlands within the project area are human constructed (i.e., irrigation ditches and agricultural ponds). Construction and maintenance of irrigation ditches and agricultural ponds are exempt from Section 404 requirements (EPA 2025, USACE 2025). The project will not affect agricultural ditches or ponds. No natural wetlands subject to Section 404 requirements occur within the project area. **No Impact.**
- e.) The project area lies within a California Essential Habitat Connectivity (CEHC) area between large natural landscape blocks to the east and west of the project (CDFW 2025e). The project area supports a variety of native resident and migratory fish and wildlife species (See Attachment A – Biological Resources Report). The Scott River mainstem supports migratory fish, including four special-status anadromous fish species (CDFW 2017a). The associated riparian habitat supports many migratory as well as resident native birds. Bats may potentially have nursery sites within or adjacent to the project. Ungulates (deer and elk) also utilize the project area, primarily in winter when they move to lower elevations. The project has the potential to impact these species. However, the project will implement mitigation measures to reduce impacts on wildlife movement and migration patterns to less than significant levels. Species-specific discussions and mitigation measures are described below.

Migratory Birds

Suitable migratory bird habitat includes riparian habitat, which exists within the project site. However, when considering the area of riparian habitat within the Scott River watershed, the scope and footprint of the project are minimal. Although temporary impacts to riparian habitats will result from the project, riparian habitat loss will be minimized and revegetation will be implemented to compensate for any loss of riparian habitats. During the revegetation period, birds may use other existing riparian habitat found in the Scott River watershed. Overall, the project activities would not affect migratory behavior in the larger migratory flyway.

Though designed to reduce impacts, some riparian vegetation will be disturbed during project construction. The project will implement mitigation measure MM-BIO-12 to minimize impacts to and compensate for loss of riparian vegetation. Whenever possible, disturbed willows will be transplanted within the project footprint in coordination with root stock plantings. Revegetation will increase the density and extent of riparian vegetation throughout the project reach, by replanting riparian habitat with a ratio of 2:1. Plantings are expected to increase the functional riparian habitat for migratory avian species within the project footprint long-term.

Additionally, nesting birds would be protected from project impacts through implementation of mitigation measure MM-BIO-4. For these reasons, impacts to songbird habitats and migratory behavior will be less than significant. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

Ungulates

The project area is located within the range of the Marble Mountains management unit for Roosevelt elk *Cervus canadensis roosevelti* (CDFW 2017b). Elk use a variety of habitat types. Suitable elk habitat contains sufficient cover and forage (grasses and forbs) (CDFW 2017b). The Scott Valley herd does not migrate between traditional summer and winter seasonal ranges; however, in the winter they spent more time in the lower elevations in the Scott Valley rather than in the surrounding mountains (CDFW 2025d). The project area is within the higher winter time use areas of the Scott Valley elk herd's annual home range. Project implementation will not significantly affect cover or forage for elk. Effects of the project on elk and their habitats will be temporary. Also, project implementation activities will not occur during the winter when elk are most likely to spend time in the Scott Valley. The project is expected to have a less than significant effect on habitat, behavior, or migration patterns of elk. **Less Than Significant.**

The project provides habitat for mule deer *Odocoileus hemionus* which were observed during the biological reconnaissance survey in May 2025 (See Attachment A – Biological

Resources Report). Deer generally use higher elevation areas in the summer and move to lower elevations in the winter (CDFW 2025e). The project area lies between designated critical deer wintering areas that lie to the east and west (Siskiyou County 1980a). Project implementation will not significantly affect cover or forage for deer, and project effects will be temporary. The project is expected to have a less than significant effect on habitat, behavior, or migration patterns of deer. **Less Than Significant.**

Fish

Coho salmon, chinook salmon, steelhead trout, and Pacific lamprey migrate between the ocean and the upper reaches of the Scott River watershed. Project implementation will not affect the active migration of coho, nor will it alter or impact the migratory corridor of salmonids or lamprey. Project implementation will take place during the period of annual low flow. It is unlikely that fish will be migrating through the project reach during the time of project implementation. Should water be present and temperature conditions necessitate it, water will be temporarily diverted around the active work areas to protect fish and water quality from being impacted by construction activities and will allow for fish passage. Utilization of coffer dams and other turbidity prevention measures will protect migrating fish from degraded water quality during project activities. Changes made within the Scott River channel will not alter the migratory corridor and will have no long-term impact on salmonid migration through the project reach. For these reasons, project implementation will have a less than significant impact on active salmonid migration or the migration corridor. **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.**

Bats

The project contains riparian and meadow habitats and open pasture areas that may support foraging, roosting, breeding, migrating, or wintering bats. The most sensitive life-history stage for bat is the maternity season (April-August) when female bats are nursing young (CDFW 2000, Harris et al. 2019). If project activities are implemented during the bat maternity season, maternity colonies will be protected by implementation of mitigation measure MM-BIO-9. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

Northwestern Pond Turtle

The project contains potentially suitable aquatic and upland habitats for northwestern pond turtle. Mitigation measure MM-BIO-1 will be implemented to protect pond turtles and modify revegetation plants to provide gaps in planting areas to allow pond turtles to move between aquatic and upland habitats. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

- f.) The project does not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources (i.e. tree preservation policy or ordinance, etc.). All project activities will

conform to federal and state regulatory requirements such as the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and CDFW regulations. The project is consistent with and will not conflict with the policies for natural resources, floodplains, or critical wintering deer habitat as specified in the Siskiyou County General Plan (Siskiyou County 1997) or the Scott Valley Area Plan (Siskiyou County 1980a, 1980b). To our knowledge, there are no other applicable local policies or ordinances that have additional requirements beyond the federal and state requirements for protecting biological resources. **No Impact.**

- g.) The project does not conflict with any Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans. Rather, the project's goals of improving stream channel morphology and anadromous fish habitat through the installation of instream large woody debris features, bank stabilization efforts, and riparian vegetation restoration complement strategic objectives of both federal and state coho salmon recovery plans (CDFW 2004, NMFS 2014). The project's focus on restoring natural stream processes, improving riparian shade, and reducing sediment delivery is also consistent with the Action Plan for the Scott River TMDLs (NCRWQCB 2005). **No Impact.**

STANDARD PROJECT REQUIREMENTS (SPRs) FOR BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

SPR-BIO-1: Compliance with Biological Resource Regulations

The project will comply with the applicable federal and state requirements for biological resources. The project proponent must notify the US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and apply for biological resource permits as needed (e.g., ESA, CESA, LSAA). The project will adhere to all permit requirements. This SPR applies to all project activities, including project maintenance activities.

SPR-BIO-2: Data Review and Reconnaissance Survey for Biological Resources

A qualified biologist will conduct a data review and reconnaissance-level survey prior to project implementation. The data review will cover the biological resources setting, potential special-status species, sensitive natural communities, and habitat conditions, drawing on the best available data, including habitat/vegetation mapping, species distribution, CNDDDB, IPAC, the CNPS Rare Plant Inventory, and other relevant sources. The reconnaissance survey will use visual and auditory inspection to document sensitive resources (e.g., riparian or other sensitive habitats, wetlands, wildlife nursery sites, nesting bird habitat) and assess habitat suitability for special-status species. Surveys will be conducted during the appropriate season to allow reliable identification of habitats and suitability. The survey must be completed within one year of project implementation. If more than a year passes, the results must be verified through reviewing for any data updates and/or visiting the site to verify conditions.

Note: This SPR was completed in May 2025.

SPR-BIO-3: Biological Resource Training for Workers

Prior to project implementation, a qualified biologist shall provide biological resource awareness training to all construction personnel. Training will include information on biological resources (e.g., special-status species, sensitive habitats, wetlands, nesting birds), applicable environmental regulations, protection and mitigation measures, and procedures for halting work and notifying the biologist if sensitive resources are encountered.

SPR-BIO-4: Avoidance of Special-Status Species Habitats

If suitable habitats for special-status species are identified during pre-implementation surveys, these habitat areas will be avoided to the extent feasible. If avoidance is not feasible, then mitigation measures for special-status species would be implemented.

SPR-BIO-5: Survey for Special-Status Wildlife and Plant Species

If SPR BIO-1 determines that suitable habitat for special-status wildlife or plant species is present and cannot be avoided, a qualified biologist will conduct focused or protocol-level surveys for special-status wildlife or plant species with potential to be directly or indirectly affected by a treatment activity. The biologist will determine if following an established protocol is required, and the biologist and/or project proponent may consult with CDFW and/or USFWS for technical information regarding appropriate survey methods or protocols. Unless otherwise specified in the species-specific mitigation measures, below, or unless otherwise specified in a species-specific survey protocol, the survey will be conducted within 14 days prior of beginning project implementation for special-status wildlife, and will be conducted during an appropriate season for detecting special-status plants. Focused or protocol surveys for a special-status species with potential to occur in the treatment area may not be required if presence of the species is assumed. If no special-status species are identified during focused surveys, then no species-specific mitigation measures would be required. However, if special-status species are identified then species-specific mitigation measures would apply.

SPR-BIO-6: Implement Noxious Weed BMPs

Best management practices (BMPs) will be followed to prevent the spread of noxious weeds. Equipment will be inspected at a designated staging area and, if necessary, decontaminated by physical removal methods (e.g., brushing or high-powered washing) prior to entering the work site and before leaving the work site. The SRCD will utilize weed-free erosion control materials and will monitor the site for any new noxious weed infestations post-construction.

MITIGATION MEASURES (MMs) FOR BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

MM-BIO-1: Northwestern Pond Turtle Protection

If suitable habitat for northwestern pond turtle exists in the project area and the habitat cannot be avoided, pre-construction surveys for northwestern pond turtle and pond turtle nests shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within 14 days, and again within 24 hours, before the start of

ground-disturbing activities. If a northwestern pond turtle or nest is observed during pre-construction surveys, a qualified biologist shall be on-site to monitor construction in suitable pond turtle habitat. If a pond turtle is found within the construction area, it will be allowed to leave of its own volition or it will be captured by a qualified biologist, in coordination with CDFW and/or USFWS, and relocated out of harm's way to the nearest suitable habitat immediately upstream or downstream from the project site. However, because pond turtles exhibit high site fidelity and the likelihood of relocated pond turtles returning to the construction zone is high, a qualified biological monitor experienced with the species will be present during construction where there is a high probability pond turtle could be present. If pond turtle nests are identified in the work area during pre-construction surveys, a 300-foot no disturbance buffer shall be established between the nest and any areas of potential disturbance. Buffers shall be clearly marked with flagging or temporary fencing. Construction will not be allowed to in the exclusion area until hatchlings have emerged from the nest, or the nest is deemed inactive by a qualified biologist. If northwestern pond turtle is found to be occupying the project area, revegetation plans will be modified to provide gaps in planting areas to allow movement of pond turtles between aquatic and upland habitats.

MM-BIO-2: Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog and Cascades Frog Protection

If suitable habitat for foothill yellow-legged frog (FYLF) or Cascades frog (CF) exists in the project area and the habitat cannot be avoided, pre-construction surveys for FYLF and CF shall be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities. If work activities occur between April 1 and August 31, a qualified biologist will conduct surveys for FYLF and CF eggs and tadpoles within 7 days prior to project implementation. To the extent feasible, work will be implemented during late summer and early fall, after tadpoles have developed and transformed, and before the heavy rains and high water flows of winter. If FYLF or CF eggs or tadpoles are identified in the work area or within 250 feet downstream of the work area, project activities will be modified to ensure the activities do not directly or indirectly disturb eggs or tadpoles. The project equipment and work area will be inspected daily to ensure no FYLF or CF individuals are present. If FYLF or CF are found in equipment or in a work area, they would be allowed to leave of their own volition or a qualified biologist, in coordination with CDFW, will relocate frogs to suitable habitat outside of the construction zones.

MM-BIO-3: Greater Sandhill Crane Protection

Should greater sandhill cranes be present, a non-disturbance buffer of 200 feet will be established around the birds, and they shall be monitored by a qualified biologist and/or SRCD staff in coordination with the biologist, to ensure no impacts occur. No vegetation removal or construction activities will be allowed within this non-disturbance buffer until the cranes have dispersed as verified by the biologist and/or SRCD staff coordinating with the biologist. Greater sandhill crane nests shall be protected by implementing MM-BIO-4.

MM-BIO-4: Bird Nest Protection

To the extent feasible, impacts to native nesting birds will be avoided by not conducting project activities that involve clearing of vegetation, generation of mechanical noise, or ground disturbance during the typical breeding season (January 1 – September 15 for raptors, and February 1 to August 31 for other bird species). This applies to special-status avian species as well as to avian species covered under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 are determined to be present.

If Project activities must be conducted during the nesting bird season, a qualified biologist will conduct surveys for nesting raptors within a 0.5-mile radius of the project area and for other nesting bird species within a 500-ft radius of the project area. Surveys shall be conducted within 7 days prior to project implementation. If nests are detected, buffers will be established around nests that are sufficient to ensure that breeding is not likely to be disturbed or adversely impacted by construction. Buffers around active nests will be a minimum of 0.5 miles for bald and golden eagle nests, 500 feet for osprey and other non-listed raptor nests, 500 feet for greater sandhill crane nests, 250 feet for bank swallow nests and nesting habitat (See MM-BIO-5), and 250 feet for nests of other non-special status avian species, unless the biologist determines that smaller buffers would be sufficient to avoid impacts to nesting birds. Factors to be considered when determining buffer size will include: the presence of natural buffers provided by vegetation or topography; nest height; locations of foraging territory; and baseline levels of noise and human activity. Buffers will be maintained until young have fledged and dispersed from the area or the nests become inactive, as verified by the biologist.

MM-BIO-5: Bank Swallow Protection

Bank swallow nests shall be protected by implementing MM-BIO-4 to avoid the nesting season as feasible and to establish a minimum 250-foot no-disturbance buffer around any active nests found as well as for any nesting habitat. Because bank swallows may return to colony sites in subsequent years, buffers shall be maintained for any nesting colony sites throughout the duration of the project. Buffer size or duration may be adjusted by a qualified biologist, in consultation with CDFW. The project shall avoid all bank swallow nesting habitat, including both documented as well as potentially suitable habitat. Vertical streambanks shall remain untouched and unaltered, especially those occurring near known nesting colony sites within the project area.

MM-BIO-6: Protection of Special-Status Fish

The following avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures will be implemented to protect special-status fish species:

Avoidance:

- The project would acquire the proper permits prior to implementing any instream work.

- In-channel construction activities which could affect habitat for special-status fish species will be limited to the low-flow period between July 15 and October 1 to minimize potential for adversely affecting special-status fish species.
- Water temperatures will be maintained through avoidance of any cold groundwater seeps.
- If individuals of special-status species are observed to be present within a work area, then the appropriate agencies must be notified (i.e., NMFS for federally-listed species, and CDFW for state-listed or other state special status). Prior to construction, the project will obtain landowner permission granting agency personnel access to construction sites during construction and following project completion in order to evaluate species presence, condition, and/or habitat conditions.
- Prior to instream work, and depending on temperature conditions, water will be temporarily diverted around active work areas to protect fish and water quality. Diverting water around construction areas will maintain flow and migratory corridors. Fish exclusion barriers will be installed around the instream work areas. All fish trapped within the exclusion zone will be captured and relocated to suitable habitat outside the work area in consultation with NMFS and CDFW. The project would acquire the proper permits prior to capturing, handling, or relocating of any state- or federally-listed fish species.

Minimization:

- Cofferdams and other turbidity prevention measures will be utilized to reduce turbidity and maintain water quality.
- To protect water quality during project implementation, diversion of water would be progressively phased around the work area in accordance with the direction of flow and the construction sequence. All aspects of this procedure, including the movement of large equipment and the placement of spoils, will be designed to reduce impacts to water quality while maintaining flow and the migratory corridor.
- A dewatering and turbidity plan will be prepared and followed which would ensure protection of aquatic resources and water quality through implementation of appropriate dewatering procedures, fish and aquatic species protection, turbidity and sediment control measures, monitoring, emergency provisions, and post-construction restoration (*See Hydrology and Water Quality section 5.10*).
- In-channel construction activities which could affect habitat will be limited to daylight hours, leaving a nighttime period of passage for special-status fish species.
- Construction BMPs for off-channel staging and storage of equipment and vehicles will be implemented to minimize the risk of contamination by spilled materials (*See Hazards and Hazardous Materials section 5.9*).
- BMPs will also include minimization of erosion, sedimentation, and turbidity, as appropriate (*See Geology and Soils section 5.7, and Hydrology and Water Quality section 5.10*).

- Water temperatures will be maintained by minimizing removal of riparian vegetation to that needed to accomplish the goals of the project, with retention of at least 75% of riparian cover that would affect water temperature.
- If bank stabilization activities should be necessary, then such stabilization will be constructed to minimize predator habitat, minimize erosion potential, and contain material suitable for supporting riparian vegetation.

Mitigation:

- Removal of riparian vegetation could affect special-status fish through decreased shading and increased water temperatures. Compensatory mitigation will be implemented to replace lost riparian vegetation at a ratio of 2:1 within the immediate area of the disturbance to maintain suitable water temperatures and aquatic and riparian habitat quality (MM-BIO-12).

MM-BIO-7: Bumble Bee Protection

If project activities must be conducted during the active period for special-status bumble bee nesting colonies (March-September for Crotch bumble bee, and April-October for western bumble bee), a qualified biologist will conduct surveys for bumble bee colonies within a 200-ft radius of the project area. Surveys shall be conducted within 7 days prior to project implementation. If colonies are detected, a no-disturbance buffer of at least 50 feet will be established around them that is sufficient to ensure that they are not likely to be disturbed or adversely impacted by construction. Buffer size may be reduced or adjusted if recommended by the biologist and/or CDFW. No project activities will occur within this buffer until the nesting colony is no longer occupied as determined by the biologist.

MM-BIO-8: Monarch Breeding Habitat Protection

Monarchs are dependent on their breeding host plant milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.). Within 14 days prior to project implementation, a qualified biologist will conduct surveys for milkweed growing within a 200-foot radius of the project area. If milkweed is detected, a no-disturbance buffer of 50 feet will be established around them that is sufficient to ensure that they are not likely to be adversely impacted by construction. Buffer size may be reduced or adjusted if recommended by the biologist. Because milkweeds are perennial plants, buffers will generally remain in place until project completion.

MM-BIO-9: Special-Status Bat Protection

If project activities must be conducted during the maternity season for special-status bats (April-August for Townsend's big-eared bat), a qualified biologist will conduct surveys for bats at potentially suitable bat roosting habitat (e.g., bridges) within the project area. Surveys shall be conducted within 7 days prior to project implementation. If roosting bats or their sign (guano) are detected, a no-disturbance buffer of at least 250 feet will be established around the roosting site that is sufficient to ensure that bats are not likely to be disturbed or adversely impacted by

construction. No project activities will occur within this buffer until the roosting habitat is no longer occupied as determined by the biologist. If roosting bats are assumed to be present and a 250-foot no-disturbance buffer is established around the site (e.g., around Horn Lane bridge) for the duration of the bat maternity season, then surveys by a qualified biologist may not be necessary.

MM-BIO-10: Special-Status Plant Protection

If special-status plants are determined to be present, the project will avoid and protect these species by establishing a no-disturbance buffer around the area occupied by the plants and marking the buffer boundary with high-visibility flagging, fencing, stakes, or clear, existing landscape demarcations (e.g., edge of a roadway). The no-disturbance buffers will generally be a minimum of 50 feet from special-status plants, but the size and shape of the buffer zone may be adjusted if a qualified biologist or botanist determines that a smaller buffer will be sufficient to avoid killing or damaging special-status plants or that a larger buffer is necessary to sufficiently protect plants from the treatment activity. The appropriate buffer size will be determined based on plant phenology at the time of treatment (e.g., whether the plants are in a dormant, vegetative, or flowering state), the individual species' vulnerability to the treatment method being used, and environmental conditions and terrain.

MM-BIO-11: Protection of Sensitive Natural Communities

To the extent feasible, the project will avoid and protect sensitive natural communities by establishing a no-disturbance buffer around the area occupied by sensitive natural community and marking the buffer boundary with high-visibility flagging, fencing, stakes, or clear, existing landscape demarcations (e.g., edge of a roadway). The no-disturbance buffers will generally be a minimum of 50 feet from the sensitive natural community, but the size and shape of the buffer zone may be adjusted if a qualified biologist or botanist determines that a smaller buffer will be sufficient to avoid damaging the sensitive natural community or that a larger buffer is necessary to sufficiently protect plants from the treatment activity. If complete avoidance of sensitive natural communities is not feasible, then project disturbance within sensitive natural communities will be limited to the minimum necessary to implement the project. A qualified biologist or botanist will oversee any project activities within sensitive natural communities.

MM-BIO-12: Riparian Habitat Protection

The project will retain or improve riparian habitat functions within the project area by implementing the following:

Avoidance:

- Vegetation removal that could significantly reduce stream shading and increase stream temperatures will be avoided.

Minimization:

- Ground disturbance and removal of vegetation within riparian habitats will be limited to the minimum necessary to implement the project.
- At least 75 percent of the overstory and 50 percent of the understory canopy of native riparian vegetation will be retained within the project area.
- Removal of large-diameter native riparian hardwood trees (e.g., willow, cottonwood, alder, birch, ash, maple, oak) will be minimized to the extent feasible and 75 percent of the pretreatment native riparian hardwood tree canopy will be retained. Because tree size varies depending on vegetation type present and site conditions, the tree size retention parameter will be determined on a site-specific basis depending on vegetation type present and setting; however, live, healthy, native trees that are considered large for that species of tree and large relative to other trees in that location will be retained. Consideration of factors such as site hydrology, erosion potential, suitability of wildlife habitat, presence of sufficient seed trees, light availability, and changes in stream shading may inform the tree size retention requirements.
- Removed willows/root stock will be salvaged and replanted to the extent feasible.

Compensatory Mitigation:

- Compensatory mitigation will be implemented within the project area to replant lost riparian vegetation. At a minimum, lost riparian vegetation will be mitigated at a ratio of 2:1 (as measured in square feet) through creation of riparian habitat by replanting willows and other riparian species, with the goal of creating at least twice as much riparian habitat as was affected by project construction.
- A riparian vegetation plan will be developed prior to riparian planting. The plan will include a plant palette of species to be used in revegetation, success criteria, monitoring and reporting, and corrective actions to be taken when replanting does not meet proposed success criteria.

5.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

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 built historical resource?		X		
b.) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a pre-historic archaeological resource?		X		

c.) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?		X		
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DISCUSSION:

As per SPR-CUL-1, an archaeological records check was completed by the Northeast Center of the California Historical Resources Information System in Chico, California (NEIC) on 9 January 2025. Results of the records search indicate that six small archaeological surveys have previously occurred within the current project area and several others have occurred within 0.5 miles. Previous archaeological investigations within the project area have been primarily related to streambank stabilization and enhancement, planting and fencing, and bridge maintenance. The project area is also included in a broad geoarchaeological overview of the region. The records search concluded that no archaeological sites have been previously recorded within the project area itself; however, two sites have been recorded within 0.5 miles of the project area boundary.

Consistent with SPR-CUL-2, and following California Assembly Bill 52 requirements for Native American Consultation under CEQA, letters were sent to Native American groups. The list of Native American groups to be contacted was acquired from the Native American Heritage Commission. Letters describing the project were sent to 12 individuals/organizations on 10 February 2025. No responses to the letters had been received as of 28 August 2025.

As per SPR-CUL-3 and SPR-CUL-4, background research and an archaeological and cultural resources assessment and survey were conducted. The background research and cultural resource assessment and survey of the project area were conducted by Native-X, Inc. Archaeological Services in May-June 2025.

During the cultural resource survey, one historic archaeological site (bridge remains) and no isolated finds were discovered within the survey area. The archaeology assessment concluded that, due to its degraded condition, the bridge would not be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as it does not meet any of the NRHP’s criteria and does not retain sufficient integrity to convey any potential significance (Native-X 2025). Soil visibility during the survey was poor due to dense vegetation and it is possible that archaeological sites or isolated artifacts were missed. However, the survey report notes that the project areas have been heavily disturbed by historic gold mining, ground leveling, plowing, and cattle trampling, and that the river bottom location itself has changed over time, generally moving from side to side within the drainage corridor (Native-X 2025).

Cultural resources training would be conducted prior to project implementation to train staff and contractors in avoidance and notification procedures for archaeological and cultural resources (SPR-CUL-5). If any human remains are discovered during project implementation, SPR-CUL-5 will be followed which specifies procedures for stopping work and reporting to the County

Coroner.

The restoration project will involve ground disturbance which could potentially impact historic and/or prehistoric archaeological or cultural resources if present. The potential exists for project activities to result in inadvertent discovery and subsequent damage of unique archaeological resources or subsurface historical resources. However, potential damage to archaeological or cultural resources will be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures (MM-CUL-1). **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

- a.) The project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a built historical resource. One built historic resource (bridge remains) was identified within the project area during the cultural resource survey (Native X 2025). The historic resource will be protected by a no-disturbance buffer in which ground-disturbing activities will not occur (MM-CUL-1). However, project implementation will involve ground-disturbing activities that could lead to inadvertent discovery of additional historic resources and there is some potential for damage if that should occur. Should any new discovery of a built historical resource be made during construction, all activities within 100 feet of the resource will halt, and a qualified archaeologist will be contacted to evaluate and identify protection or mitigation measures, if necessary (MM-CUL-1). **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**
- b.) No pre-historic archaeological resources were identified within the project area during the cultural resource survey (Native X 2025). However, project implementation will involve ground-disturbing activities that could lead to inadvertent discovery of additional historic resources and there is some potential for damage if that should occur. Should any new discovery of a pre-historic archaeological resource be made during construction, mitigation measure MM-CUL-1 will be implemented. All activities within 100 feet of the resource will halt, and a qualified archaeologist will be contacted to evaluate and identify protection or mitigation measures, if necessary. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**
- c.) Project implementation could potentially uncover human remains. The NEIC records search did not reveal any burials or sites containing human remains. However, if human remains are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, all work in the immediate area shall cease and the County Coroner will be contacted pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code Section 5097 (SPR-CUL-6). **Less Than Significant.**

STANDARD PROJECT REQUIREMENTS (SPRs) FOR CULTURAL RESOURCES

SPR-CUL-1: Conduct Records Search

An archaeological and cultural resource record search request will be initiated with the Northeast Information Center prior to project implementation.

Note: This SPR was completed in January 2025.

SPR-CUL-2: Contact Native American Tribes

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be contacted to obtain a list of Native American contacts for the project area. Using the Native Americans Contact List, the project proponent will notify and provide a written project description to all California Native American Tribes/Tribal Contacts on the list.

Note: This SPR was completed in February 2025.

SPR-CUL-3: Pre-Field Background Research

Prior to project implementation, background research will be conducted by a qualified archaeologist as part of the cultural resource investigation. The purpose of this research is to properly inform survey design, based on the types of resources likely to be encountered within the treatment area, and to be prepared to interpret, record, and evaluate these findings within the context of local history and prehistory. The background research will entail reviewing records, studying maps, reading pertinent ethnographic, archaeological, and historical literature specific to the area being studied, and conducting other tasks to maximize the effectiveness of the survey.

Note: This SPR was completed in June 2025.

SPR-CUL-4: Cultural Resources Survey

A qualified archaeologist will conduct a site-specific survey of the project area. The survey methodology (e.g., pedestrian survey, subsurface investigation) depends on whether the area has a low, moderate, or high sensitivity for resources, which is based on whether the records search, pre-field background research, and/or Native American consultation identifies archaeological or historical resources near or within the treatment area. A survey report will be completed for every cultural resource survey completed. The specific requirements will comply with the applicable state or local agency procedures.

Note: This SPR was completed in June 2025.

SPR-CUL-5: Cultural Resource Training

Prior to project implementation, all crew members and contractors implementing treatment activities will be trained in the protection of sensitive historic, archaeological, cultural, and tribal cultural resources. Workers will be trained to halt work if archaeological resources are encountered and notify the project manager.

SPR-CUL-6: Human Remains

If human remains are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, work in the immediate area shall cease, and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), and the NAHC shall identify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The project applicant shall work with the MLD in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 to determine appropriate treatment of and disposition of

the remains. Work may not resume within the immediate area until treatment of the remains is completed.

MITIGATION MEASURES (MMs) FOR CULTURAL RESOURCES

MM-CUL-1: Protection of Cultural Resources

Known cultural resources will be flagged and protected with a no-disturbance buffer. No ground-disturbing activities will be permitted within the no-disturbance buffer.

If any additional historic or archaeological sites are identified during the course of the project, specific enforceable protection measures will be developed and implemented. If a cultural resource site is discovered within the project area during implementation, the following applies:

- 1.) Project activities within 100 feet of the newly discovered cultural resource should be immediately halted to ensure avoidance of the site until a qualified archaeologist can be contacted. Project activities may continue outside this 100-foot perimeter during the identification and avoidance process.
- 2.) If the newly discovered site has been negatively impacted by the project, the archaeologist will assist in development of protection measures and any necessary remediation.
- 3.) The newly discovered site should be recorded and its discovery and protection measures documented in the project files.

5.6 ENERGY

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 construction or operation?			X	
b.) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?				X

DISCUSSION:

- a.) The Proposed Project would use fossil fuels (primarily gas, diesel, and motor oil) for vehicles and equipment required for construction and maintenance activities. The materials for construction also require energy to transport. However, the use of vehicles and equipment would be short-term and temporary and would not utilize a significant amount of energy. Also, project activities will be limited to those that are necessary to accomplish project goals and vehicle idling time would be limited to five minutes or less.
Less Than Significant Impact.

- b.) The project is a stream and floodplain restoration project and would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. **No Impact.**

5.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

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 most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?				X
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				X
iv) Landslides?				X
b.) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			X	
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?			X	
d.) Be located on expansive soil, creating substantial risks to life or property?				X
e.) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for disposal of wastewater?				X
f.) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site, or unique geological feature?		X		

DISCUSSION:

Soil types in the project area were identified using the Natural Resources Conservation Service's web soil mapper (NRCS 2025). Seven soil types were identified in the soil survey. Project area soils were dominated by Settlemeier loam (48.5%), followed by riverwash (26.2%), Diyou loam (12.6%), Diyou loam, drained (4.8%), Atter very gravelly sandy loam (1.0%), Settlemeier variant silt loam (1.0%), and Duzel-Jilson-Facey complex (0.4%). Water made up the remaining 5.6% of the mapped area. Although the riverbanks in the project area are steep in some areas, the topography of the surrounding agricultural land is mostly flat with slopes less than 5%. The NRCS soil mapper data indicate that susceptibility of soils in the project area to sheet and rill erosion are low to moderate (k-factor, whole soil values of the project area range from 0.10-0.37). Nearly all the agricultural lands within the project area (99%) have only slight off-road, off-trail erosion hazard potential (NRCS 2025). Steeper slopes that correspond to greater erosion hazard potential are generally associated with the watercourses found within the project as some of the river banks are steep and erosive.

- a.) The project area does not lie within a documented earthquake fault zone, landslide zone, or liquefaction zone (DOC 2025b). The proposed does not include the construction of any buildings or residential structures and there are no expected impacts associated with exposing people to fault rupture, seismic ground shaking, seismic ground failure, liquefaction, or landslides. Although project construction will involve soil manipulation, the project will stabilize river banks and reduce the likelihood of bank erosion, slumping, and sliding. **No Impact.**

- b.) Sections of eroding riverbanks will be graded to achieve a more stable slope. Native material that is removed will be used to create berms at the tops of terraces or will be reapplied to on-site stable locations. All soil materials will be kept on site and will be stabilized to minimize erosion and loss of topsoil. Although project construction will involve soil manipulation, the soil disturbance will ultimately serve to arrest erosion and stabilize vulnerable banks. Project implementation will reduce erosion due to lateral scour, encourage sediment deposition and accumulation, and increase riparian vegetation, thereby stabilizing topsoil at the site. Erosion will be minimized by limiting soil disturbance (SPR-GEO-1), suspending soil disturbance during heavy precipitation (SPR-GEO-2) and implementing erosion control best management practices (BMPs) to reduce erosion and loss of topsoil (SPR-GEO-3). **Less Than Significant Impact.**

- c.) The project area does not lie within a documented earthquake fault zone, landslide zone, or liquefaction zone (DOC 2025b). Project treatment sites for riverbank stabilization are inherently unstable and actively eroding. However, project implementation will stabilize the soil through regrading of unstable slopes, installation of ELJs, and replanting of native riparian vegetation. Erosion will be minimized by limiting soil disturbance (SPR-GEO-1), suspending soil disturbance during heavy precipitation (SPR-GEO-2) and implementing erosion control best management practices (BMPs) to reduce erosion and

loss of topsoil (SPR-GEO-3). **Less Than Significant Impact.**

- d.) The project area contains some areas of expansive soils as it is underlain by soils with moderate to high shrink-swell potential (NRCS 2025). Expansive soils could damage foundations or other structures if not properly designed. However, because the project does not include construction of buildings and would involve only habitat restoration within natural areas, expansive soils would not pose a substantial risk. **Less Than Significant Impact.**

- e.) Project will not include construction of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. **No Impact.**

- f.) There are no known unique paleontological or geological resources, sites, or features within the project area. However, ground-disturbance during project implementation has the potential to result in inadvertent discoveries of unique paleontological or geological resources. In the event of a discovery of a new unique paleontological or geologic resource, it will be protected by mitigation measure MM-GEO-1 which will establish a no-disturbance buffer around the resource. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

STANDARD PROJECT REQUIREMENTS (SPRs) FOR GEOLOGY AND SOILS

SPR-GEO-1: Limit Soil Disturbance

The project footprint shall be minimized to the extent feasible while also accomplishing project goals. Vehicles and equipment will be restricted to designated access routes and staging areas to minimize soil disturbance.

SPR GEO-2: Suspend Soil Disturbance During Heavy Precipitation

The project will suspend use of vehicles and heavy equipment if it is raining, soils are saturated, and/or soils are wet enough to be compacted by vehicles or equipment. The project will be prepared to completely suspend construction activities prior to the start of the rain event. Indicators of saturated soil conditions may include, but are not limited to: visible runoff or erosion, areas of ponded water, creation of wheel ruts, and/or loss of vehicle traction. Soil disturbing activities may resume when precipitation stops and soils are no longer saturated (i.e., when runoff is no longer likely to occur).

SPR GEO-3: Stabilize Disturbed Soil Areas

The project will implement erosion control best management practices (BMPs) to stabilize disturbed areas that result in exposure of bare soil. Erosion control BMPs will be implemented immediately after construction and prior to any significant rains that could result in runoff. Disturbed, bare soil areas, will be stabilized by seeding with an erosion control native seed mix

and mulching. Seeding and mulching will be implemented immediately after project implementation activities, to the maximum extent practicable, to minimize the potential for substantial sediment discharge. Where straw mulch is used, it must be certified weed free. Where locally generated slash mulch is used, it will be packed into the ground surface with heavy equipment so that it is sufficiently in contact with the soil surface. Additional BMPs such as straw wattles or silt fences will be implemented as needed. BMPs will be implemented immediately following construction and before substantial precipitation occurs.

MITIGATION MEASURES (MMs) FOR GEOLOGY AND SOILS

MM-GEO-1: Protection of Unique Paleontological or Geological Resources

If any unique paleontological or geological resources are identified during the course of the project, specific enforceable protection measures will be developed and implemented. If a unique paleontological or geological resource site is discovered within the project area during implementation, the following applies: 1.) Project activities within 100 feet of the newly discovered resource should be immediately halted to ensure avoidance of the site until a qualified geologist, archaeologist, or other appropriate specialist can be contacted. Project activities may continue outside this 100-foot perimeter during the identification and avoidance process. 2.) If the newly discovered site has been negatively impacted by the project, the geologist, archaeologist, or other appropriate specialist will assist in development of protection measures and any necessary remediation. 3.) The newly discovered site should be recorded and its discovery and protection measures documented in the project files.

5.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

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 environment?			X	
b.) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases?				X

DISCUSSION

- a.) The project will not generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on environment. The project goal is to protect natural resources by promoting a naturally functioning riparian ecosystem comprised of native flora and fauna. Methods used to accomplish this project will involve limited and

temporary use of gas- and diesel-powered machinery that includes burning of fossil fuels. Given the relatively short amount of time that equipment will be running and the temporary duration of the project, only minor and relatively insignificant amounts of emissions are expected to result from project activities. Proposed restoration activities will not significantly affect climate change. Riparian planting efforts will increase vegetative abundance at the site, increasing carbon sequestration at the project site over time. **Less Than Significant Impact.**

b.) The project will not conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. **No Impact.**

5.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

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 routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
b.) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving release of hazardous materials into environment?			X	
c.) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 miles of an existing or proposed school?				X
d.) Be located on a site that 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?				X
e.) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X

f.) For a project within vicinity of a private airstrip, would project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g.) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h.) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?		X		

DISCUSSION:

- a.)** The project will not create a significant hazard to public or environment through routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. The only hazardous materials associated with the project are fuels and lubricants necessary for the operation of equipment (e.g., backhoes, excavators). However, the use of such equipment is temporary, and will be conducted so as to avoid petroleum release on site. The project would not otherwise involve transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. As per SPR-HAZ-1, the use, storage, and transportation of hazardous materials during construction and maintenance activities will be in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations, including California Occupational Safety and Health Administration and DTSC requirements and manufacturer’s instructions. The project would be required to implement and comply with existing hazardous material regulations; therefore, the routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials would be unlikely to result in a significant hazard to the public or the environment. **Less Than Significant Impact.**
- b.)** The project will not create a significant hazard to public or environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving release of hazardous materials into environment. The only hazardous materials associated with the project are fuels and lubricants necessary for the operation of equipment (e.g., backhoes, excavators). However, the use of such equipment is temporary, and will be conducted so as to avoid petroleum release on site. The implementation of SPR-HAZ-2 will be implemented to avoid risk of accidental release of hazardous materials. Staging, storage, and refueling areas for machinery, equipment, and materials shall be located a minimum of 150 feet from the river channel and outside of the 100-year floodplain. Any equipment or vehicles driven and/or operated within or adjacent to the river channel shall be checked and maintained daily to prevent leaks of materials that, if introduced to the stream, could

have negative biological consequences. Absorbent materials designed for spill containment and cleanup will be kept onsite for immediate use in the unlikely case of an accidental spill. These standard project requirements will minimize the risk of accidents that may create public or environmental hazards and will reduce potential impacts to less than significant. **Less Than Significant Impact.**

- c.) The project site is not within a 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. Therefore, project will not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. **No Impact.**
- d.) The project is not located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and will not create a significant hazard to the public or environment. **No Impact.**
- e.) The project is not located within an airport land use plan. The project site is located well beyond the boundaries of the Scott Valley Airport and is outside the airport protected approaches and would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area that is related to airports or air traffic. **No Impact.**
- f.) The project is not located within an airport land use plan. The project site is located well beyond the boundaries of the Scott Valley Airport and is outside the airport protected approaches and would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area that is related to airports or air traffic. **No Impact.**
- g.) The project will not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The project site is located within the Scott River riparian corridor and is accessed by private agricultural roads. Construction equipment and materials will be staged away from public roads. The project will not interfere with emergency personnel, services, response, or evacuation. **No Impact.**
- h.) Temporary increases in wildfire ignition risk could occur during construction and maintenance from vehicle and equipment use; however, implementation of mitigation measure MM-WIL-1, which includes crew training, spark arrestors, and fire safety practices, would reduce this risk to a less than significant level. See the Wildfire section 5.20 for details. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

STANDARD PROJECT REQUIREMENTS (SPRs) FOR HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

SPR-HAZ-1: Compliance with Hazardous Materials Regulations

The project will comply with the applicable local, state, and federal regulations related to the use, storage, and transportation of hazardous materials.

SPR-HAZ-2: Protection from Hazardous Materials

The project will maintain all diesel- and gasoline-powered vehicles and equipment per manufacturer’s specifications. Prior to project implementation, the project proponent will inspect all vehicles and equipment for leaks and inspect every day thereafter until vehicles and equipment are removed from the site. No fuel will be stored on-site. Equipment will be re-fueled and serviced at least 150 feet from any water body and outside of the 100-year floodplain. Any vehicles or equipment found leaking will be promptly contained and removed. A hazardous materials spill kit containing absorbent materials will be kept on site in case of accidental spillage.

MITIGATION MEASURES (MMs) FOR HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

See MMs in the Wildfire section (Section 5.20).

5.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER RESOURCES

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?		X		
b.) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				X

Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
 Upper Mainstem Scott River Habitat Enhancement Project: Phase II

c.) Substantially alter existing drainage pattern of site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?		X		
d.) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			X	
e.) 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?		X		
f.) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			X	
g.) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				X
h.) Place structures within a 100-year flood hazard area, which would impede or redirect flood flows?				X
i.) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				X
j.) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X

DISCUSSION:

- a.) As per SPR-HYD-1, the project will comply with and will not exceed any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. Additionally, a permit from the Regional Water Quality Control Board will be required for the project, which will contain required additional water quality protection measures, such as monitoring and reporting, a diversion plan if operating in water, and a stormwater plan.

Project implementation will also work to address the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements for suspended sediment. The Scott River is listed as impaired for suspended sediment. This bank stabilization project is designed to arrest aggressively eroding banks by reducing lateral

scour and promoting sediment deposition along the banks. The eroding banks are a point-source of sediment pollution. Project completion will stabilize vulnerable riverbanks and improve riparian vegetative cover, thereby reducing suspended sediment in the Scott River and addressing the TMDL. This project will not violate any water quality standards.

The project seeks to restore functional hydrology, which would improve water quality in the long-term. In the short-term, and before re-vegetation becomes established, there is a potential for temporary effects of sedimentation into stream channels which could degrade water quality and the quality of aquatic habitat. Sources of sedimentation would be bare soil areas (including fill areas) and equipment operations near stream channels that disturb soils and cause erosion. Standard Project Requirements SPR-GEO-1 and SPR-GEO-2 discussed in the Geology and Soils section (Section 5.7) will reduce soil disturbance and reduce erosion that would enter the channel and cause water quality degradation. An accident involving hazardous materials could also degrade water quality, but the risk will be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of SPR-HAZ-1 and SPR-HAZ-2 as discussed in the Hazardous Materials section (Section 5.9).

Project implementation will involve ground disturbance that may result in sediment delivery to watercourses. However, the potential effects of sediment on water quality will be reduced to less than significant levels through implementation of project requirements to prevent erosion, sediment, and turbidity levels (SPR-GEO-1, SPR-GEO-2, SPR-HYD-1, SPR-HYD-2, SPR-HYD-3). Also, a Dewatering and Turbidity Control Plan would be prepared as per mitigation measure MM-HYD-1. Additional measures for fish protection (MM-BIO-6) described in the Biological Resources section (Section 5.4) will help mitigate sediment pollution to less than significant levels. **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.**

- b.) The project will not deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level. The Project will not impact groundwater as it does not involve any new water diversions, wells or intensification of water uses. The surface alterations of the project will not be substantial enough to impact groundwater flow directions, rate of flow, or quality and there are no other groundwater impacts anticipated. **No Impact.**

- c.) The project will not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. Should water be present at the time

or construction, water will be diverted around active construction areas to prevent adverse impacts to water quality and to maintain the salmonid migratory corridor during project implementation. This would be achieved by directing water into side channels excavated through gravel bars with a series of dams created with sandbags or native rocks and materials sourced onsite. However, rather than resulting in erosion, these temporary manipulations are intended to prevent erosion and sedimentation at the site during construction. The altered drainage patterns would only be maintained during the short construction period. Upon the completion of in-stream work, dams will be removed and flow will return to the original river channel. Though the side channels will remain, they will only be accessed during periods of high flow and will work to reduce water volume at the thalweg and reduce shear stress on the vulnerable banks. Both the dewatering process and the ultimate configuration will prevent erosion and siltation.

Prior to initiating in-water construction activities, a Dewatering and Turbidity Control Plan would be prepared as per mitigation measure MM-HYD-1, which would be subject to approval by the relevant resource agencies (e.g., RWQCB, CDFW, NMFS, RWQCB). The plan will ensure protection of aquatic resources and water quality through implementation of appropriate dewatering procedures, fish and aquatic species protection, turbidity and sediment control measures, monitoring, emergency provisions, and post-construction restoration. Implementation of the Dewatering and Turbidity Control will result in less than significant impacts to hydrology and water resources. **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.**

- d.) The project will not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on- or off-site. The project will not substantially change the geometry of the channel, but will rather reinforce vulnerable points along the riverbank and decrease the slope of the bank/terrace. These changes are expected to have a minor effect on drainage patterns and surface runoff and will not result in significantly altered flood patterns. Project design conforms to regulatory requirements regarding erosion and sediment control, flooding, and water quality protection. **Less Than Significant Impact.**

- e.) The project will not substantially 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. No stormwater systems are downslope from the project. Pollution from suspended sediment will be reduced to less than significant levels through implementation of project requirements to prevent erosion, sediment, and turbidity levels (SPR-GEO-1, SPR-GEO-2, SPR-HYD-1, SPR-HYD-2, SPR-HYD-3). Additionally, mitigation measures described in the Biological Resources section (Section

5.4) for special-status fish protection (MM-BIO-6) will help protect water quality through measures such as diverting water around active construction areas. **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.**

- f.) The project will not otherwise substantially degrade water quality. Consistent with SPR-HYD-1, construction will be timed to occur during the low-flow season to minimize hydrological disturbance and the project footprint will be minimized to the extent feasible while also accomplishing project goals. Vehicles and equipment will be restricted to designated access routes and staging areas to minimize hydrological disturbance and potential for sediment delivery to watercourses. Contamination and erosion prevention measures will be implemented during the project construction to prevent short-term impacts to water quality. Best management practices will be implemented to reduce sediment and turbidity (SPR-HYD-2). Bank stabilization at the site will improve water quality in the long-term by reducing erosion and suspended sediment. **Less Than Significant Impact.**

- g.) No housing or structures will be constructed as part of the project. **No Impact.**

- h.) No housing or structures will be constructed as part of the project. **No Impact.**

- i.) The project will not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam. The project site is located within, and immediately adjacent, to the river, on private property and away from structures and residences. **No Impact.**

- j.) The project will not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death due to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. The project site is not located near an ocean or lake, and is not located near residences, structures, or gathering places. **No Impact.**

STANDARD PROJECT REQUIREMENTS (SPRs) FOR HYDROLOGY AND WATER RESOURCES

SPR-HYD-1: Compliance with Water Quality Regulations

The project will comply with the applicable water quality requirements of the State and Regional Water Quality Control Board. The project proponent must notify the Waterboard of the project, and apply for water quality permits as needed (Clean Water Act § 401 Water Quality Certification or a Waste Discharge permit). The project will adhere to all permit requirements. The project will not exceed Regional Water Quality Control Board standards for waste discharges or water quality. This SPR applies to all project activities, including project maintenance activities.

SPR-HYD-2: Limit Hydrological Disturbance

Construction will be timed to occur during the low-flow season to minimize hydrological disturbance. The project footprint shall be minimized to the extent feasible while also accomplishing project goals. Vehicles and equipment will be restricted to designated access routes and staging areas to minimize hydrological disturbance and potential for sediment delivery to watercourses.

SPR-HYD-3: Minimize Sediment Delivery and Turbidity

Fill shall be staged in a stable location a minimum of 150 feet from the river channel and outside of the 100-year floodplain. Best management practices (BMPs) shall be implemented to minimize turbidity and sediment delivery to watercourses. Erosion control BMPs will be implemented as described in SPR-GEO-2. Additional measures such as use of coffer dams or turbidity curtains will be implemented as needed to reduce and minimize turbidity levels.

See additional relevant SPRs in the Biological Resources section (Section 5.4), Geology and Soils section (Section 5.7), and Hazards and Hazardous Materials section (Section 5.9).

MITIGATION MEASURES (MMs) FOR HYDROLOGY AND WATER RESOURCES

MM-HYD-1: Dewatering and Turbidity Control Plan

Prior to initiating in-water construction activities, a Dewatering and Turbidity Control Plan would be prepared, which would be subject to approval by the relevant resource agencies (e.g., CDFW, NMFS, RWQCB). The plan will ensure protection of aquatic resources and water quality through implementation of appropriate dewatering procedures, fish and aquatic species protection, turbidity and sediment control measures, monitoring, emergency provisions, and post-construction restoration.

5.11 LAND USE

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.) Physically divide an established community?				X
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?				X

c.) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X
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DISCUSSION:

- a.) The project will not physically divide any established community. **No Impact.**
- b.) The project will not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The project will comply will all federal, state, and local policies and regulations. The project is consistent with and will not conflict with the policies in the Siskiyou County General Plan (Siskiyou County 1997) or the Scott Valley Area Plan (Siskiyou County 1980a, 1980b). **No Impact.**
- c.) The project will not conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. The project is located in Siskiyou County which does not have an existing Regional Conservation Plan, Species Conservation Plan, or Natural Community Conservation Plans (CDFW 2025e). **No Impact.**

5.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

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?				X
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?				X

DISCUSSION:

- a.) The project will not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state. No known mineral

resources exist within the project area. **No Impact.**

- b.) The project will not result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan. No known mineral resources exist within the project area. **No Impact.**

5.13 NOISE

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.) Generate a substantial increase in noise levels in excess of standards established in local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?		X		
b.) Generate excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?		X		
c.) Cause a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
d.) Cause a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in project vicinity above levels existing without project?		X		
e.) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f.) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in project area to excessive noise levels?				X

DISCUSSION:

The Project is located within the Scott River channel and riparian corridor and adjacent to agricultural land. The site is remotely located, and there are no structures in the immediate vicinity. The prevailing winds, vegetation, bank height, and distance across the fields help will buffer noise generated during construction. Noise currently affecting the project area comes from farm equipment, and adjacent County Roads.

- a.) Project implementation will not result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies. As per SPR-NOI-1, the project will comply with noise standards specified in the Siskiyou County General Plan's Noise Element (Siskiyou County 1978). The project will involve the use of trucks and earthmoving equipment (e.g., backhoes, excavators) which will generate construction noise. Peak noise levels for construction equipment are expected to be 70-85 decibels (db) at a 50-foot distance (FHA 2018), which is significantly higher than average median ambient noise levels of 53 db for open space in Siskiyou County (Siskiyou County 1978). However, the project area is surrounded by land being used for farm operations using trucks and tractors which average 70-85 db at 50 feet, equivalent to the anticipated noise from the project's construction equipment (FHA 2018). The noise generated by project's construction will be temporary and is expected to be within the levels suggested in the Siskiyou County General Plan's Noise Element for construction equipment (Siskiyou County, 1978). Also, the nearest residence is over 1,000 feet from the project area; at this distance, the noise from an 85 db source would decrease to less than 60 db, which is a significance threshold for noise exposure in residential areas as specified in the General Plan (Siskiyou County 1978). Therefore, the project is not expected to exceed Siskiyou County noise standards.

The project will implement mitigations to reduce noise exposure and impacts (MM-NOI-1). Exposure to construction noise is expected to primarily affect those working at the site. However, the noise mitigation measures specify that equipment must be equipped with mufflers, and that operators and other onsite workers will be required to wear hearing protection. The project is on private land and the public will be excluded from the immediate area of equipment operations. The primary noise impacts on the public will be very brief exposure to construction noise by passersby on the public road (Horn Lane) that forms the northern boundary of the project area. Noise impacts will also be mitigated by limiting construction hours to daylight hours, requiring mufflers on equipment, and limiting equipment idling. Following the standard project requirements and implementing the mitigations will reduce project-related noise to less than significant levels. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

- b.) Project implementation will not expose persons to or generate excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels. Although ground-borne vibration will be generated during construction, the construction activities will be temporary. Also, ground vibration dissipates quickly over very short distances (FTA 2018). Exposure to ground-borne vibration or noise will primarily affect those working at the site. As per MM-NOI-2, onsite workers will be required to wear hearing protection, construction will be limited to daylight hours, equipment idling time will be minimized, and mufflers will be required

for equipment. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

- c.) The project will not cause a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project. All project-related activities producing noise will be temporary. There will be no project-related noise following project completion and the project site will return to ambient conditions. **No Impact.**

- d.) Project construction may result in a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project. According to the Siskiyou County General Plan Noise Element, open space in Siskiyou County has an average median ambient noise level of 53 db (Siskiyou County 1978). Although the project will create noise above ambient levels, the increase in noise levels will be brief and temporary, with noise levels returning to ambient levels following project completion. Elevated noise will be limited to periods of active construction. During this time, exposure to construction noise by people is expected to be limited to those working at the site. It is unlikely that noise will reach any residential areas. Equipment operators and other workers onsite will be required to wear hearing protection (SPR-NOI-2). The public will be excluded from the immediate area of equipment operations.

In addition to humans, wildlife may also experience impacts from noise exposure due to the project. Wildlife will be protected through avoidance and other mitigation measures described in the Biological Resources section (Section 5.4). The project will also minimize noise impacts on humans and wildlife by implementing mitigation measures (MM-NOI-2) including limiting construction to daylight hours, limiting equipment idling time, and requiring mufflers on equipment. These mitigations will reduce the temporary impacts of noise that exceeds ambient levels to a less than significant effect. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

- e.) The project is not located within an airport land use plan or where such a plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport. The project is a river channel and floodplain restoration project and is not related to airports or air traffic. **No Impact.**

- f.) The project is not within the vicinity of a private airstrip and will not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels as a result of activities related to airports or air traffic. **No Impact.**

STANDARD PROJECT REQUIREMENTS (SPRs)

SPR-NOI-1: Compliance with Noise Standards

The project will comply with the applicable noise standards established in the Siskiyou County General Plan as well other applicable noise standards or ordinances.

SPR-NOI-1: Minimize Noise Impacts

To reduce potential impacts from noise, the project will require the following:

- Equipment operators and construction workers must be provided with adequate ear protection.
- All vehicles, equipment, and power tools must be used and maintained according to manufacturer specifications. All diesel- and gasoline-powered equipment must be properly maintained and equipped with noise-reduction intake and exhaust mufflers and engine shrouds, in accordance with manufacturers’ recommendations.
- Work will be limited to daylight hours only and must not occur outside of the hours of 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
- All vehicles and motorized equipment must be shut down when not in use. Idling of vehicles and equipment will be limited to 5 minutes.

5.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.) Induce substantial 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)?				X
b.) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X

DISCUSSION:

- a.) The project will not induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly. The project is a restoration project on the Scott River and is not related to, and will not lead to any new construction of, housing, businesses, roads, or other infrastructure. The project site lies within the Scott River Riparian corridor, and is surrounded by natural habitats, private, undeveloped agricultural land, and a few private residences. **No Impact.**
- b.) The project will not displace people, necessitating construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The project site is located in an uninhabited location, and will therefore cause no displacement of people. Likewise, the project will not prohibit, displace, or affect any existing housing that would necessitate construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The project is a restoration project that does not involve housing or development of any kind. The project area is located primarily in the Scott River channel and immediate

floodplain where housing development would not be possible. **No Impact.**

5.15 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?				X
ii.) Police protection?				X
iii.) Schools?				X
iv.) Parks?				X
v.) Other public facilities?				X
b.) Result in any impacts to existing or future public services or facilities?				X

DISCUSSION:

- a.) The project will not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios for public services. The project will be implemented on private property away from public services and infrastructure. The project will not affect public services related to fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities. **No Impact.**
- b.) The project has a limited geographic scope, is on private property, and will not affect any existing public services. No additional demands on existing services will result from project completion, nor will it reduce capacity for performance of existing public services. **No Impact.**

5.16 RECREATION

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?				X
b.) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				X
c.) Impede, prevent, prohibit, or otherwise affect existing or future recreation?			X	

DISCUSSION:

- a.) The project is a habitat restoration project on private property with no public parks or recreational facilities in the immediate vicinity. The project will not increase use of an existing neighborhood parks, regional parks, or other recreational facilities such that a substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. **No Impact.**
- b.) The project does not include recreational facilities or require construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. The project is not recreational in nature and is located on private property. **No Impact.**
- c.) The project may potentially interfere with nature-based recreational activities such as wildlife viewing or photography as a result of construction noise and temporary loss of riparian habitat. However, most of the project area is on private land that is not accessible for public recreation. Also, construction will be limited in geographic scope and will occur within a limited time period. Thus, impacts to these types of recreational activities are expected to be minimal and temporary. Overall, project activities are expected to increase riparian habitat and provide benefits to wildlife. **Less Than Significant Impact.**

5.17 TRANSPORTATION

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?				X
b.) Conflict with or be inconstant with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b) related to vehicle miles traveled (VMT)?			X	
c.) Cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either number of vehicle trips, volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?			X	
d.) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			X	
e.) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in air traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X
f.) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
g.) Result in inadequate emergency access?				X
h.) Result in inadequate parking capacity?			X	
i.) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks).				X

DISCUSSION:

- a.) The project will not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities. The project is consistent with and will not conflict with the policies in the Siskiyou County

General Plan (Siskiyou County 1997) or the Scott Valley Area Plan (Siskiyou County 1980a, 1980b). **No Impact.**

- b.)** With the current CEQA Guidelines, transportation impacts are to be evaluated based on a project's effect on vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The project will potentially result in a net increase in VMT; however, the increased VMT will be temporary and for a short duration. The California Office of Planning and Research guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) analyses (OPR 2018) state that projects that generate fewer than 110 trips per day may be assumed to cause less than significant VMT impacts. The project will result in fewer trips than this threshold. Impacts of the project in terms of VMT are therefore determined to be less than significant. **Less Than Significant.**
- c.)** The project will not cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to existing traffic load and capacity of the street system. The project will involve equipment mobilization to and from the site, and daily travel to the site while project is being implemented. However, the work will be completed by a small crew, and will not exceed the capacity of the existing State Hwy 3 and county roads. Increased traffic as a result of the project will be minimal and temporary. **Less Than Significant Impact.**
- d.)** The project will not exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service (LOS) standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways. Although Siskiyou County has not established LOS standards for specific roads, the County does not accept an LOS greater than Level C (stable flow with higher traffic volumes), and specifies that Level B (stable flow with lower traffic volumes) is recommended for rural roads (Siskiyou County 1988). The project is located in a rural area and the roads in the vicinity of the project are rural roads. Although construction equipment and vehicles will be mobilized to and from the site, and there will be daily travel to the site while the project is being implemented, the work will be completed by a small crew and is not expected to significantly increase traffic or interfere with traffic flow patterns. The traffic generated by the project is not expected to have a significant enough impact on traffic flow such that a Level B service standard would be exceeded. **Less Than Significant Impact.**
- e.)** The project will have no effect on air traffic. The project will not result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in air traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks. **No Impact.**
- f.)** The project will not increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses. No design changes are proposed for current road access, nor are any changes anticipated with traffic patterns. Transport of equipment will not require vehicles to drive more slowly

than the speed limit or select alternate routes to reach their destination. **No Impact.**

- g.) The project will not result in any changes to existing emergency access because changes to current traffic levels or patterns are not anticipated. No changes to emergency access or parking would result from plan adoption and the plan would not interfere with alternative transportation. **No Impact.**
- h.) The project will not significantly affect parking capacity along county roads or Highway 3. Work crews will be parked on private property within or adjacent to the project area. Although parking along public roads may potentially be used, parking along public roads is expected to be occasional and temporary. **Less Than Significant Impact.**
- i.) The project will not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks). There are no such policies, plans, or programs associate with the project site. **No Impact.**

5.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

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 tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074, and that is:		X		
i.) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources?		X		
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 Public Resource Code section 5024.1, subdivision (c). In applying these criteria, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.		X		
b.) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	

DISCUSSION:

Under CEQA (Public Resources Code Section 21074), Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs) are defined as sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe. TRCs have some overlap with cultural/archaeological resources, but may not align solely with archaeological or cultural resources. Some, but not all, prehistoric archaeological resources may also be TRCS. The primary distinguishing feature of TRCs is that they have cultural value to a California Native American tribe.

- a.) As per SPR-CUL-1, an archaeological records check was completed by the Northeast Center of the California Historical Resources Information System in Chico, California (NEIC) on 9 January 2025. Results of the records search indicated that no pre-historic Native American archaeological sites have been previously recorded within the project area.

Following California Assembly Bill 52 requirements for Native American Consultation under CEQA, and consistent with SPR-CUL-2, letters were sent to Native American groups. The list of Native American groups to be contacted was acquired from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). On 10 February 2025, letters describing the project were sent to the 12 individuals/organizations on the NAHC contact list. The NAHC was again contacted on 20 August 2025 to request a sacred lands file search. No responses to the letters or results of the sacred lands file search had been received as of 7 October 2025.

Background research and an archaeological and cultural resources assessment and survey were conducted as per SPR-CUL-3 and SPR-CUL-4 and described in the Cultural Resources section (Section 5.5). During the cultural resource survey, one non-Native American historic site was identified (bridge remains), but was determined to be ineligible for the California Register of Historic Places (Native-X 2025). No pre-historic Native American sites or isolated finds were discovered within the survey area (Native-X 2025). However, the survey report notes that the project areas have been heavily disturbed by historic gold mining, ground leveling, plowing, and cattle trampling, and that the river bottom location itself has changed over time, generally moving from side to side within the drainage corridor (Native-X 2025).

The restoration project will involve ground disturbance which could potentially impact prehistoric Native American archaeological or tribal cultural resources if present. As per SPR-CUL-5, cultural resources training would be conducted prior to project implementation to train staff and contractors in avoidance and notification procedures for archaeological and cultural resources; this will include training in protection of TRCs. No pre-historic archaeological resources were identified within the project area during the

cultural resource survey (Native X 2025), no responses were received from Native American tribes, and no results were received from the NAHC sacred lands file search. However, there is the potential for ground-disturbing activities to lead to inadvertent discovery and potential damage to pre-historic archaeological resources or TRCS should they be present. Should any new discovery of a pre-historic archaeological resource be made during construction, mitigation measure MM-CUL-1 will be implemented. All activities within 100 feet of the resource will halt, and a qualified archaeologist will be contacted to evaluate and identify protection or mitigation measures, if necessary. If a prehistoric archaeological resource may also potentially be a tribal cultural resource, mitigation measure MM-TRC-1 will be implemented and the locally-affiliated tribe(s) will be contacted. Implementation of these SPRs and mitigation measures will reduce potential impacts to TRCs to less than significant levels. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation.**

- b.) The NEIC records search did not reveal any burials or sites containing human remains. However, project implementation could potentially inadvertently uncover human remains. If human remains are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, all work in the immediate area shall cease and the County Coroner will be contacted pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code Section 5097 and consistent with SPR-CUL-6. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), and the NAHC shall identify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The project applicant shall work with the MLD in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 to determine appropriate treatment of and disposition of the remains. Work may not resume within the immediate area until treatment of the remains is completed. Following this SPR will reduce the potential impact to a less than significant level. **Less Than Significant.**

STANDARD PROJECT REQUIREMENTS (SPRs) FOR TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

See SPRs in the Cultural Resources section (Section 5.5).

MITIGATION MEASURES (MMs) FOR TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

MM-TCR-1: Protection of Tribal Cultural Resources

If a Tribal Cultural Resource is discovered during archaeological or cultural resource investigations or if an inadvertent discovery is made during project implementation, the resource will be protected by a no-disturbance buffer of at least 100 feet and a qualified archaeologist, the local Native American tribal group(s) on the NAHC contact list, and the NAHC should be contacted, as appropriate. Work may not resume within the no-disturbance buffer until a determination is made by the lead agency, in consultation with the tribe(s).

5.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

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?				X
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?				X
d.) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?				X
e.) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X

DISCUSSION:

- a. The project is a river channel and floodplain restoration project and will not result in the relocation, construction, or expansion of any infrastructure. Project implementation will not require or result in the relocation, new construction or expansion of water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the relocation, construction, or expansion of which could cause significant environmental effects. An electric powerline exists within the project area, but project implementation activities will not interfere with or otherwise affect the existing electric powerline. **No Impact.**
- b. The project will have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources. The project is a habitat restoration project and will not result

in any future development that would require additional water resources. The project will not affect an existing irrigation infrastructure within or adjacent to the project area, including a pumphouse, irrigation ditches, agricultural sump ponds, or adjacent irrigation diversion dam (Young’s dam). **No Impact.**

- c. The project will not require 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 providers existing commitments. The project is a restoration project and will not affect wastewater utilities or service systems. **No Impact.**
- d. No solid waste will be directed to a landfill due to this project. **No Impact.**
- e. Project implementation will comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. **No Impact.**

5.20 WILDFIRE

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?				X
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?		X		
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?				X
d.) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?		X		

e.) 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?			X	
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DISCUSSION:

The project area is within the local responsibility area (LRA) for fire protection (CNRA 2024). The project area contains a mix of fire hazard severity zones (FHSZs) ranging from no fire hazard severity to very high fire hazard severity (CAL FIRE 2025).

- a.) The project will not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The project site is located within the Scott River riparian corridor and is accessed by private agricultural roads. Construction equipment and materials will be staged away from public roads. The project will not interfere with emergency personnel, services, response, or evacuation. **No Impact.**
- b.) The project area is within a river channel and floodplain surrounded by irrigated fields that are relatively flat. Therefore, slope and other characteristics of the project site will not exacerbate wildfire risk. The potential exists for accidental ignition of a wildland fire due to the use of vehicles and equipment to implement the project. However, the increased wildfire risk will be temporary and limited to construction and maintenance periods. Also, implementation of mitigation measure MM-HAZ-1 will significantly reduce the risk of accidental wildfire ignition. Mitigation measures including wildfire awareness training for work crews, requiring spark arrestors on equipment, avoidance of flammable materials, and other safety measures will reduce the potential for accidental wildfire ignition to a less than significant level. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**
- c.) The project is a river channel and floodplain habitat restoration project. The project will not 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. **No Impact.**
- d.) The potential exists for accidental ignition of a wildland fire due to the use of vehicles and equipment. However, the increased risks will be temporary as they will be limited to construction and maintenance periods. Also, implementation of mitigation measure MM-WIL-1 will significantly reduce the risk of accidental wildfire ignition. Mitigation measures including wildfire awareness training for work crews, requiring spark arrestors on equipment, avoidance of flammable materials, and other safety measures will reduce

the potential for accidental wildfire ignition to a less than significant level. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**

- e.) The project will not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. The project will not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam. The project site is located within, and immediately adjacent, to the river, on private property and away from structures and residences. The project area does not lie within a documented landslide zone (DOC 2025b). The proposed project does not include the construction of any buildings or residential structures and there are no expected impacts associated with exposing people to flooding or landslides.

Project treatment sites for riverbank stabilization are inherently unstable and actively eroding. Although project construction will involve soil manipulation, the project will stabilize river banks and reduce the likelihood of bank erosion, slumping, and sliding. Project implementation will stabilize the soil through regrading of unstable slopes, installation of ELJs, and replanting of native riparian vegetation.

The project will not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on- or off-site. The project will not substantially change the geometry of the channel, but will rather reinforce vulnerable points along the riverbank and decrease the slope of the bank/terrace. These changes are expected to have a minor effect on drainage patterns and surface runoff and will not result in significantly altered flood patterns. Project design conforms to regulatory requirements regarding erosion and sediment control, flooding, and water quality protection. **Less Than Significant Impact.**

MITIGATION MEASURES (MMs) FOR WILDFIRE

MM-WIL-1: Wildfire Risk Reduction

The project will require the following wildfire prevention measures to be implemented:

- Wildfire awareness training shall be provided to work crews prior to project implementation.
- All earthmoving and portable equipment with internal combustion engines shall be equipped with spark arrestors.
- Work crews shall have appropriate fire suppression equipment (fire extinguishers, buckets for water, shovels, etc.) available at the work site.

- On days when the fire danger is high, vehicles and equipment that could produce a spark, fire, or flame shall be kept at least 10 feet away from flammable materials including dry vegetation, straw mulch and flammable vegetation slash.
- Smoking by work crews shall only be permitted in designated smoking areas that are barren and cleared to mineral soil and with fire suppression equipment on hand. Cigarette butts shall be collected in a fire resistant container and properly disposed of off site.

5.21 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.) Does 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?		X		
b.) Does 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)?		X		
c.) Does project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		X		

DISCUSSION:

- a. The project will potentially degrade the quality of the environment or reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species although these impacts would only occur temporarily during the construction phase. During project implementation and maintenance, potential adverse effects will be managed through the avoidance, minimization and mitigation

measures described in this IS/MND. Ultimately, the activities described here will lead to the protection and restoration of habitat for fish and wildlife and improvement of water quality. In the long-term, it is the objective of the project to reduce sedimentation and turbidity and improve habitat quantity and quality for aquatic and riparian species. The project will not cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number of or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. In fact, the project is intended to improve stream channel morphology and anadromous fish habitat, thus helping to address strategic recovery actions for threatened coho salmon (CDFW 2004, NMFS 2014). The project will not eliminate important examples of major periods of California history or prehistory. The project will reduce its impacts to less than significant levels by following standard project requirements (SPRs) and by implementing mitigation measures (MMs). **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.**

- b. The proposed project would result in short-term construction related impacts. Multiple previous projects aimed at stream channel and riparian habitat enhancement, restoration, and bank stabilization have been completed by the SRCD and other entities on the Scott River mainstem and it is likely that additional projects will be implemented in the future. These combined projects have the potential to result in cumulative impacts. However, the currently proposed project is not expected to contribute to cumulative impacts because the mitigation measures described, which will reduce all potential impacts of the project to less than significant levels, will also ensure that the project's contribution to any cumulatively considerable impacts would be minimal. Given the project's short construction duration, minimal footprint, and limited scope, the proposed project would not result in a considerable contribution to cumulative impacts. Furthermore, following the standard project requirements (SPRs) and implementing the mitigation measures (MMs) will reduce all potential impacts of the project, including cumulative impacts, to a less than significant level. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.**
- c. The Project will not have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. The project will reduce its potential impacts on human beings to less than significant levels by following standard project requirements (SPRs) and by implementing mitigation measures (MMs). **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.**

6. LIST OF PREPARERS

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Nathan Howington.....Field Technician

Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District (Project Management)

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Andrea Claassen (Independent Environmental Consultant)...Biologist/CEQA Document Preparer
Joey Howard (Cascade Stream Solutions, LLC).....Engineer/Restoration Designs
John Jones (Native-X, Inc. Archaeological Services).....Archaeologist

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