
State Water Resources Control Board

July 27, 2026

Taryn Vanderpan
County of Tuolumne
48 Yaney Avenue
Sonora, CA, 95370

COMMENT LETTER ON THE COUNTY OF TUOLUMNE (COUNTY), INITIAL
STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT)
FOR THE LUNR-24-13 (PROJECT); STATE CLEARINGHOUSE # 2026070436

Dear Ms. Taryn Vanderpan:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Environmental Document for the proposed Project. The State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water (State Water Board, DDW) is responsible for regulating public water systems and issuing water supply permits pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water Act. This Project is within the jurisdiction of the State Water Board, DDW Yosemite District.

A public water system, as defined in the California Health and Safety Code (Health & Saf. Code) § 116275 subd. [h], is “a system for the provision of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances that has 15 or more service connections or regularly serves an average of at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year.” If a new public water system will be formed by the Project, an application must be submitted, and a permit must be obtained from the DDW Yosemite District before water can be provided for human consumption. “Human consumption” means the use of water for drinking, bathing or showering, hand washing, oral hygiene, or cooking, including, but not limited to, preparing food and washing dishes.” Health & Saf. Code § 116275 subd. [e].

Note, Health & Saf. Code § 116527 subd. (b) requires that any person submitting a permit application for a proposed new public water system must first submit a technical report to the DDW Yosemite District at least six months before initiating construction of any drinking water-related improvements. The technical report must include an examination of the possibility of connecting to or being annexed by an existing adjacent community water system. Please see the attached What is a Public Water System flyer for more details.

The Project's contract engineer contacted the SWRCB, DDW for a comprehensive list of water system permit requirements. In response, SWRCB, DDW provided the attached list [New Transient-Non Community Water System Guidelines].

The State Water Board, DDW, as a responsible agency under the California Environmental Quality Act, has the following comments on the County's Environmental Document:

- The Environmental Document indicates that the Project involves development of a minimart, fueling station, restaurant, bar, and visitor center (PDF page 4). Water service will be provided by an existing groundwater well (PDF page 5). Given anticipated visitor numbers, this Project would likely meet the definition of a public water system. If the Project will create a new water system and no nearby municipal water systems agree to serve the Project, the applicant must submit a technical report to DDW Yosemite District (Health and Saf. Code § 116527 subd. [b]) and apply to the DDW Yosemite District for a water supply permit.
- If a new public water system will be created by the Project, please consider:
 - If the water quality of the existing well currently meets the Waterworks Standards (Ca. Code Regs. tit. 22, chapter 16) or if treatment and/or well upgrades are needed to meet the standards. If treatment or new infrastructure is needed, please disclose what is needed and include this in the environmental impacts assessment.
 - If the proposed 200,000-gallon water tank for fire protection will be part of the domestic water system and meet the definition of a distribution reservoir pursuant to § 64551.10, plans must be submitted [Cal. Code Regs., tit. 22, § 64556 (a)(1)].
 - If qualified staff can be retained to operate the water system.
 - Cal. Code Regs. § 64572 and Cal. Code Regs. § 64560 requires separation of drinking water service lines and domestic supply wells from sources of potential contamination such as wastewater treatment systems, leach fields, and septic pipelines. If there are plans to connect septic lines to the RV sites for full site hookup and/or if a wastewater dump station will be available at the Project location, consider if the separation requirements can be met or if an alternative to Waterworks Standards (Cal. Code Regs. § 64551.100) will be needed. If an alternative is needed, the water system will must submit an application to the DDW Yosemite District office.
 - The Hydrogeological Evaluation Report includes plans for a small park, including a creek side picnic area north of Mountain Pass Creek (PDF pages 141 and 142). If a small park will be developed as part of the Project, please consider the potential environmental impacts of developing the park.
 - Under Utilities and Service Systems (b), the Environmental Document says the existing well has sufficient capacity; however, this does not consider if the aquifer has sufficient groundwater to support the development. Please substantiate that the Project's maximum daily water

demand will be available for pumping during multiple dry years. If past usage has shown water to be available during multiple dry years, please disclose this, including the years, the amount of water available at the time, and the expected amount of water that may be available for this Project during multiple dry years.

Once the Environmental Document is adopted, please forward the following items in support of new water system's permit application to the State Water Board, DDW Yosemite District Office at DWPDIST28@waterboards.ca.gov:

- The Environmental Document, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP), comment letters received, and the lead agency responses as appropriate.
- The Resolution or Board Minutes certifying the Environmental Document and MMRP and approving the Project; and
- The Notice of Determination filed at the County Clerk's Office and the State Clearinghouse.

Please contact Lori Schmitz of the State Water Board at (916) 449-5285 or Lori.Schmitz@waterboards.ca.gov, for questions regarding this comment letter.

Sincerely,

Lori Schmitz
Digitally signed by
Lori Schmitz
Date: 2026.07.27
10:13:35 -07'00'

Lori Schmitz
Environmental Scientist
Division of Financial Assistance
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1001 I Street, 16th floor
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Cc:

State Clearinghouse

Ofelia Romero-Maraccini
District Engineer
Yosemite District