



Yana Garcia
Secretary for
Environmental Protection



Department of Toxic Substances Control

Katherine M. Butler, MPH, Director
8800 Cal Center Drive
Sacramento, California 95826-3200
dtsc.ca.gov



Gavin Newsom
Governor

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

February 17, 2026

Gary Mills
Chief Planner
County of Tulare, Resource Management Agency
5961 S Mooney Blvd.
Visalia, CA 93277
GMills@tularecounty.ca.gov

RE: NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE ALLENSWORTH COMMUNITY UPDATE (GPA 25-006 & SPA 25-001) DATED FEBRUARY 9, 2026, STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER [2026020313](#)

Dear Gary Mills,

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) reviewed the Negative Declaration (Neg Dec) for the Allensworth Community Update (GPA 25-006 & SPA 25-001) (Project). The Tulare County Board of Supervisors passed Resolution 2022-0342 on April 19, 2022, approving General Plan Initiation No. GPI 22-001 to authorize the Allensworth Community Plan Update. The boundary subject to the Project generally includes the approximately 5.9 square-mile area south of Avenue 56, west of State Route 43 and the railroad, north of Avenue 24, and east of the planned California High Speed Rail line. A modification proposed through a General Plan Amendment (GPA) No. GPA 25-006 would modify the existing Allensworth Hamlet Development Boundary by adding approximately 2,794 acres to the proposed community Urban Development Boundary to encompass a total of approximately 3,845 acres. The GPA would also change the existing "Valley Agriculture" land use designation of the acreage currently within the Project boundaries to a "Mixed Use" land use designation. DTSC recommends and requests consideration of the following comments:

1. When agricultural crops and/or land uses are proposed or rezoned for residential use, several contaminants of concern (COCs) can be present. The Lead Agency shall identify the amounts of Pesticides and Organochlorine Pesticides (OCPs) historically used on the property. If present, OCPs requiring further analysis are dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane, toxaphene, and dieldrin. Additionally, any level of arsenic present would require further analysis and sampling and must meet approved local area baselines or thresholds. If they do not, remedial action must take place to mitigate them below those thresholds. Additional COCs may be found in mixing/loading/storage areas, drainage ditches, farmhouses, or any other outbuildings and should be sampled and analyzed. If smudge pots had been routinely utilized, additional sampling for Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons and/or Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons may be required. These recommendations should be adhered to and become part of the environmental document. Please refer to the [DTSC's Human and Ecological Risk Office \(HERO\) webpage](#) for the most recent guidance and screening levels.
2. DTSC recommends all imported soil/fill material be tested to ensure all COCs meet screening levels as outlined in [DTSC's Preliminary Endangerment Assessment Guidance Manual](#). Furthermore, DTSC advises referencing the [DTSC Information Advisory Clean Imported Fill Material Fact Sheet](#) if importing soil/fill is necessary. To minimize the possibility of introducing contaminated soil/fill material, there should be documentation of the origins of the soil/fill material and, if applicable, sampling be conducted to ensure that the imported soil/fill material is suitable for the intended land use. The sampling should include analysis based on the source of the soil/fill and knowledge of prior land use.
3. The County of Tulare Resource Management Agency should consider soil testing as mentioned in comment #1. If, in the event any COC results are above DTSC residential screening levels, DTSC recommends The County of Tulare Resource Management Agency address the contaminations within the Project area through an Environmental Site Assessment and/or receive oversight from a [self-certified local agency](#), DTSC or Regional Water Quality Control Board. If entering into one

of DTSC's voluntary agreements, please note that DTSC uses a single standard Request for Lead Agency Oversight Application for all agreement types. Please apply for DTSC oversight using this link: [Request for Agency Oversight Application](#). Submittal of the online application includes an agreement to pay costs incurred during agreement preparation. If you have any questions about the application portal, please contact the relevant [Regional Brownfield Coordinator](#) for your Project.

DTSC believes the County of Tulare Resource Management Agency must address these comments to determine if any significant impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) will occur and, if necessary, avoid significant impacts under CEQA. DTSC recommends the department connect with our unit if any hazardous waste projects managed or overseen by DTSC are discovered. Please refer to the [Tulare County EnviroStor Map](#) for additional information about the areas of potential contamination. If further concerns or impacts surface in light of any forthcoming environmental documents, DTSC reserves the right to provide applicable comments at that time.

DTSC appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Neg Dec for the Allensworth Community Update (GPA 25-006 & SPA 25-001). Thank you for your assistance in protecting California's people and environment from the harmful effects of toxic substances. If you have any questions or would like clarification on DTSC's comments, please respond to this letter or via [email](#) for additional guidance.

Sincerely,



Dave Kereazis
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HWMP-Permitting Division – CEQA Unit
Department of Toxic Substances Control
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Gary Mills
February 17, 2026
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cc: (via email)

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