

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

- 1. Project title:** PRJ #2024-004 – Precision Civil Engineering
- 2. Lead agency name and address:** County of Madera
Community and Economic Development Department
200 West 4th Street, Suite 3100
Madera, California 93637
- 3. Contact person and phone number:** Jacob Aragon, Senior Planner
559-675-7821

Jacob.Aragon@maderacounty.com
- 4. Project Location & APN:** The subject property is located on the northeast corner of Avenue 21 1/2 and Golden State Blvd, (No Situs), Chowchilla
- 5. Project sponsor’s name and address:** Precision Civil Engineering
1234 O Street
Fresno, CA 93721
- 6. General Plan Designation:** AR (Agriculture Residential)
- 7. Zoning:** AR-5 (Agriculture, Rural, 5 Acre) District
CRG (Commercial, Rural, General) District
- 8. Description of project:**

The applicant is requesting a General Plan Amendment from AR (Agricultural Residential) to HSC (Highway Service Commercial) and a Zone Change from the AR-5 (Agricultural Rural, 5-acre) District to the CRG (Commercial Rural General) District to allow for the development of a truck stop complex.

The project site is located on Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN) 027-201-002, consisting of approximately 37.04 acres, and is currently vacant. The site is located at the northeast corner of Avenue 21 1/2 and Golden State Boulevard (no situs address), in the Chowchilla area of Madera County.

The proposed development would occupy approximately 9 acres of the project site and includes construction of a truck stop complex consisting of a 2,810-square-foot fast-food restaurant and a 6,405-square-foot building containing a convenience store and trucker amenities, including showers.

The project would include up to 10 fueling bays for semi-trucks and 8 fueling pumps for passenger vehicles. The site would provide 27 parking spaces for semi-trucks and 112 parking spaces for passenger vehicles, including 16 spaces designated for recreational vehicles.

The facility is proposed to operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week, and is anticipated to employ approximately 15 to 20 employees across all on-site operations. The project includes four points of access from Road 19.

The proposed truck stop complex would be a permitted use by right within the CRG (Commercial Rural General) zone district upon approval of the requested General Plan Amendment and Zone Change.

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

Surrounding properties are zoned AR-5 (Agricultural Rural, 5-acre), ARE-40 (Agricultural Rural Exclusive, 40-acre), OS (Open Space), and CRH (Commercial Rural Highway). The surrounding land use designations include AR (Agricultural Residential) and PI (Public Institutional).

The project site is located in a predominantly rural setting characterized by agricultural uses and sparse residential development.

10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required:

None.

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

Under AB 52, Tribal Governments have been notified of the Project. (See Section XVIII for additional discussion.).

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

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

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

DETERMINATION (to be completed by Lead Agency)	
On the basis of this initial evaluation:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signed: *Jacob Aragon* Date: 05/13/2026

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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I. AESTHETICS

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

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Responses:

(a - b) No Impact. There are no designated scenic vistas by the true definition (scene, view, or panorama; it’s what one stops to see when one climbs to the top of a mountain or pull off the road at the “scenic view”) in the vicinity of the Project site.

(c - d) Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is located in a rural area of Madera County characterized by agricultural uses, vacant land, and sparse residential development. The existing visual character of the site is currently undeveloped and lacks distinctive visual features or scenic resources.

Development of the proposed truck stop complex would introduce new structures, lighting, parking areas, and improvements to the site. While the project would alter the visual character of the immediate area, the proposed commercial use would be consistent with the proposed Highway Service Commercial (HSC) land use designation and Commercial Rural General (CRG) zoning, which anticipate more intensive, highway-oriented uses.

The project site is located near a major roadway corridor and would be viewed primarily by motorists traveling along Highway 99 and surrounding roadways. The proposed structures are relatively low in profile, and the site design would be subject to County development standards, including setbacks, lighting requirements, and any applicable landscaping provisions, which would serve to minimize potential visual impacts.

There is the potential for additional lighting at the site, but the minimal increase will not be a significant impact. As a condition of approval, it will be required to be hooded and directed down and away from neighboring parcels. Therefore, the Project will have a less

than significant impact.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

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

Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Responses:

(a - e) No Impact. The project site is designated as Vacant or Disturbed Land under the Department of Land Resources and Planning (DLRP) Important Farmland Finder. Therefore, the project will not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

The applicant has requested a rezone from AR-5 (Agricultural Rural, 5-acre minimum) District to CRG (Commercial Rural General) District. The project does not conflict with existing zoning regulations or a Williamson Act contract.

The project site is not classified as forest land and does not involve the rezoning of forest land. The proposed development will not result in the loss of forest or conversion of forest land to non-forest uses; therefore, there will be no impact on forest resources.

The site is currently vacant but has been previously disturbed through rough grading. It has not been used for agricultural production and has remained undeveloped.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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III. AIR QUALITY

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

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|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Conflict with, or obstruct implementation of, the applicable air quality plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Responses:

(a) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project is located within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin and is subject to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). The Project consists of a General Plan Amendment and rezone to allow development of a truck stop complex on a vacant site and does not introduce land uses or intensities inconsistent with AQMP planning assumptions.

Construction and operational activities would be required to comply with applicable SJVAPCD rules and permitting requirements. In addition, implementation of SJVAPCD Regulation VIII fugitive dust control measures (AIR MM-1) would reduce construction-related particulate emissions.

Because the Project would not exceed SJVAPCD emission thresholds or conflict with AQMP strategies, it would not obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

(b) Less Than Significant With Mitigation. The Project would generate short-term construction emissions and long-term operational emissions of ozone precursors (ROG and NOx) and particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5). The San Joaquin Valley Air Basin is designated as non-attainment for ozone and particulate matter standards.

Construction emissions were quantified using CalEEMod and compared to SJVAPCD significance thresholds. As shown in Table A of the Air Quality analysis, construction emissions would be reduced to below applicable thresholds with implementation of SJVAPCD Regulation VIII dust control requirements (AIR MM-1). Operational emissions would also be subject to SJVAPCD regulatory controls.

With implementation of AIR MM-1 and required SJVAPCD regulations, the Project's emissions would not be cumulatively considerable. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

Table A: Short-Term Regional Construction Emissions

Construction Year	Pollutant Emissions (Tons per Year)					
	ROG	NO _x	CO	SO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
2026	0.1	1.7	1.4	<0.1	0.1	0.1
2027	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Maximum Emissions	0.1	1.7	1.4	<0.1	0.1	0.1
SJVAPCD Threshold	10.0	10.0	100.0	27.0	15.0	15.0
Significant?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Compiled by LSA (June 2025). CO = carbon monoxide

NO_x = nitrogen oxides

PM_{2.5} = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in size PM₁₀ = particulate matter less than 10 microns in size

ROG = reactive organic gas

SJVAPCD = San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

SO_x = sulfur oxides

AIR MM-1 Consistent with San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM₁₀ Prohibitions), the following controls are required to be included as specifications for the proposed project and implemented at the construction site:

- All disturbed areas, including storage piles, which are not being actively utilized for construction purposes, shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using water or chemical stabilizer/suppressant or covered with a tarp or other suitable cover or vegetative ground cover.
- All on-site unpaved roads and off-site unpaved access roads shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using water or chemical stabilizer/suppressant.
- All land clearing, grubbing, scraping, excavation, land leveling, grading, cut and fill, and demolition activities shall be effectively controlled of fugitive dust emissions utilizing application of water or by presoaking.
- When materials are transported off site, all material shall be covered, or effectively wetted to limit visible dust emissions, and at least 6 inches of freeboard space from the top of the container shall be maintained.
- All operations shall limit or expeditiously remove the accumulation of mud or dirt from adjacent public streets at the end of each workday. (The use of dry rotary brushes is expressly prohibited except where preceded or accompanied by sufficient wetting to limit the visible dust emissions. Use of blower devices is expressly forbidden.)

- Following the addition of materials to, or the removal of materials from, the surface of outdoor storage piles, said piles shall be effectively stabilized of fugitive dust emissions utilizing sufficient water or chemical stabilizer/suppressant.

Construction emissions associated with the proposed project would be less than significant with implementation of AIR MM-1. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard.

(c) Less Than Significant Impact. Sensitive receptors in the vicinity include residential uses and workers located approximately 750 feet and 440 feet west of the Project site, respectively.

A Health Risk Assessment (HRA) evaluated potential exposure to toxic air contaminants from construction activities. The results indicate that the maximum residential cancer risk is 0.9 in one million and the worker risk is 0.15 in one million, both below the SJVAPCD significance threshold of 20 in one million. Chronic and acute hazard indices are also below applicable thresholds.

Based on modeled emissions, regulatory compliance requirements, and separation distances to sensitive receptors, the Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Impacts would be less than significant.

Table B: Health Risks from Project Construction to Off-Site Receptors

Location	Carcinogenic Inhalation Health Risk in One Million	Chronic Inhalation Hazard Index	Acute Inhalation Hazard Index
Residential Receptor Risk	0.9	0.001	0.000
Worker Receptor Risk	0.15	0.012	0.000
SJVAPCD Significance Threshold	20.0 in 1 million	1.0	1.0
Significant?	No	No	No

Source: LSA (June 2025).

SJVAPCD = San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

As shown in Table B, the maximum cancer risk for the residential MEI would be 0.9 in one million, which would not exceed the SJVAPCD cancer risk threshold of 20 in one million. The worker MEI risk would be lower at 0.15 in one million, which would also not exceed the SJVAPCD cancer risk thresholds. The total chronic hazard index would be 0.001 for the residential MEI and 0.012 for the worker MEI, which are below the threshold of 1.0. In addition, the total acute hazard index would be nominal (0.000), which would also not exceed the threshold of 1.0. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not exceed SJVAPCD thresholds and would not expose nearby sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. No significant health risk would occur from project construction emissions.

(d) Less Than Significant With Mitigation. Construction activities may generate temporary and localized odors associated with diesel-powered equipment. These emissions would be short-term and would dissipate rapidly with distance.

Operational activities, including fuel dispensing and truck-related uses, may result in intermittent odors. These emissions would be controlled through applicable SJVAPCD vapor recovery requirements, CARB idling restrictions, and standard operational practices.

Implementation of AIR MM-1 (where applicable to construction activities) and compliance with applicable air district regulations would further reduce potential emissions. Given regulatory controls, dispersion characteristics, and distance to the nearest sensitive receptors (approximately 750 feet), odors are not expected to result in nuisance conditions affecting a substantial number of people. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of a native wildlife nursery site?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Responses:

(a) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation. A Biological Resources Evaluation (BRE) was prepared by LSA to assess potential impacts to biological resources associated with development of the Project. The BRE identified special-status plant and wildlife species with potential to occur on or near the Project site and evaluated potential impacts based on habitat suitability, database records, and site conditions.

Special-Status Plant Species

The BRE identified 17 special-status plant species with potential to occur in the region; however, none were determined to have potential to occur on the Project site due to a lack

of suitable habitat. Therefore, no impacts to special-status plant species would occur.

Special-Status Animal Species

The BRE identified 20 special-status animal species with potential to occur in the region. Four species were determined to have potential to occur within or adjacent to the Project site based on available habitat:

- Swainson’s hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) – State Threatened
- Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) – California Species of Special Concern
- American badger (*Taxidea taxus*) – California Species of Special Concern
- San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*) – Federally Endangered and State Threatened

The Project site consists primarily of disturbed and ruderal habitat, with surrounding agricultural and transportation land uses. While habitat suitability exists for some species, potential impacts are primarily associated with temporary construction disturbance, ground disturbance, and potential occupancy of burrows or nesting habitat.

Without mitigation, Project activities could result in direct impacts such as disturbance or loss of individuals, disturbance of active burrows or nests, and temporary habitat loss. However, with implementation of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures (BIO-MM-1 through BIO-MM-8), impacts to special-status species would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

Table C presents the list of special-status plant and animal species determined to have potential to occur on-site and identifies whether the Project may affect the species and threaten the viability of the species population.

Table C: Special-Status Species with Potential to Occur on Site

Scientific Name Common Name	Status FESA/CESA	Potentially Affected by Project? Yes/No	Viability Threat? Yes/No
Birds			
<i>Athene cunicularia</i> burrowing owl	--/-- SSC	Yes	No
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i> Swainson’s hawk	--/ST	Yes	No
Mammals			
<i>Taxidea taxus</i> American badger	--/-- SSC	Yes	No
<i>Vulpes macrotis mutica</i> San Joaquin kit fox	FE/ST	Yes	No

Source: Compiled by LSA (2024).
 CESA = California Endangered Species Act FE = Federally Endangered
 FESA = Federal Endangered Species Act
 SSC = California Species of Special Concern
 ST = State Threatened

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

The following measures are recommended to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate impacts to special-status animal species.

BIO-MM-1 Pre-activity Surveys for San Joaquin Kit Fox, American Badger, and Burrowing Owl. Within 14 days of the start of Project activities in any specific area, a pre-activity survey should be conducted by a qualified biologist knowledgeable in the identification of these species. The surveys should cover the Project site plus a 500-foot buffer where accessible. Pedestrian surveys of the Project site achieving 100 percent visual coverage should be conducted. If no evidence of these species is detected, no further action is required.

BIO-MM-2 Avoidance of Dens for San Joaquin Kit Fox and American Badger. If dens that could support any of these species are discovered during the pre-activity surveys conducted under BIO-MM-1, the avoidance buffers outlined below should be established. No work would occur within these buffers unless a qualified biologist approves and monitors the activity.

San Joaquin Kit Fox

- Potential Den: 50 feet
- Atypical Den: 50 feet (includes pipes and other man-made structures)
- Known Den: 100 feet
- Natal/Pupping Den: 500 feet

Badger

- Potential Den: None
- Natal/Pupping Den: 100 feet

If dens cannot be avoided, a qualified biologist should assess the dens for evidence of use by each of these species. This assessment should include notation of any evidence of use (e.g., tracks, scat, feathers, pellets, prey remains, etc.) plus a combination of track plates, trail cameras, and/or visual monitoring.

If the qualified biologist confirms there is no evidence of active use of dens by San Joaquin kit fox or American badger, the qualified biologist should oversee the excavation of the den, hand-excavating each den tunnel to its terminus to confirm there are no special-status species present. If at any point during den excavation evidence of special-status species is found, excavation should cease until the special-status species vacates the den on its own.

BIO-MM-3 Avoidance of Burrowing Owl Burrows. If burrows that could support burrowing owls are discovered during the pre-activity surveys conducted under BIO-MM-1, the avoidance buffers outlined below should be

established. No work would occur within these buffers unless a qualified biologist approves and monitors the activity.

- **Burrowing owl (active burrows)**
 - April 1–October 15: 500 feet
 - October 16–March 31: 100 feet

If burrows cannot be avoided, a qualified biologist should prepare an Exclusion Plan for review and approval by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

The Exclusion Plan should include the following minimum requirements:

- Protocols to confirm that the burrow(s) are unoccupied by burrowing owls and other species prior to destruction. Protocols shall include:
 - Properly functioning one-way doors should be installed in all suitable burrows and in place a minimum of 48 hours prior to burrow excavation;
 - Twice-daily monitoring to confirm evidence that owls have been excluded from the burrow; and
 - Scoping of the burrows to confirm absence.
- Procedures for how the burrow(s) will be excavated. Excavation using hand tools with refilling to prevent reoccupation is preferable whenever possible (may include using piping to stabilize the burrow to prevent collapsing until the entire burrow has been excavated and it can be determined that no owls reside inside the burrow).
- Monitoring of the site to evaluate success and, if needed, to implement remedial measures to prevent subsequent owl use to avoid take.
- Measures to make the site inhospitable to burrowing owls and fossorial mammals (e.g., by allowing vegetation to grow tall, heavy disking, or immediate and continuous grading) until activity is complete.
- Reporting requirements.

BIO-MM-4 Avoidance and Minimization Measures for San Joaquin Kit Fox, American Badger, and Burrowing Owl. The following avoidance and minimization measures should be implemented during the construction phases of the Project to reduce the potential for impact from the Project. They are modified from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Standardized Recommendations for Protection of the Endangered San Joaquin Kit Fox Prior to or During Ground Disturbance (United States Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS] 2011) and apply to all three species.

- **Work Timing.** All Project activities should occur during daylight hours.

- **Vehicles.** Project-related vehicles should observe a daytime speed limit of 20 miles per hour (mph) throughout the Project site except on County roads and State and federal highways. Nighttime construction speed limits should be 10 mph. Off-road traffic outside of designated Project areas should be prohibited.
- **Daily Entrapment Inspections.** The following measures apply to all excavations (e.g., trenches, holes, sumps, etc.):
 - A qualified biologist should inspect all open holes, sumps, and trenches at the beginning of each day for trapped covered species.
 - All excavations with sidewalls steeper than a 1:1 (45-degree) slope and that are between 2 and 8 feet deep should be covered when workers or equipment are not actively working in the excavation (including cessation of work overnight) or shall have an escape ramp of earth or a nonslip material with a less than 1:1 (45-degree) slope.
 - The covering of all excavations with a greater than 1:1 (45-degree) slope of any depth with barrier material (e.g., hardware cloth) should be designed such that animals are unable to dig or squeeze under the barrier and become entrapped. The outer 2 feet of excavation cover should conform to solid ground so that gaps do not occur between the cover and the ground and secured with soil staples or similar means to prevent gaps.
 - Excavations that are covered for more than 1 day should have the covers inspected daily by a qualified biologist to confirm that they are intact and functioning in accordance with the requirements above. Intact covers with no evidence of animal intrusion do not need to be lifted to inspect the excavation.
 - If any worker discovers that animals have become trapped, all construction should cease in the immediate vicinity and the qualified biologist should be notified immediately. The animals will be allowed to escape unimpeded if possible before the approved biologist authorizes continuation of covered activities. Capture and relocation should not occur unless authorized by the USFWS and/or CDFW.
- **Material Inspection.** All construction pipes, culverts, or similar structures with a diameter of 4 inches or greater that are stored at a construction site for one or more overnight periods should be thoroughly inspected for San Joaquin kit foxes and burrowing owls before the pipe is subsequently buried, capped, or otherwise used or moved in any way. If a special-status animal species is discovered inside a pipe, that section of pipe should not be moved until the animal has left on its own. The appropriate resource agencies may be consulted if the animal does not leave, and relocation becomes necessary.

- **Housekeeping.**
 - All food-related trash items such as wrappers, cans, bottles, and food scraps should be disposed of in securely closed containers and removed at least once per week from a construction or Project site.
 - No firearms should be allowed on the Project site.
 - No pets (e.g., dogs or cats) shall be permitted on the Project site.
 - Use of rodenticides in Project areas should be prohibited.
- **Lighting.** Permanent or temporary fixed, exterior lighting, including motion-triggered security lighting that casts light on undeveloped special-status species habitat beyond the Project site, should not be installed.
- **Worker Education.** All construction personnel should receive pre-activity training from a qualified biologist about special-status species potentially occurring on or near the construction site. Training should include the following: (1) descriptions of the sensitive Habitat Conservation Plan Natural Communities, Covered Species, and Special Management Species potentially occurring within work areas; (2) all routine and Project-specific measures being implemented to protect these species and natural communities during work and the possible federal and/or State penalties for not complying with these requirements; (3) approved people who are authorized to handle and relocate any species; (4) identification of the boundaries of permitted work areas; and (5) the requirement to stop all work and notify a supervisor or the Project Biologist if a Covered Species or Special Management Species is observed in the Project site.
- **Incident Notification Procedures.** Any Project personnel who are responsible for inadvertently killing or injuring one of these species should immediately report the incident to the qualified biologist, who should contact the CDFW and USFWS within 24 hours. Notification should include the date, time, and location of the incident or of the finding of a dead or injured animal and any other pertinent information.
- **CNDDDB Reporting.** New sightings of special-status species should be reported to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB).

BIO-MM-6 Pre-activity Surveys for Swainson’s Hawk Nests. If Project activities must occur during the nesting season (February 15 to August 31), pre-activity surveys should be conducted for Swainson’s hawk nests within 14 days prior to the start of construction. The surveys should be conducted within the Project site plus a 0.5-mile buffer. The survey should be conducted in accordance with the methodology outlined in existing protocols. Note that Swainson’s hawks may establish a nest at any time from February through June; multiple Swainson’s hawks nest surveys may be necessary in one

season at the direction of a qualified biologist, depending on the timing of Project construction.

If no Swainson's hawk nests are found, no further action is required.

BIO-MM-7 Swainson's Hawk Nest Avoidance. If an active Swainson's hawk nest is discovered at any time within 0.5 mile of active construction, a qualified biologist should complete an assessment of the potential for current construction activities to impact the nest. The assessment should consider the type of construction activities, the location of construction relative to the nest, the visibility of construction activities from the nest location, and other existing disturbances in the area that are not related to construction activities of this Project. Based on this assessment, the biologist should determine if construction activities can proceed and if nest monitoring will be required. At a minimum, construction activities should not occur within 100 feet of an active nest and should require monitoring if construction activities occur within 500 feet of an active nest. These buffers may need to increase depending on the sensitivity of the nest location.

BIO-MM-8 Pre-activity Nesting Bird Surveys. If Project activities must occur during the nesting season (February 15 to August 31), pre-activity nesting bird surveys should be conducted no more than 7 days prior to the start of construction at the construction site, and a 250-foot buffer for songbirds and a 500-foot buffer for raptors (other than Swainson's hawk) must be established. If no active nests are found, no further action is required; however, note that nests may become active at any time throughout the summer, including when construction activities are occurring. If active nests are found during the survey or at any time during Project construction, an avoidance buffer ranging from 50 feet to 350 feet should be required, as determined by a qualified biologist. The avoidance buffer should remain in place until the biologist has determined that the young are no longer reliant on the nest. Work may occur within the avoidance buffer under the approval and guidance of the biologist. The biologist should have the ability to stop construction if nesting adults show sign of distress.

(b) No Impact. A database search identified one sensitive natural community (Northern Hardpan Vernal Pool) within the broader region; however, no sensitive natural communities are present on the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not impact sensitive natural communities.

(c) No Impact. No jurisdictional waters, wetlands, or other aquatic resources are present on the Project site. Therefore, no impacts to jurisdictional waters or wetlands would occur.

(d) No Impact. The Project site is not located within an identified regional wildlife movement corridor. The surrounding landscape consists of agricultural land uses, transportation infrastructure, and rural development. No features on the site function as regionally significant movement corridors or nursery habitat. Therefore, no impacts to wildlife movement corridors would occur.

(e) No Impact. The Project site does not contain protected oak woodlands, sensitive habitat areas, or other biological resources subject to local preservation

policies or ordinances. The Project would comply with applicable Madera County policies related to biological resources and would implement mitigation measures identified in the Biological Resources Evaluation to avoid impacts to special-status species and nesting birds. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, and no impact would occur.

(f) No Impact. The Project site is not located within the boundaries of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP), or other approved habitat conservation plan. The Project would not conflict with the provisions of any adopted conservation plan or associated implementing policies. Therefore, no impact would occur.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES				
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Responses:

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

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) §15064.5 mainly describes historical and archaeological resources that need to be taken into consideration for evaluating impacts from any proposed Project. The primary factor is determining if there are any potential resources on site, and this is typically done through consultation of tribal members with knowledge of the site or its surroundings, as well as review of jurisdictional documentation.

In some cases, tribal members will request any number of site inspections to determine if there are any Native American resources.

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

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

Principle settlements were located on the tops of low mounds, on or near the banks of larger watercourses. Settlements were composed of single-family dwellings, sweathouses, and ceremonial assembly chambers. Dwellings were small and lightly constructed, semi-subterranean and oval. The public structures were large, and earth covered.

With the development of Spanish Ranchos throughout California, cattle husbandry was prevalent, while dairy farms remained crude and sparse.

Most of the archaeological survey work in the County has taken place in the foothills and mountains. This does not mean, however, that no sites exist in the western part of the County, but rather that this area has not been as thoroughly studied. There are slightly more than 2,000 recorded archaeological sites in the county, most of which are located in the foothills and mountains. Recorded prehistoric artifacts include village sites, camp sites, and bedrock milling stations, pictographs, petroglyphs, rock rings, sacred sites, and resource gathering areas. Madera County also contains a significant number of potentially historic sites, including homesteads and ranches, mining and logging sites and associated features (such as small camps, railroad beds, logging chutes, and trash dumps).

Public Resource Code 5021.1(b) defines a historic resource as “any object building, structure, site, area or place which is historically significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California.” These resources are of such import, that it is codified in CEQA (PRC §21000) which prohibits actions that “disrupt, or adversely affect a prehistoric or historic archaeological site or a property of historical or cultural significance to a community or ethnic or social groups; or a paleontological site except as part of a scientific study.”

Archaeological importance is generally, although not exclusively, a measure of the archaeological research value of a site which meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Is associated with an event or person of recognized significance in California or American history or of recognized scientific importance in prehistory.
- Can provide information which is both of demonstrable public interest and useful in addressing scientifically consequential and reasonable archaeological research questions.
- Has a special or particular quality such as oldest, best example, largest, or last surviving example of its kind.

- Is at least 100 years old and possesses substantial stratigraphic integrity (i.e., it is essentially undisturbed and intact).
- Involves important research questions that historic research has shown can be answered only with archaeological methods.

As a result of AB 52, which requires jurisdictions to notify Tribal Governments that request such outreach, the County alerted Tribal Entities that requested initial review packets.

If any of the tribes did respond and requested additional reviews, consultations or studies of the site prior to further processing of the Project, the County would have coordinated contact with the applicant and tribal representatives.

(a - c) No Impact. A Cultural Resources Assessment was prepared for the project by Peak & Associates, Inc. The assessment included a records search and evaluation of the project area. No historical resources, either prehistoric or historic, were identified within the project area. Therefore, the project would result in no impact to cultural resources.

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Responses:

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

Additionally, California has adopted a Renewables Portfolio Standard, which requires electricity retailers in the state to generate 33 percent of the electricity they sell from renewable energy sources (i.e., solar, wind, geothermal, hydroelectric from small generators, etc.) by the end of 2020. In 2018, SB 100 was signed into law, which increases the electricity generation requirement from renewable sources to 60% by 2030 and requires all the state's electricity to come from carbon-free resources by 2045. The main sources of energy consumption would be construction activities and ongoing project operations. Project construction would involve fuel consumption and the use of other nonrenewable resources. Construction equipment used for such improvements typically runs on diesel fuel or gasoline. The same fuels are typically used for vehicles transporting equipment and workers to and from a construction site. However, construction-related fuel consumption would be finite, short-term, and consistent with construction activities of a similar character. This energy use would not be considered wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary. Equipment overtime would be more energy-efficient in order to assist with meeting State emissions reduction goals. Additionally, under California's Renewable Portfolio Standard, a greater share of electricity would be provided from renewable energy sources over time, so less fossil fuel consumption to generate electricity would occur. The project would be required

to comply with the building energy efficiency standards of California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 6, also known as the California Energy Code. Compliance with these standards would reduce energy consumption associated with project operations, although reductions from compliance cannot be readily quantified at this time. Overall, project construction and operations would not consume energy resources in a manner considered wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary; the project would also not conflict with or obstruct any state or local plans for renewable energy efficiency. Project impacts related to energy consumption are considered less than significant.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	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 the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Map issued by the State Geologist for the area, or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geological unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Responses:

The regional geology of the area is influenced by the Great Valley, a topographically dominant northwest-trending valley approximately 50 miles wide and 400 miles long that formed between the Coast Range Mountains to the west and the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the east. The Great Valley itself is divided into northern and southern portions, named the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys respectively. The western portion of the county, which consists of the rich alluvial bottom lands of the San Joaquin Valley, is predominately

agricultural. Most of the County's agricultural activities occur here, due to the level topography, prime cultivable soils, and excellent drainage.

Soils in the western (or valley) portion of Madera County can generally be placed in one of three major groups: recent alluvial fans and flood plains, the basin area, and older alluvial fans and terraces. The recent alluvial fans are gently sloping cone-shaped features located primarily along the Chowchilla, Fresno and San Joaquin Rivers. Flood plain soils along the San Joaquin River resulted primarily from flood events now largely controlled by Friant Dam. The basin area is located in the western portion of the valley and is nearly level. The area contains fine soil carried beyond the alluvial fans and deposited in the slower water of the flatlands. The older alluvial fans and terraces are areas that no longer receive flood deposits and have been subject to erosion and weathering in the time since their deposition.

The topography of the site is mountainous and would be prone to mudslides during intense rain showers.

(a i - iii) Less than Significant Impact. Madera County is divided into two major physiographic and geologic provinces: The Sierra Nevada Range and the Central Valley. The Sierra Nevada physiographic province in the northeastern portion of the county is underlain by metamorphic and igneous rock. It consists mainly of homogenous types of granitic rocks, with several islands of older metamorphic rock. The central and western parts of the county are part of the Central Valley province, underlain by marine and non-marine sedimentary rocks.

The foothill area of the County is essentially a transition zone, containing old alluvial soils that have been dissected by the west-flowing rivers and streams which carry runoff from the Sierra Nevada's.

Seismicity varies greatly between the two major geologic provinces represented in Madera County. The Central Valley is an area of relatively low tectonic activity bordered by mountain ranges on either side. The Sierra Nevada's, partly within Madera County, are the result of movement of tectonic plates which resulted in the creation of the mountain range. The Coast Ranges on the west side of the Central Valley are also a result of these forces, and continued movement of the Pacific and North American tectonic plates continues to elevate the ranges. Most of the seismic hazards in Madera County result from movement along faults associated with the creation of these ranges.

There are no active or potentially active faults of major historic significance within Madera County. The County does not lie within any Alquist Priolo Special Studies Zone for surface faulting or fault creep.

However, there are two significant faults within the larger region that have been and will continue to be, the principal sources of potential seismic activity within Madera County.

San Andreas Fault: The San Andreas Fault lies approximately 45 miles west of the county line. The fault has a long history of activity and is thus a concern in determining activity in the area.

Owens Valley Fault Group: The Owens Valley Fault Group is a complex system containing both active and potentially active faults on the eastern base of the Sierra Nevada Range.

This group is located approximately 80 miles east of the County line in Inyo County. This system has historically been the source of seismic activity within the County.

The *Draft Environmental Impact Report* for the state prison Project near Fairmead identified faults within a 100-mile radius of the Project site. Since Fairmead is centrally located along Highway 99 within the county, this information provides a good indicator of the potential seismic activity which might be felt within the County. Fifteen active faults (including the San Andreas and Owens Valley Fault Group) were identified in the *Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation*. Four of the faults lie along the eastern portion of the Sierra Nevada Range, approximately 75 miles to the northeast of Fairmead. These are the Parker Lake, Hartley Springs, Hilton Creek and Mono Valley Faults. The remaining faults are in the western portion of the San Joaquin Valley, as well as within the Coast Range, approximately 47 miles west of Fairmead. Most of the remaining 11 faults are associated with the San Andreas, Calaveras, Hayward and Rinconada Fault Systems which collectively form the tectonic plate boundary of the Central Valley.

In addition, the Clovis Fault, although not having any historic evidence of activity, is considered to be active within quaternary time (within the past two million years), is considered potentially active. This fault line lies approximately six miles south of the Madera County line in Fresno County. Activity along this fault could potentially generate more seismic activity in Madera County than the San Andreas or Owens Valley fault systems. However, because of the lack of historic activity along the Clovis Fault, there is inadequate evidence for assessing maximum earthquake impacts.

Seismic ground shaking, however, is the primary seismic hazard in Madera County because of the County's seismic setting and its record of historical activity (General Plan Background Element and Program EIR). The Project represents no specific threat or hazard from seismic ground shaking, and all new construction will comply with current local and state building codes. Other geologic hazards, such as landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, and liquefaction have not been known to occur within Madera County.

According to the Madera County General Plan Background Report, ground shaking is the primary seismic hazard in Madera County. The valley portion of Madera County is located on alluvium deposits, which tend to experience greater ground shaking intensities than areas located on hard rock. Therefore, structures located in the valley will tend to suffer greater damage from ground shaking than those located in the foothill and mountain areas.

Liquefaction is a process whereby soil is temporarily transformed to a fluid form during intense and prolonged ground shaking. According to the Madera County General Plan Background Report, although there are areas of Madera County where the water table is at 30 feet or less below the surface, soil types in the area are not conducive to liquefaction because they are either too coarse in texture or too high in clay content; the soil types mitigate against the potential for liquefaction.

While the County has not been affected directly by any known recent earthquakes, there still stands the possibility of being affected by those elsewhere. The 2019 Ridgecrest earthquake (Ridgecrest, CA near China Lake Military Installation) is an example of this. While the quake was centered in proximity to Ridgecrest, Madera County and surrounding communities felt the vibrations.

(a – iv) No Impact. The area is topographically flat, so landslides are not likely.

(b) Less Than Significant Impact. There are currently eight facilities on the Project site in support of agricultural activities, two storage lagoons located to the south, and ground-mounted solar panels located on the north side of the Project site along with existing freestall barns. As previously stated, The Project will consist of installing a Digester which will be covered, a Dual Slope Screen Separator, and biogas blower skid. The Project also consists of approximately 7,720 linear feet of the pipeline, which will transport produced biogas from the digester site to an existing injection located at the southwest corner of the parcel (026-110-008) utilizing primarily private dirt roads on site and a portion of county right-of-way (Avenue 26). Potential for erosion exists due to rain events; however due to the topographically flat nature of the Project site, erosion will be minimal. And therefore, the Project would have less than a significant impact.

(c - f) No impact. There are no known impacts that will occur as a direct or indirect result of this Project.

The Project site and surrounding areas do not contain substantial grade changes. Risk of landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, and collapse are minimal. The Project does not propose significant alteration of the topography of the site, and it does not involve development of structures or facilities that could be affected by expansive soils or expose people to substantial risks to life or property.

No septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed as a part of this Project.

The proposed Project is not in an area known for paleontological resources. And therefore, the Project would have not impact.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

Responses:

(a) Less Than Significant Impact. Construction activities associated with the construction of residential and nonresidential development capacity would cause short-term GHG emissions. Construction activities with the proposed project would produce combustion emissions from various sources. During construction, GHGs would be emitted through the operation of construction equipment and from worker and builder supply vendor vehicles, each of which typically use fossil-based fuels to operate. The combustion of fossil-based fuels creates GHGs such as CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O. Furthermore, CH₄ is emitted during the fueling of heavy equipment. Exhaust emissions from on-site construction activities would vary daily as construction activity levels change.

The SJVAPCD does not have an adopted threshold of significance for construction-related GHG emissions. However, it is encouraged to quantify and disclose GHG emissions that would occur during construction. Using CalEEMod, it is estimated that the annual emissions associated with construction of the proposed project would be approximately 218.1 metric tons of CO₂e per year. Construction GHG emissions were amortized over the life of the project (assumed to be 30 years) and added to the operational emissions. When annualized over the life of the project, amortized construction emissions would be approximately 7.3 MT CO₂e per year.

Long-term GHG emissions are typically generated from mobile sources (e.g., vehicle and truck trips), area sources (e.g., maintenance activities and landscaping), indirect emissions from sources associated with energy consumption, waste sources (land filling and waste disposal), and water sources (water supply and conveyance, treatment, and distribution). Mobile-source GHG emissions would include project-generated vehicle trips to and from the project. Area-source emissions would be associated with activities such as landscaping and maintenance on the project site. Energy source emissions would be generated at off-site utility providers as a result of increased electricity demand generated by the project. Waste source emissions generated by the proposed project include energy generated by land filling and other methods of disposal related to transporting and managing project generated waste. In addition, water source emissions associated with the proposed project are generated by water supply and conveyance, water treatment, water distribution, and wastewater treatment.

Following guidance from the SJVAPCD, GHG emissions for operation of the project were calculated using CalEEMod. Based on the analysis results, summarized in Table D, the proposed project would result in emissions of approximately 4,400.3 MT CO₂e per year.

Table D: Project Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Emission Type	Operational Emissions (Metric Tons per Year)			
	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	CO ₂ e

Mobile Sources	4,200.8	0.1	0.2	4,274.2
Area Sources	0.2	<0.1	<0.1	0.2
Energy Sources	97.0	<0.1	<0.1	97.7
Water Sources	1.0	<0.1	<0.1	2.5
Waste Sources	5.3	0.5	0.0	18.4
Amortized Construction Emissions				7.3
Total Operational Emissions				4,400.3

Source: Compiled by LSA (June 2025).

CH₄ = methane CO₂ = carbon dioxide

CO₂e = carbon dioxide equivalent N₂O = nitrous oxide

the SJVAPCD has not established a numeric threshold for GHG emissions. The significance of GHG emissions may be evaluated based on locally adopted quantitative thresholds or consistency with a regional GHG reduction plan (e.g., a Climate Action Plan). Therefore, consistent with the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15183.5, if a project is consistent with an adopted qualified Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy, it can be presumed that the project would not have significant GHG emission impacts. However, neither the County nor the SJVAPCD has developed or adopted numeric GHG significance thresholds.

In the absence of any City or SJVAPCD specific guidelines or thresholds, this analysis evaluates the proposed project for consistency with the Bay Area Air District Justification Report,⁴⁵ which identifies project design elements as the applicable thresholds of significance. If a project is designed and built to incorporate design elements related to natural gas, energy, VMT, and EVs, then it would contribute its portion of what is necessary to achieve California’s long-term climate goals—its “fair share”—and an agency reviewing the project under CEQA can conclude that the project would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change.

Per the significance thresholds described above, a less than significant GHG impact would occur if the project were consistent with the identified design standards.

Natural Gas Usage. According to the Justification Report, a less than significant GHG impact would occur if the project does not include natural gas appliances or natural gas plumbing. It is not yet known whether the proposed project would include natural gas. To be conservative, this analysis assumes that natural gas may be required. However, it is anticipated that natural gas would only be used in a limited fashion due to the nature of the proposed project as a truck stop. Further, the proposed project will be constructed with the latest Title 24 building design and will meet all required energy efficiency measures. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with this design element.

Energy Usage. Under this design criterion, the project must not result in any wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary energy usage as determined by the analysis required under CEQA Section 21100(b)(3) and Section 15126.2(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines. Energy use consumed by the proposed project would be associated with electricity consumption associated with the project. Energy consumption was estimated for the project using default energy intensities by land use type in the CalEEMod output, which is included in Attachment B.

The estimated potential increase in electricity demand associated with the operation of the proposed project is 601,712 kilowatt-hours per year. Total electricity consumption in Madera County in 2022 was 1,808,229,048 kilowatt-hours. Therefore, operation of the proposed project would increase the annual electricity consumption in Madera County by approximately 0.03 percent.

As mentioned above, it is not yet known whether the proposed project would include natural gas. To be conservative, this analysis assumes that natural gas may be required. As such, the estimated potential increase in natural gas demand associated with the operation of the proposed project based on the CalEEMod assessment, is 7,791 therms per year. Total natural gas consumption in Madera County in 2022 was 48,541,390 therms. Therefore, operation of the proposed project would increase the annual natural gas consumption in Madera County by approximately 0.02 percent.

In addition, the proposed project would be constructed to current Title 24 standards, which would require energy-saving building features. As such, based on this analysis, as required under CEQA Section 21100(b)(3) and Section 15126.2(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of fuel or energy and would incorporate renewable energy and energy efficiency measures into the building design, equipment use, and transportation. As such, the proposed project would be consistent with this design element.

Vehicle Miles Traveled. As discussed above, development that does not result in a net increase in existing VMT would be considered to have a less than significant GHG emission impact from transportation sources or should meet a locally adopted SB 743 VMT target. The OPR identifies retail developments with area of less than 50,000 sf may be considered as local serving. The proposed project includes the development of truck travel center with fueling stations, a fast-food restaurant, convenience store, and associated site improvements. Since the project is lower than the 50,000 sf threshold, it can be considered as local serving retail. As such, a VMT analysis was not required for the proposed project; therefore, as a local serving project, it is not expected that the proposed project would have a significant VMT impact. Further, the proposed project would provide appropriate amenities that are local serving. The proposed project would also be designed to support alternative modes of transportation by including an EV charging stations. As such, the proposed project is not expected to significantly increase VMT in the project area. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with this project design element.

Electric Vehicle Requirements. The final project design element that the proposed project should include to ensure that it is achieving its “fair share” of GHG emission reductions is compliance with EV requirements in the most recently adopted version of the CALGreen Code Tier 2 measures. The proposed project would include 27 EV charging stations, consistent with CALGreen Tier 2 standards. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with this design element.

The proposed project would be generally consistent with the project design elements. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the GHG emission thresholds identified for this project. As such, the proposed project would not result in the generation of GHG emissions that would have a significant impact on the environment.

(b) Less Than Significant Impact. The following discussion evaluates the proposed project according to the goals of the 2022 Scoping Plan, EO B-30-15, AB 1279, SB 32, and AB 197. Plan, EO B-30-15, AB 1279, SB 32, and AB 197. EO B-30-15 added the immediate target of reducing GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. CARB released a second update to the Scoping Plan, the 2017 Scoping Plan, to reflect the 2030 target set by EO B-30-15 and codified by SB 32. SB 32 affirms the importance of addressing climate change by codifying into statute the GHG emission reductions target of at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 contained in EO B-30-15. SB 32 builds on AB 32 and keeps us on the path toward achieving the State’s

2050 objective of reducing emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels. The companion bill to SB 32, AB 197, provides additional direction to the CARB related to the adoption of strategies to reduce GHG emissions. Additional direction in AB 197 intended to provide easier public access to air emissions data that are collected by CARB was posted in December 2016. AB 1279 establishes State policy to achieve net zero GHG emissions no later than 2045 and for Statewide anthropogenic GHG emissions to be reduced to at least 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045.

In addition, the 2022 Scoping Plan assesses progress toward the statutory 2030 target, while laying out a path to achieving carbon neutrality no later than 2045. The 2022 Scoping Plan focuses on outcomes needed to achieve carbon neutrality by assessing paths for clean technology, energy deployment, natural and working lands, and others, and is designed to meet the State's long-term climate objectives and support a range of economic, environmental, energy security, environmental justice, and public health priorities.

Energy efficient measures are intended to maximize energy efficiency building and appliance standards, pursue additional efficiency efforts including new technologies and new policy and implementation mechanisms, and pursue comparable investment in energy efficiency from all retail providers of electricity in California. In addition, these measures are designed to expand the use of green building practices to reduce the carbon footprint of California's new and existing inventory of buildings. As identified above, the proposed project would be required to comply with the latest Title 24 and CALGreen Code standards regarding energy conservation requirements. The elimination of natural gas in new development would help projects implement their "fair share" of achieving long-term 2045 carbon neutrality consistent with State goals. As such, if a project does not utilize natural gas, a lead agency can conclude that it would be consistent with achieving the 2045 neutrality goal and will not have a cumulative considerable impact on climate change.⁴⁶ It is not yet known whether the proposed project would include natural gas. To be conservative, this analysis assumes that natural gas may be required. However, natural gas may be used in a limited fashion. Further, the proposed project will be constructed with the latest Title 24 building design and will meet all required energy efficiency measures. Therefore, the proposed project would comply with applicable energy measures.

Water conservation and efficiency measures are intended to continue efficiency programs and use cleaner energy sources to move and treat water. Increasing the efficiency of water transport and reducing water use would reduce GHG emissions. As noted above, buildout associated with the proposed project would be required to comply with the latest Title 24 and CALGreen Code standards, which include a variety of different measures, including reduction of wastewater and water use. In addition, the proposed project would use drip irrigation and install low-flow water fixtures. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with any of the water conservation and efficiency measures.

The goal of transportation and motor vehicle measures is to develop regional GHG emissions reduction targets for passenger vehicles. Specific regional emission targets for transportation emissions would not directly apply to the proposed project. The proposed project is defined as a local serving project. Therefore, it is not expected that the proposed project would have a significant VMT impact. The proposed project would also be designed to support alternative modes of transportation by including an EV charging stations. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the identified transportation and motor vehicle measures.

The MCTC 2022 RTP/SCS47 reflects transportation planning for Madera County through 2046. The vision, goals, and policies in the 2022 RTP are intended to serve as the foundation for both short and long-term planning and guide implementation activities. The core vision in the 2022

RTP is to create a region of diverse, safe, resilient, and accessible transportation options that improve the quality of life for all residents by fostering sustainability, equity, a vibrant economy, clean air, and healthy communities. The 2022 RTP contains transportation projects to help more efficiently distribute population, housing, and employment growth, as well as forecast development that is generally consistent with regional-level general plan data. The actions in the 2022 RTP address all transportation modes (e.g., highways, local streets and roads, mass transportation, rail, bicycle, and aviation facilities and services) and consists of short and long-term activities that address regional transportation needs. While the actions are organized by the five key policy areas, many of them support multiple goals and policies. Some actions are intended to support the SCS and reduce GHG emissions directly, while others are focused on the RTP's broader goals. The 2022 RTP does not require that local General Plans, Specific Plans, or zoning be consistent with the 2022 RTP, but provides incentives for consistency for governments and developers.

The proposed project would not interfere with the MCTC ability to achieve the region's GHG reductions. Furthermore, the proposed project is not regionally significant per State CEQA Guidelines Section 15206, and it would not conflict with the 2022 RTP targets because those targets were established and are applicable on a regional level. The proposed project would include 168 single family housing units and associated site improvements. The proposed project has the potential to employ 15 to 20 employees. The RTP is based on a projected population in the Madera region in 2046 of 1.35 million people and associated employment. Therefore, the proposed project would not significantly increase employment in the area and it would be well within the forecasted growth for the region. As such, the proposed project land uses would be consistent with the growth assumptions used in the 2022 RTP. Therefore, it is anticipated that implementation of the proposed project would not interfere with MCTC's ability to implement the regional strategies outlined in the 2022 RTP.

The proposed project would comply with existing State regulations adopted to achieve the overall GHG emissions reduction goals identified in the 2022 RTP and would be consistent with applicable State plans and programs designed to reduce GHG emissions. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Responses:

The western part of Madera County has historically experienced several concerns related to hazardous materials. The dominant land use in the area consists of existing dairies and irrigated agricultural crop production. Additional land uses include agricultural crop processing facilities, grain storage facilities and irrigation water supply canals and reservoirs.

A material is considered hazardous if it appears on a list of hazardous materials prepared by a federal, state, or local agency, or if it has characteristics defined as hazardous by such an agency. The California Code of Regulations (CCR) defines a hazardous material as a substance that, because of physical or chemical properties, quantity, concentration, or other characteristics, may either (1) cause an increase in mortality or an increase in serious, irreversible, or incapacitating illness; or (2) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or environment when improperly treated, stored, transported or disposed of, or otherwise managed (CCR Title 22 Division 4.5 Chapter 10 Article 2 §66260.10).

Hazardous wastes are defined in the same manner. Hazardous wastes are hazardous materials that no longer have practical use, such as substances that have been discarded, discharged, spilled, contaminated or are being stored prior to proper disposal. Hazardous materials and hazardous wastes are classified according to four properties: toxicity, ignitability, corrosively, and reactivity.

The use and management of chemicals, including hazardous materials, within the agricultural areas of the County are dominated by the application of fertilizer and pesticides for crop production. Hazardous materials management in agricultural areas also includes storage and use of hydrocarbon fuel. Diesel fuel is used to power mobile farm equipment (trucks, tractors, combines) and stationary equipment, including irrigation pumps and groundwater well pumps. Gasoline is stored at some facilities. Other hazardous materials used at dairies can include chlorine and other disinfectants, oils and lubricants, and antifreeze.

The greatest wildland fire hazards exist in areas with quickly ignitable, dense understory vegetation, such as grasses, adjacent to slower and hotter burning fuels such as trees. These conditions exist in varying degrees over approximately two-thirds of Madera County, to the north and east of the Madera Canal.

The storage, use, generation, transport and disposal of hazardous materials and waste are highly regulated under federal and state laws and regulations. Laws and regulations established by the USEPA are enforced by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CAL-EPA). CAL-EPA also oversees the unified hazardous waste and hazardous materials management regulatory program. California Health and Safety Code Section 25501 defines a hazardous material as “any material that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment.” Section 25092.6 of the CEQA Statutes requires the Lead Agency to consult the lists compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 to determine whether a proposed Project and any alternatives are identified as contaminated sites.

(a) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project consists of a proposed truck stop complex that would involve the routine use, storage, and transport of potentially hazardous materials, including fuels, oils, lubricants, cleaning agents, and other vehicle-related fluids. These materials would be handled in accordance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations governing hazardous materials management, storage, transport, and disposal. Compliance with applicable requirements administered by agencies such as the California

Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), Madera County Environmental Health Division, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board would minimize the potential for hazards to the public or environment. Therefore, the Project would not create a significant hazard through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, and impacts would be less than significant.

(b) Less Than Significant Impact. Construction and operation of the Project could involve reasonably foreseeable accidental releases of fuels, oils, or other hazardous materials. However, the Project would be required to comply with applicable hazardous materials handling, spill prevention, fire protection, and emergency response regulations. Fuel storage and dispensing facilities would be designed and operated in accordance with applicable building, fire, and environmental regulations, including secondary containment and spill control measures. In addition, implementation of best management practices during construction and operation would reduce the potential for accidental releases to surface water, groundwater, or surrounding properties. Compliance with these requirements would minimize the potential for significant hazards associated with accidental releases of hazardous materials. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

(c) Less Than Significant Impact. The nearest existing school is located approximately 0.81 miles from the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. Impacts would be less than significant.

(d) Less Than Significant Impact. Based on available information, the Project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, development of the Project would not expose the public or environment to hazards associated with contamination from a listed hazardous materials site. Impacts would be less than significant.

(e) No Impact. No airports or airstrips exist in the vicinity of this Project. The closest airport to the Project is the Chowchilla Municipal Airport which is approximately 4.30 miles northwest of the Project. As a result, the Project would have no impact.

(f) No Impact. the Project will not impair or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan and therefore will have no impact.

(g) No Impact. According to the Madera County General Plan, a Wildland is a nonurban, natural area that contains uncultivated land, timber, range, watershed, brush, or grasslands. The Project is located in a heavy agricultural area where the ground has been disturbed and cultivated. The Project will not expose people or structures, directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildfires and therefore have no impact.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

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

Responses:

(a) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water or groundwater quality. Construction activities associated with the Project could result in temporary erosion, sedimentation, or pollutant runoff; however, the Project would be required to comply with all applicable federal, State, and local regulations related to water quality protection, including preparation and implementation of a Stormwater

Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and adherence to National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements, as applicable.

Operational activities associated with the proposed truck stop complex would include the handling of fuels, vehicle fluids, and other potentially hazardous materials. The Project would be required to incorporate standard design features and comply with applicable regulatory requirements related to hazardous materials storage, spill prevention, stormwater treatment, and wastewater disposal to minimize the potential for contamination of surface water or groundwater resources. In addition, wastewater generated by the Project would be managed in accordance with applicable County Environmental Health and Regional Water Quality Control Board requirements.

With compliance with applicable regulations and implementation of required best management practices, the Project would not substantially degrade water quality or violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. Therefore, impacts related to water quality would be less than significant.

(b) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project's water supply is proposed to be provided by a new groundwater extraction well located on the project site. Daily water demand is anticipated to be approximately 15,000 gallons per day, equivalent to an average pumping rate of approximately 10 gallons per minute (gpm). Annual water demand for the proposed truck stop complex is estimated to range from approximately 10 to 16 acre-feet per year (AFY).

Based on the estimated demand, the Project would represent approximately a 0.003 percent increase in total basin demand compared to the 1989–2014 average groundwater demand within the Madera Subbasin. Average recharge to the Madera Subbasin from surface water infiltration is estimated to be approximately 370,000 AFY between 1989 and 2015 (Davids Engineering, Inc. et al., 2023). The Project's estimated annual groundwater demand would therefore represent approximately 0.004 percent of the basin's average annual recharge.

Assuming all other basin inputs and outputs remain constant, the additional groundwater demand associated with the Project would represent approximately a 0.01 percent increase in the annual overdraft condition. In addition, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires that groundwater demand not exceed the Madera Subbasin's long-term sustainable yield by 2040, which is estimated to be approximately 310,000 AFY (Davids Engineering, Inc. et al., 2023). The Project's estimated annual water demand would represent approximately 0.005 percent of the subbasin's long-term sustainable yield.

Given the relatively minor increase in groundwater demand compared to overall basin demand, recharge, and sustainable yield, the Project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with implementation of the applicable Groundwater Sustainability Plan. Therefore, impacts related to groundwater supply would be less than significant.

(c i - iv) Less Than Significant Impact. Extensive grading or other soil disturbing activities often leave the soils of construction zones barren of vegetation and, therefore, vulnerable to erosion. However as previously stated the project is a general plan amendment and a rezone, and when construction occurs the applicant

will be required to maintain the required permits from the Madera County Public Works Department.

HYDRO MM-1: Prior to construction, the Applicant shall submit a copy of: (1) the approved Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and (2) the Notice of Intent (NOI) to comply with the General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. The requirements of the SWPPP and NPDES shall be incorporated into design specifications and construction contracts. The Applicant or person responsible shall meet County of Madera construction site requirements regarding the control of surface water, and runoff. Runoff created at the project site shall meet the following minimum requirements:

- Sediments generated on the project site shall be retained using adequate treatment control or structural Best Management Practices (BMPs)
- Construction-related materials, wastes, spill or residues shall be retained at the project site to avoid discharge to streets, drainage facilities, receiving waters or adjacent properties by wind or run-off.

HYDRO MM-2: All stabilized construction at on and off-site access locations shall be constructed per the latest edition of the California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA) details to effectively prevent tracking of sediment onto paved areas. If applicable, all BMPs are to be inspected weekly and before and after each rain event and repaired or replaced as necessary. The contractor shall abide all the laws, ordinances, and regulations associated with the NPDES and the Clean Water Act.

(d) No Impact. A seiche is an occasional and sudden oscillation of the water of a lake, bay or estuary producing fluctuations in the water level and caused by wind, earthquakes or changes in barometric pressure. A tsunami (from the Japanese language, roughly translated as “harbor wave”) is an unusually large sea wave produced by seaquake or undersea volcanic eruption. According to the California Division of Mines and Geology, there are no active or potentially active faults of major historic significance within Madera County. Additionally, there are no bodies of water (lakes, etc.) within proximity of the site. Madera County is geographically located in the center of the state, therefore not affected by tsunamis.

(e) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would require installation of a new groundwater extraction well to service the amenities at the property. The proposed use for the new well qualifies as an intensive use under the MID Intensive Use Policy a water well installation and a new well will require a permit from the MID GSA in addition to a well installation permit from Madera County Environmental Health Department. The predicted groundwater demand associated with the proposed Truck Stop is estimated to increase the groundwater demand in the Madera Subbasin by around 0.003% and storage in the Madera Subbasin is sufficient to meet the demands of the Project. The additional groundwater use is not expected to significantly impact other wells in the vicinity or the long-term volume of groundwater in storage.

General Information

Groundwater quality contaminants of concern in the Valley Floor include high salinity (total dissolved solids), nitrate, uranium, arsenic, methane gas, iron, manganese, slime

production, and dibromo chloropropane with the maximum contaminant level exceeded in some areas. Despite the water quality issues noted above, most of the groundwater in the Valley Floor is of suitable quality for irrigation. Groundwater of suitable quality for public consumption has been demonstrated to be present in most of the area at specific depths.

Groundwater quality contaminants of concern in the Foothills and Mountains include manganese, iron, high salinity, hydrogen sulfide gas, uranium, nitrate, arsenic, and methylbutylethylene (MTBE) with the maximum concentration level being exceeded in some areas. Despite these problems, there are substantial amounts of good-quality groundwater in each of the areas evaluated in the Foothills and Mountains. Iron and manganese are commonly removed by treatment. Uranium treatment is being conducted on a well by the Bass Lake Water Company.

A seiche is an occasional and sudden oscillation of the water of a lake, bay or estuary producing fluctuations in the water level and caused by wind, earthquakes or changes in barometric pressure. A tsunami (from the Japanese language, roughly translated as “harbor wave”) is an unusually large sea wave produced by seaquake or undersea volcanic eruption. According to the California Division of Mines and Geology, there are no active or potentially active faults of major historic significance within Madera County. As this property is not located near any bodies of water, no impacts are identified.

The flood hazard areas of the County of Madera are subject to periodic inundation which results in loss of life and property, health and safety hazards, disruption of commerce and governmental services, extraordinary public expenditures for flood protection and relief, and impairment of the tax base, all of which adversely affect the public health, safety and general welfare. These flood losses are caused by uses that are inadequately elevated, floodproofed, or protected from flood damage. The cumulative effect of obstruction in areas of special flood hazards which increase flood height and velocities also contribute to flood loss.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Responses:

(a - b) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would not physically divide an

established community, as the project site is currently vacant and surrounded by existing development and rights-of-way. Additionally, the Project would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The Project consists of a General Plan Amendment and rezone to establish consistency with the proposed truck stop complex use. The proposed land use changes would be consistent with County General Plan Goal 1.D, which seeks to designate adequate commercial land and promote development of commercial uses to meet the present and future needs of Madera County residents and visitors while maintaining economic vitality. Therefore, impacts related to land use and planning would be less than significant.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Responses:

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

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinances, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Responses:

The Noise Element of the Madera County General Plan (Policy 7.A.5) provides that noise which will be created by new non-transportation noise sources shall be mitigated so as not to exceed the Noise Element noise level standards on lands designated for noise-sensitive uses. However, this policy does not apply to noise levels associated with agricultural operations. All the surrounding properties, while include some residential units, are designated and zoned for agricultural uses. This impact is therefore considered less than significant.

Construction noise typically occurs intermittently and varies depending upon the nature or phase of construction (e.g. demolition/land clearing, grading and excavation, erection). The United States Environmental Protection Agency has found that the average noise levels associated with construction activities typically range from approximately 76 dBA to 84 dBA Leq, with intermittent individual equipment noise levels ranging from approximately 75 dBA to more than 88 dBA for brief periods.

Short Term Noise

Noise from localized point sources (such as construction sites) typically decreases by approximately 6 dBA with each doubling of distance from source to receptor. Given the noise attenuation rate and assuming no noise shielding from either natural or human-made features (e.g., trees, buildings, and fences), outdoor receptors within approximately 400 feet of construction site could experience maximum noise levels of greater than 70 dBA when onsite construction-related noise levels exceed approximately 89 dBA at the Project site boundary. Construction activities that occur during the more noise-sensitive eighteen hours could result in increased levels of annoyance and sleep disruption for occupants of nearby existing residential dwellings. As a result, noise-generating construction activities would be considered to have a potentially significant short-term impact. However, with implementation of mitigation measures, this impact would be considered less than significant.

Long Term Noise

Mechanical building equipment (e.g., heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, and boilers), associated with the proposed structures, could generate noise levels of approximately 90 dBA at 3 feet from the source. However, such mechanical equipment systems are typically shielded from direct public exposure and usually housed on rooftops, within equipment rooms, or within exterior enclosures.

Landscape maintenance equipment, such as leaf blowers and gasoline powered mowers, could result in intermittent noise levels that range from approximately 80 to 100 dBA at 3 feet, respectively. Based on an equipment noise level of 100 dBA, landscape maintenance equipment (assuming a noise attenuation rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance from the source) may result in exterior noise levels of approximately 75 dBA at 50 feet.

MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE NOISE EXPOSURE FOR
NON-TRANSPORTATION NOISE SOURCES*

		Residential	Commercial	Industrial (L)	Industrial (H)	Agricultural
Residential	AM	50	60	55	60	60
	PM	45	55	50	55	55
Commercial	AM	60	60	60	65	60
	PM	55	55	55	60	55
Industrial (L)	AM	55	60	60	65	60
	PM	50	55	55	60	55
Industrial (H)	AM	60	65	65	70	65
	PM	55	60	60	65	60
Agricultural	AM	60	60	60	65	60
	PM	55	55	55	60	55

*As determined at the property line of the receiving land use. When determining the effectiveness of noise mitigation measures, the standards may be applied on the receptor side of noise barriers at the property line.

AM = 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM

PM = 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM

L = Light

H = Heavy

Note: Each of the noise levels specified above shall be lowered by 5 dB for pure tone noises, noises consisting primarily of speech or music, or for recurring impulsive noises. These noise level standards do not apply to residential units established in conjunction with industrial or commercial uses (e.g., caretaker dwellings).

Vibration perception threshold: The minimum ground or structure-borne vibrational motion necessary to cause a normal person to be aware of the vibration by such direct means as, but not limited to, sensation by touch or visual observation of moving objects. The perception threshold shall be presumed to be a motion velocity of one-tenth (0.1) inches per second over the range of one to one hundred Hz.

Reaction of People and Damage to Buildings from Continuous Vibration Levels		
Velocity Level, PPV (in/sec)	Human Reaction	Effect on Buildings
0.006 to 0.019	Threshold of perception; possibility of intrusion	Damage of any type unlikely
0.08	Vibration readily perceptible	Recommended upper level of vibration to which ruins and ancient monuments should be subjected
0.10	Continuous vibration begins to annoy people	Virtually no risk of architectural damage to normal buildings
0.20	Vibration annoying to people in buildings	Risk of architectural damage to normal dwellings such as plastered walls or ceilings
0.4 to 0.6	Vibration considered unpleasant by people subjected to continuous vibrations	Architectural damage and possibly minor structural damage

Source: Whiffen and Leonard 1971

(a - b) Less than Significant Impact. The Project is located in an area of the County considered most likely to accommodate future growth in agricultural facilities. The noise sources associated with these types of facilities are mainly agricultural equipment, and vehicles operating on local roadways. Noise levels away from these noise sources can be quite low depending on the amount of nearby human activity.

Operation of the proposed Project would generate levels of noise from normal operations.

It is not anticipated that the Project would generate excessive groundborne vibration or noise level. Operations are anticipated to be similar to those of existing agricultural operations. The Project is expected to minimally contribute to groundborne vibration and noise levels in the area.

c) No Impact. As previously stated, there are no airports or airstrips in the vicinity of this Project. The closest airport to the Project is the Chowchilla Municipal Airport which is approximately four miles northwest of the Project. As a result, the Project would have no impact.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

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

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Responses:

(a - b) No Impact. The Project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, nor would it induce substantial unplanned population growth either directly or indirectly. The project site is currently vacant and does not contain any existing residential uses or housing units. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Additionally, the Project is limited in scope and surrounded by existing rights-of-way and developed areas, and would not extend infrastructure or otherwise facilitate growth beyond that anticipated under the proposed land use designations and zoning. Impacts related to population and housing would be less than significant.

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

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

i) Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
v) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Responses:

(a – I through V) No Impact. The Project will not result in new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services. And therefore, the Project will have no impact.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XVI. RECREATION

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

Responses:

(a – b) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated. The Project consists of a General Plan Amendment and rezone to allow development of a proposed truck stop complex on a currently vacant site. The Project is not residential in nature and would not generate a substantial increase in permanent population that would create additional demand for public recreational facilities. Additionally, the proposed on-site dog park is an accessory amenity to the truck stop complex and would not result in adverse physical effects on the environment. Therefore, impacts related to recreation would be less than significant.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g. sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Responses:

State Route 99 (SR 99) is a four-lane freeway that links the County with the entire State and is the eastern boundary of where most of the dairies are located. SR 99 is one of the most important corridors to the economic livelihood of the San Joaquin Valley because it serves as a main shipping line for agricultural products and other commercial goods. SR 99 is also the primary link to Interstate 5, connecting the Valley with Los Angeles and Sacramento metropolitan areas.

State Route 145 (SR 145) is a two- and four-lane highway extending north/south from the Fresno County line to the City of Madera, then east/west to its intersection with SR41, SR 145 provides secondary access to Yosemite National Park via SR 41 and provides an important link to both SR 99 and Interstate 5. It runs north/south through an eastern portion of the County where the majority of dairies exist and is also a key shipping route for agricultural products.

State Route 152 (SR 152) is a four-lane divided expressway extending east and west from the Merced County Line to SR 99. SR 152 is a primary access route from the central San Joaquin Valley to Monterey and Santa Clara Counties. This state route is considered an important agricultural, commercial and recreational access route and runs east/west through the northern portion of where the dairies exist in the county.

State Route 233 (SR 233) is a two- and four-lane highway extending four miles northeasterly from its intersection with SR 152 to the interchange with SR 99. This route serves primarily to provide for northbound traffic movement from SR 152 and SR 99 as well as local access to Chowchilla.

In addition to the regional state routes, a variety of County maintained roadways pass through the area. These include Avenue 7, Avenue 14, Avenue 18 ½, Road 16 and Road 9.

As with most rural areas, Eastern Madera County is served by limited alternative transportation modes. Currently, only limited public transportation facilities or routes exist within the area. Volunteer systems such as the driver escort service, as well as the senior bus system, operate for special purpose activities and are administered by the Madera County Action Committee. The rural densities which are prevalent throughout the region have typically precluded successful public transit systems, which require more concentrated populations in order to gain sufficient ridership. Oakhurst is therefore dependent on private automobile and truck access.

Access will be via Road 602, south of its intersection with Avenue 24. The closest traffic counts done by the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) in 2016 centers around Avenue 26 at its intersection with Road 26, which is 4.17 miles northwest of the Project site. Per the MCTC, there were 343 east bound and 326 west bound trips on Avenue 26, just east of Road 26. There will be a minor increase of traffic in the area for the duration of construction of the site.

(a - d) No Impact. The Project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities. The Project consists of a General Plan Amendment and rezone to allow development of a proposed truck stop complex. The Project would utilize existing roadway infrastructure and would not include construction of new public roads that would alter the existing circulation network. Additionally, the Project would not interfere with emergency access or emergency response plans. Proposed site access is available through two (2) existing access points serving the property. Therefore, impacts related to transportation and circulation would have no impact.

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

Would the project:

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

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| i. | Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| ii. | A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Responses:

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

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

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

Principle settlements were located on the tops of low mounds, on or near the banks of larger watercourses. Settlements were composed of single-family dwellings, sweathouses, and ceremonial assembly chambers. Dwellings were small and lightly constructed, semi-subterranean and oval. The public structures were large, and earth covered.

With the development of Spanish Ranchos throughout California, cattle husbandry was prevalent, while dairy farms remained crude and sparse.

As a result of AB 52, which requires jurisdictions to notify Tribal Governments that request such outreach, the County alerted Tribal Entities that requested initial review packets.

(a – i, ii) No Impact. A Cultural Resources Assessment was prepared for the project by Peak & Associates, Inc. The assessment included a records search and evaluation of the project area. No historical resources, either prehistoric or historic, were identified within the project area. Therefore, the project would result in no impact to cultural resources.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it had adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Responses:

General Discussion

Madera County has 34 County Service Areas and Maintenance Districts that together operate 30 small water systems and 16 sewer systems. Fourteen of these special districts are located in the Valley Floor, and the remaining 20 special districts are in the Foothills and Mountains. MD-1 Hidden Lakes, Bass Lake (SA-2B and SA-2C) and SA-16 Sumner Hill have surface water treatment plants, with the remaining special districts relying solely on groundwater.

The major wastewater treatment plants in the County are operated in the incorporated cities of Madera and Chowchilla and the community of Oakhurst. These wastewater systems have been recently or are planned to be upgraded, increasing opportunities for use of recycled water. The cities of Madera and Chowchilla have adopted or are in the process of developing Urban Water Management Plans. Most of the irrigation and water districts have individual groundwater management plans. All of these agencies engage in some form of groundwater recharge and management.

Groundwater provides almost the entire urban and rural water use and about 75 percent of the agricultural water use in the Valley Floor. The remaining water demand is met with surface water. Almost all of the water use in the Foothills and Mountains is from groundwater with only three small water treatment plants relying on surface water from the San Joaquin River and its tributaries.

In areas of higher precipitation (Oakhurst, North Fork, and the topographically higher part of the Coarsegold Area), groundwater recharge is adequate for existing uses. However, some problems have been encountered in parts of these areas due to well interference and groundwater quality issues. In areas of lower precipitation (Raymond-Hensley Lake and the lower part of the Coarsegold area), groundwater recharge is more limited, possibly requiring additional water supply from other sources to support future development.

Madera County is served by a solid waste facility (landfill) in Fairmead. There is a transfer station in North Fork. The Fairmead facility also provides for Household Hazardous Materials collections on Saturdays. The unincorporated portion of the County is served by Red Rock Environmental Group. Above the 1,000-foot elevation, residents are served by EMADCO services for solid waste pick-up.

Water Quality Issues

Erosion and sedimentation/siltation are two potentially significant impacts related to development with the entire Oakhurst area. These impacts are generally proportional to the intensity of development which occurs in an area, including the amount of the clearing and grading which is necessary.

Rainfall is unable to percolate into the portions of each site that are paved over and is converted almost entirely into storm run-off, often exceeding the capacity of existing drainage system, causing intermittent flooding, increased flooding, and other adverse impacts. Pollutants associated with parking lots (oil & grease predominately) will be found in high quantities after the first rain of the season. These pollutants have the potential of contaminating ground and surface water sources.

Groundwater availability issues

Groundwater within the area is generally limited and unpredictable as a result of geologic formation which characterizes the mountain and foothill regions of Madera County. These areas are generally underlain by impervious bedrock, and “groundwater” is available only through water bearing fractures within these formations. Within these “fracture” systems the ability to store and transmit water is solely dependent on the development of secondary openings such as faults, joints and exfoliation planes.

Wastewater Issues

The reliance on septic systems has generated concerns regarding potential impacts to both surface and ground water quality, particularly where septic systems are concentrated on individual lots. This Project will have an on-site treatment facility.

Solid Waste Issues

According to the Madera County General Plan Background report, all solid waste generated in the unincorporated area is currently disposed of at the Fairmead Landfill, which is owned by the County and operated by Madera Disposal Systems, Inc. The landfill facility is located on 48 acres at the southeast corner of Road 19 and Avenue 22. The landfill is expected to reach capacity in 2020. If additional waste can be diverted, the life

of the expansion area could be increased. There is the potential for approximately 28 residential units' total that would be in need of disposing of residential related waste material to this landfill. Recycling measures are strongly encouraged. According to the California Integrated Waste Management Board, the generation rate per resident is 0.63 pounds per day of trash.

(a) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would require utility connections and on-site utility infrastructure necessary to serve the proposed truck stop complex, including water, wastewater, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, and telecommunications facilities. However, the Project would primarily utilize and connect to existing utility systems in the surrounding area and would not require major off-site expansion or relocation of utility infrastructure that could result in significant environmental effects. Any utility improvements required to serve the Project would occur as part of future permitting and would be subject to applicable environmental review and regulatory requirements. Therefore, impacts associated with the construction or expansion of utility facilities would be less than significant.

(b) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project's water supply is proposed to be provided by a new groundwater extraction well located on the project site. Annual water demand associated with the proposed truck stop complex is estimated to range from approximately 10 to 16 acre-feet per year (AFY). Compared to groundwater demand, recharge, and sustainable yield within the Madera Subbasin, the Project's projected demand represents a minimal increase. The Project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with implementation of the applicable Groundwater Sustainability Plan under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Therefore, sufficient water supplies would be available to serve the Project during normal, dry, and multiple dry years, and impacts would be less than significant.

(c) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would generate wastewater associated with operation of the proposed truck stop complex. Wastewater treatment and disposal would be provided through an approved on-site wastewater treatment system and would be subject to review and approval by Madera County Environmental Health and other applicable regulatory agencies. The Project would be required to demonstrate adequate wastewater treatment and disposal capacity prior to issuance of applicable permits. Therefore, the Project would not result in inadequate wastewater treatment capacity, and impacts would be less than significant.

(d) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would generate solid waste during construction and operation of the proposed truck stop complex. Construction debris and operational waste would be collected, transported, and disposed of in accordance with applicable State and local regulations. The amount of solid waste generated by the Project would not exceed the capacity of local landfills or solid waste infrastructure, nor would it impair attainment of State or local solid waste reduction goals. Therefore, impacts related to solid waste generation would be less than significant.

(e) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would comply with all applicable federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste management and reduction, including requirements established by the California Integrated Waste Management Act and local waste diversion programs. Construction and operational waste generated by the Project would be properly handled and disposed of by licensed waste haulers and approved disposal facilities. Therefore, the Project would comply with applicable solid waste regulations, and impacts would be less than significant.

XX. WILDFIRE

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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Responses:

(a - d) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is not located within or near a State Responsibility Area (SRA) or a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The nearest SRA is located approximately seven miles east of the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not substantially impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, nor would it exacerbate wildfire risks.

The proposed Project consists of a truck stop complex in an already developed and accessible area and would not introduce features that would substantially increase wildfire hazards. In addition, the Project would not expose people or structures to significant risks associated with wildfire, including downslope or downstream flooding, landslides, or debris flows resulting from post-fire conditions. The Project would also not substantially alter drainage patterns or generate conditions that would contribute to post-fire slope instability.

Because the Project site is not located in or near a high wildfire hazard area and would not increase wildfire exposure or interfere with emergency response capabilities, impacts related to wildfire would be less than significant.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

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

Responses:

(a) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project consists of a General Plan Amendment and rezone to allow development of a proposed truck stop complex on a currently disturbed and vacant site. The Project does not include features that would substantially degrade the quality of the environment or result in the substantial loss of habitat for fish or wildlife species. The site does not contain known aquatic habitat and is not expected to support populations of special-status fish or wildlife species that would be reduced below self-sustaining levels.

Implementation of the Project would not substantially reduce the range of any special-status species, nor would it eliminate or fragment an important plant or animal community beyond what is typical for disturbed agricultural or rural developed lands in the region. In addition, compliance with applicable environmental regulations and any required mitigation measures would avoid or reduce potential impacts to biological resources to a less-than-significant level.

With respect to cultural resources, the Project would be required to comply with applicable regulatory requirements governing inadvertent discovery of archaeological or tribal cultural resources during ground-disturbing activities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

(b-c) Less Than Significant Impact. The Project’s potential environmental impacts have been evaluated in the context of existing and reasonably foreseeable future development within the surrounding area and the region. While the Project may contribute incrementally to environmental effects such as traffic, air quality, or resource demand, these contributions would be minor and would not be cumulatively considerable when combined with other

past, present, or reasonably foreseeable projects.

Furthermore, where applicable, the Project would be required to comply with adopted regulatory programs, mitigation measures, and performance standards designed to address cumulative impacts at a regional level. As a result, the Project would not result in cumulatively considerable environmental effects, and impacts would be less than significant.

The Project has the potential to generate limited environmental effects associated with construction and operation of a truck stop complex, including temporary construction-related emissions, traffic, and noise, as well as operational activities typical of commercial fueling and vehicle services. However, these effects would be reduced through compliance with applicable regulations, design standards, and implementation of mitigation measures where required.

The Project does not propose uses or activities that would expose the public to unusually hazardous conditions or substantially adverse environmental effects beyond those typically associated with similar commercial developments. Therefore, the Project would not result in substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly, and impacts would be less than significant.

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