



# COUNTY OF TULARE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

## NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To: State Clearinghouse  
PO Box 3044/ 1400 Tenth St  
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: County of Tulare – RMA  
5961 S Mooney Blvd  
Visalia CA 93277

Date: March 25, 2026

Subject: Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Focused Environmental Impact Report (Focused EIR) and Scoping Meeting

Project Title: Tulare County Zoning Ordinance Update PZC 25-005 (Agricultural Zones) and PZC 25-008 (Residential Zones)

Project Applicant: County of Tulare Resource Management Agency

Project Location: Countywide

Tulare County Resource Management Agency (RMA) will be the Lead Agency and will prepare a focused environmental impact report for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the focused EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit(s) or other approval(s) for the project. In addition, please provide us with contact information of the person(s) in your agency that we may contact during the CEQA process.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

A scoping meeting is scheduled for the 8<sup>th</sup> day of April 2026, at 2:00 p.m. in the Main Conference Room of the Tulare County Resource Management Agency at the address shown above. **Please sign in at the Security Desk in the Government Plaza main lobby.** The scoping meeting will also be available online via Microsoft Teams using the following link: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/24450804791018?p=d0DyNUNV2gkKp8K6o2>, Meeting ID: 244 508 047 910 18 and Passcode: cR9sp9iD.

Please direct your response to Gary Mills, Chief Planner at the address shown above, by e-mail at [gmills@tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:gmills@tularecounty.ca.gov), or by telephone at 559-624-7199.

Signature:  Date: 3/25/2026

Name/Title: Gary A. Mills, Chief Planner, Environmental Planning Division

Signature:  For \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 3/25/2026

Name/Title: Michael G. Washam, A.C.E., Associate RMA Director, Designee

Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375

**Project Description:**

Tulare County is located in Central California in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley. The County is composed of eight incorporated cities and numerous unincorporated communities. Most of the unincorporated communities and all of the cities are located on the Valley floor. The foothills and Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks form the eastern half of the County.

The Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update was approved by the Board of Supervisors on August 28, 2012. At that time, the Board also certified the Final Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse No. 2006041162). The General Plan Update Work Plan/Implementation Measures laid out the direction for the updates to the Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the General Plan.

In addition, the Tulare County Housing Element was updated for the sixth planning cycle which covers an 8-year period (December 31, 2023, through December 31, 2031). The Housing Element was adopted on December 12, 2023, by Resolution No. 2023-1110. At that time, the Board also certified and adopted the Mitigated Negative Declaration (State Clearinghouse No. 2023110037). Several modifications were made to the Housing Element programs which guide the County on making meaningful and object-based impacts to housing in Tulare County. This included several updates to the Tulare County Zoning Ordinance to achieve these goals.

Several of the Sections within the Tulare County Zoning Ordinance have remained unchanged throughout the years and include language that is conflicting with other Sections that have been updated or includes language that is outdated and no longer relevant. In addition, based on feedback received, the Zoning Ordinance was found to be difficult to navigate as information has had tendencies to be found in multiple locations, making it more difficult to be able to find specific information. The County is proposing updates to the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that it does conform to the General Plan as well as making it more streamlined and easier to navigate.

The Sections of the Tulare County Zoning Ordinance which are being updated are as follows:

Text Amendment No. PZC 25-005 is proposing to update the following Agricultural Zoning sections in the Tulare County Zoning Ordinance: Section 2 Definitions, Establish the Preamble and Zoning Matrix for Agricultural Zones, Section 9.5 AE (Exclusive Agricultural), Section 9.55 AE-10 (Exclusive Agricultural – 10 acre minimum), Section 9.6 AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 acre minimum), Section 9.7 AE-40 (Exclusive Agricultural – 40 acre minimum), Section 9.8 AE-80 (Exclusive Agricultural – 80 acre minimum), Section 10 A-1 (Agricultural), Section 10.3 AF (Foothill Agricultural), Section 15.5 (Reasonable Accommodations), Section 16 (Variances and Special Use Permits), Section 16.4 (Site Review Combining Zone), Section 16. IV (Temporary Use Permits), and Section 16.V (Special Use Permit – Assemblage of People for Educational and/or Event Purposes).

Text Amendment No. PZC 25-008, is proposing to update the Residential Zoning sections of the Tulare County Zoning Ordinance, including: Section 2 (Definitions), Establish the Preamble and Zoning Matrix for the Residential Zones, Section 4 R-A (Rural Residential), Section 4.5 MR (Mountain Residential), Section 5 R-O (Single Family Estate), Section 6 R-1 (Single-Family Residential), Section 7 R-2 (Two-Family Residential), Section 8 R-3 (Multi-Family), Section 14.3 M (Special Mobilehome Overlay), Section 15 (General Provisions and Exceptions), Section 15.5 (Reasonable Accommodations), Section 16 (Variances and Special Use Permits), Section 16.4 (Site Review Combining Zone), Section 16. IV (Temporary Use Permits), Section 16.V (Special Use Permit – Assemblage of People for Educational and/or Event Purposes), Section 18.6 PD (Planned Development), and Section 18.7 F (Foothill Combining).

To view the redlined and clean versions of the Proposed Text Amendments please visit the Tulare County Resource Management Agency website at: <https://tularecounty.ca.gov/rma/rma-documents/planning-documents/tulare-county-zoning-ordinance-updates>.

**Figures included in this Notice:**

Figure 1 – Vicinity Map

**PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING**

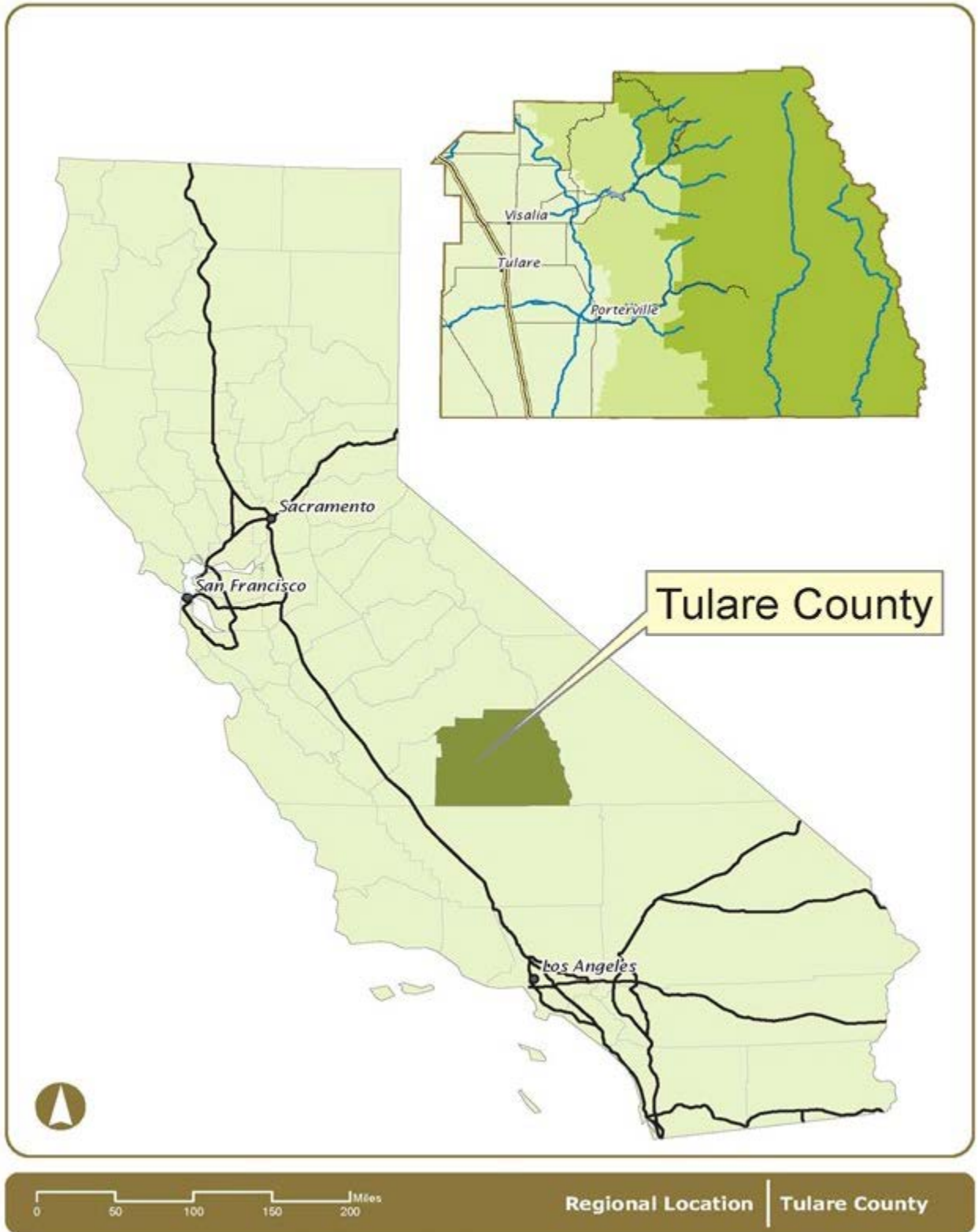
Tulare County lies in the southern half of and on the east side of the San Joaquin Valley, the great central valley of California, which is bounded on three sides by mountains – the Coast Range to the west and the Sierra Nevada to the east and south (See Figure 1). The County itself covers approximately 4,863 square miles and encompasses 3,112,320 acres. Federal and State-owned lands comprise approximately 51 percent of the County area.

**POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

The County, as the CEQA Lead Agency, has determined that a Focused EIR is required to address the potential for significant environmental effects to occur as a result of its implementation. The Focused DEIR will contain only the information necessary to address factors that were not previously analyzed by the approved FEIR for the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update due to the changes to the Tulare County Zoning Ordinance. This focus meets the requirements for supplemental analysis under Section 15178(c)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines, which requires that only the subsequent project’s additional significant environmental effects and any new or additional mitigation measures or alternatives that were not identified and analyzed by the Master EIR be analyzed.

An Initial Study (IS) has been prepared for the proposed project. As a result, the County has determined that the proposed project could potentially affect 3 of the 20 environmental topic areas identified in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. The topical areas are agricultural and forestry resources, land use and planning, and population and housing. These impacts will be analyzed in detail in the Draft EIR. The proposed project is not expected to result in impacts related to aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, mineral resources, noise, public services, recreation, transportation, tribal cultural resources, utilities and service systems, and wildfire; therefore, the Draft EIR will not include a detailed analysis of these topics. Other required sections of CEQA will be addressed including cumulative impacts and project alternatives.

Figure 1 – Vicinity Map



**OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

Interested individuals, groups, and agencies may provide to the County of Tulare Resource Management Agency, Planning Branch, written comments on topics to be addressed in the EIR for the proposed Project. Because of time limits mandated by state law, comments should be provided no later than **5:00 p.m. April 24, 2026**. Agencies that will need to use the EIR when considering permits or other approvals for the proposed Project should provide the name of a staff contact person. Please send all comments to:

**Gary Mills, Chief Planner, Environmental Planning Division  
Tulare County Resource Management Agency  
Economic Development and Planning Branch  
5961 South Mooney Boulevard  
Visalia, CA 93277-9394  
E-mail: [gills@tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:gills@tularecounty.ca.gov)  
Phone: (559) 624-7199**