

SR-79 CAPM Drainage and Bridge Rail Project

Riverside County, California
District 08-RIV-79 (PM M31.7/40.4), RIV-10 (PM 7.6)
EA 08-1M340/PN 0821000120

Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration



**Prepared by the
State of California, Department of Transportation**



August 2026

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General Information About this Document

What's in this document:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has prepared this Initial Study, which examines the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives being considered for the proposed project located in Riverside County, California. Caltrans is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The document tells you why the project is being proposed, what alternatives have been considered for the project, how the existing environment could be affected by the project, the potential impacts of each of the alternatives, and the proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

What you should do:

- Please read this document.
- To request an electronic version of this document, please send an email to D8.1M340.Comments@dot.ca.gov.
- We'd like to hear what you think. If you have any comments about the proposed project, please send your written comments via postal mail or email to Caltrans by the deadline.
- Send comments via postal mail to:
California Department of Transportation, District 8
Division of Environmental Planning
Attn: Malisa Lieng, Branch Chief
464 West Fourth Street, Sixth Floor, MS-823
San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400
- Send comments via email to: D8.1M340.Comments@dot.ca.gov
- Be sure to send comments by the deadline: September 24, 2026.

What happens next:

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, Caltrans may: (1) give environmental approval to the proposed project, (2) do additional environmental studies, or (3) abandon the project. If the project is given environmental approval and funding is obtained, Caltrans could design and construct all or part of the project.

Alternative Formats:

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document can be made available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please write to Caltrans, Attn: Malisa Lieng, 464 West Fourth Street, MS-823, San Bernardino, CA 92401, or you may contact the California Relay Service at 1 (800) 735-2929 (TTY to Voice), 1 (800) 735-2922 (Voice to TTY), 1(800) 855-3000 (Spanish TTY to Voice and Voice to TTY), 1 (800) 854-7784 (Spanish and English Speech to Speech) or dial 711.

State Clearinghouse #
08-RIV-79 (PM M31.7/40.4), Riv-10 (PM 7.6)
EA 08-1M340/PN 0821000120

Conduct roadway improvements and upgrades along State Route 79 from Post Mile
M31.7 to 40.4, and Interstate 10 at Post Mile 7.6 in Riverside County, California.

Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation



for Antonia Toledo
Deputy District Director
Division of Environmental Planning, District 8
California Department of Transportation
CEQA Lead Agency

8/6/2026

Date

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Proposed Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to repair pavement and culverts on State Route (SR)-79 from Post Mile (PM) M31.7 to 40.4 and on Interstate (I-)10 at PM 7.6 at the junction of SR-79, in Riverside County. Improvements would include cold plane and overlay of mainlines, shoulders, and ramps including digouts where needed; upgrading guardrail and end treatments with vegetation control underneath; upgrading existing curb ramps to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and installing new curb ramps, pedestrian heads, and push buttons; repairing or replacing culverts; replacing sign panels; modifying the signal system and traffic census stations; implementing roadside safety improvements at gore areas; rock slope protection (RSP); replacing bridge railings and installing chain link or tubular railing on top of existing bridge railings; constructing new sidewalks; and installing Class II bike lanes, and enhanced crosswalk marking and striping where appropriate.

DRAFT Determination

This proposed Negative Declaration is included to give notice to interested agencies and the public that it is Caltrans' intent to adopt a Negative Declaration for this project. This does not mean that Caltrans' decision regarding the project is final. This Negative Declaration is subject to change based on comments received by interested agencies and the public.

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study for this project and, pending public review, expects to determine from this study that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

The project would have no effect on aesthetics, agriculture and forestry, air quality, energy, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, and wildfire.

In addition, the project would have less-than-significant effects on biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas, hazards and hazardous materials, transportation, tribal cultural resources, and utilities and service systems.

Antonia Toledo
Deputy District Director
Division of Environmental Planning, District 8
California Department of Transportation

Date

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Chapter 1 Proposed Project

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to improve an approximately 8.7-mile segment of State Route (SR-)79 Post Mile (PM) M31.7 to 40.4 and on Interstate (I-) 10 at PM 7.6 at the junction of SR-79, in Riverside County (see Figure 1-1, Project Vicinity, and Figure 1-2, Project Location). Improvements would include cold plane and overlay of mainlines, shoulders, and ramps including digouts where needed; upgrading guardrail and end treatments with vegetation control underneath; upgrading existing curb ramps to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and installing new curb ramps, pedestrian heads, and push buttons; repairing or replacing culverts; replacing sign panels; modifying the signal system and traffic census stations; implementing roadside safety improvements at gore areas; replacing bridge railings and installing chain link or tubular railing on top of existing bridge railings; constructing new sidewalks; and installing Class II bike lanes, and enhanced crosswalk marking and striping where appropriate. One Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative are being considered. Caltrans is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

SR-79 is a major north-south route serving the rural areas of western San Diego and Riverside Counties. Within District 8, SR-79 is a two- to four-lane conventional highway that begins at the Riverside/San Diego County line and terminates at its junction with I-10 in Beaumont on the northerly end. The route traverses urbanized and rural areas, including the communities of Murrieta Hot Springs, Winchester, Temecula, Murrieta, San Jacinto, Hemet, and Beaumont. As part of the Interregional Road System, SR-79 connects commuters to major employment centers and supports interregional and intraregional goods movement trips. Within the project limits, SR-79 is a four-lane, conventional highway with right of way (ROW) width ranging from 40 feet to 100 feet from the centerline. The San Jacinto River Bridge (Bridge No. 54-0820) is located at PM M32.76. Land uses within the project area consist of mostly forested open space, as well as rural commercial, commercial industrial, single residential, open space, and tribal areas.

This project is included in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Connect SoCal Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) and the 2025 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) under ID SBDLS02, Exempt Grouped Projects for Pavement Resurfacing and/or Pavement Rehabilitation, as part of the State Highway Operation and Protection Program Roadway Preservation Program (refer to FTIP Technical Appendix D).

1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED

1.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the project is to preserve and extend the service life of the existing pavement and improve its ride quality. The project would also rehabilitate existing roadside features and would improve safety for maintenance crews by installing new worker safety elements.

1.2.2 Need

This segment of SR-79 has a variety of deficiencies. The pavement within the project limits is exhibiting minor distress. If left uncorrected, the pavement would deteriorate and would need major roadway rehabilitation. In addition, some guardrail, curb ramps with pedestrian heads and push buttons, loop detectors, and roadside sign panels within the project limits are either in poor condition or not in compliance with current standards. The project area would include worker safety elements such as constructing vegetation control under guardrail, slope paving, paving beyond gore area, and areas where stormwater runoff has caused erosion and trash accumulation.

1.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project is located along State Route 79 (SR-79) from Post Mile (PM) M31.7 to 40.4 and at Interstate 10 (I-10) near PM 7.6 at junction of SR-79, in Riverside County. The project scope consists of cold plane and overlay mainline, shoulders, and ramps including digouts where needed, upgrade guardrail and end treatments with vegetation control underneath, upgrade existing curb ramps to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, install new curb ramps and pedestrians push buttons, repair/replace culverts, replace sign panels, modify signal system and traffic census stations, implementing roadside safety improvements at gore area, installing chain link or tubular railing on top of existing bridge railings, install new sidewalks, and install Class II bike lanes and apply enhanced crosswalk marking and striping where appropriate.

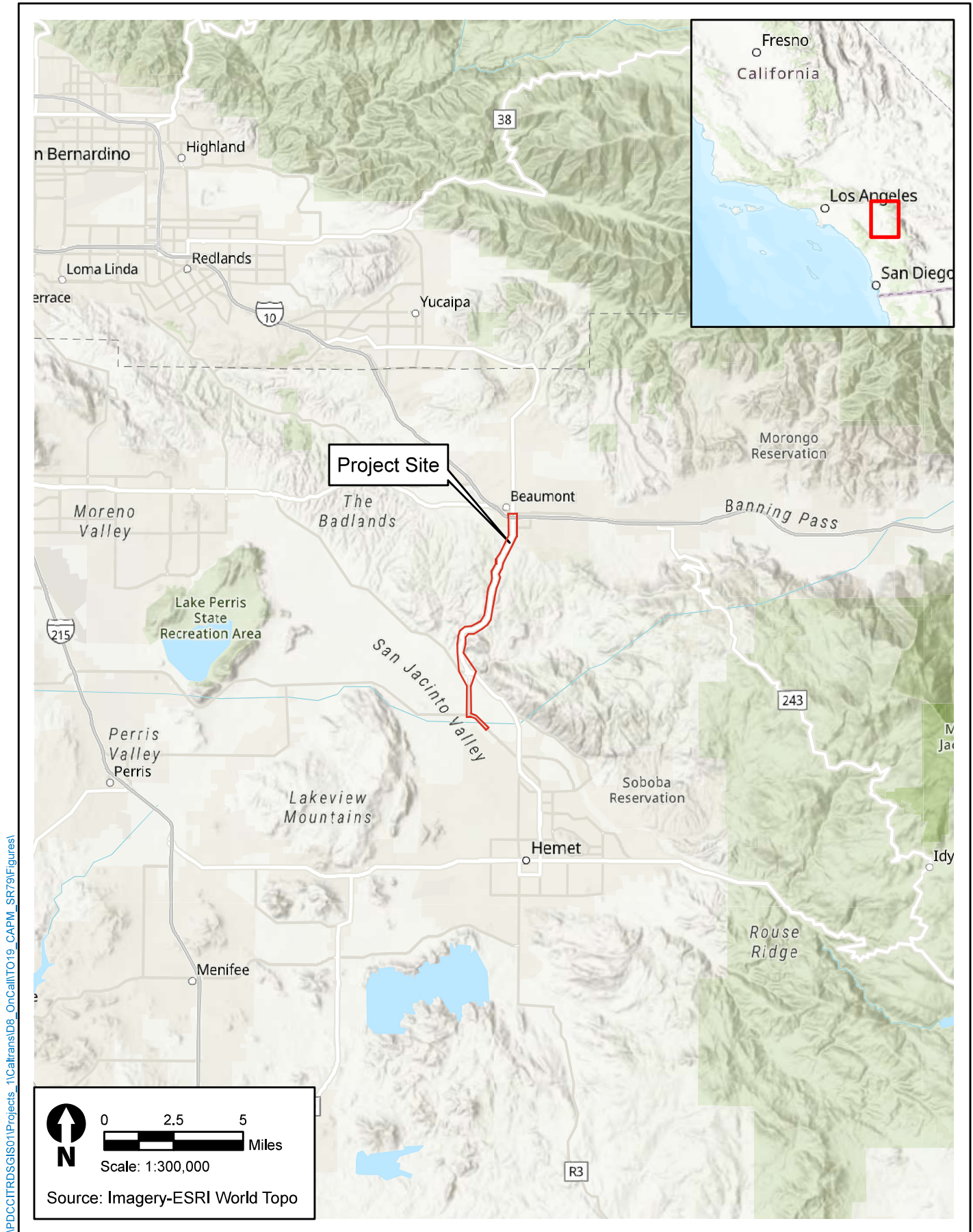


Figure 1-1
Project Vicinity
SR-79 CAPM Drainage Bridge Project

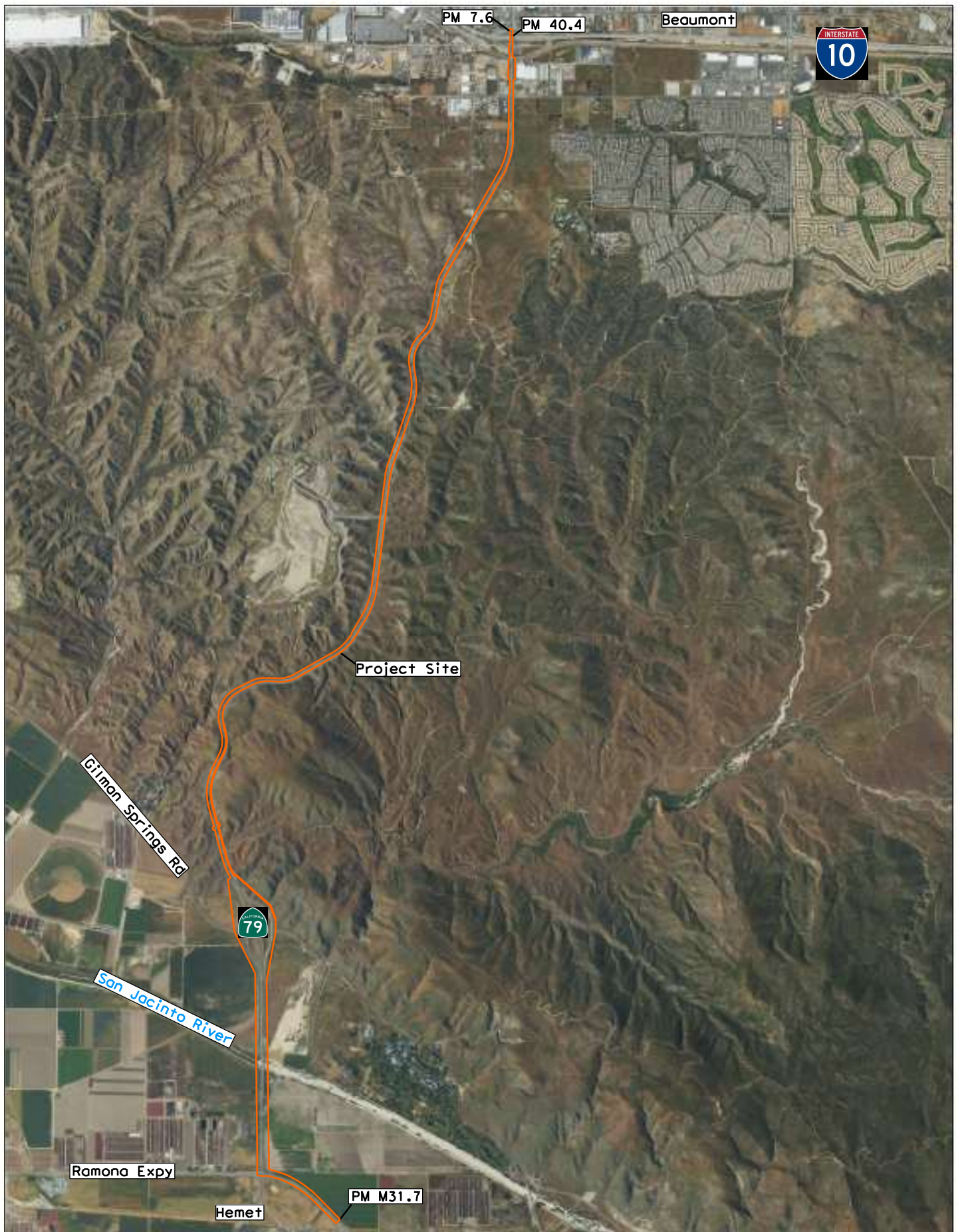


Figure 2
Project Location
SR-79 CAPM Drainage Bridge Project

1.4 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

This section describes the proposed project alternatives developed to meet the purpose and need of the project, while avoiding or minimizing environmental impacts. The alternatives are the No-Build Alternative and the Build Alternative.

1.4.1 No-Build (No-Action) Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the facility in its current condition. No improvements would be implemented to SR-79. As a result, the pavement on this portion of SR-79 would continue to deteriorate and need major roadway rehabilitation. In addition, the condition of drainage culverts, guardrails, and Transportation Management System (TMS) elements would continue to worsen and would not be compliant with current standards. No capital cost is associated with this alternative. This alternative would not meet the purpose and need of the project.

1.4.2 Proposed Build Alternative

The Build Alternative proposes improving SR-79 within the project limits through the following (refer to Figure 1-3, Sheets 1 through 8):

- Cold plane and overlay with Rubberized Hot Mix Asphalt – GapGraded (RHMA-G) for lanes and ramps
- Cold plane and overlay with Hot Mix Asphalt (HMA-A) for shoulders
- Perform Replace Asphalt Concrete Surfacing (Digout)
- Upgrade guardrail and end treatments and install vegetation control
- Upgrade curb ramps at Ramona Expressway and Sanderson Ave. intersection, Gilman Springs Rd SB Offramp/Onramp, E 1st St, and 4th St
- Install new curb ramps at 2nd St, 4th St, and I-10 EB Offramp/Onramp
- Repair/replace culverts at PM 32.78, PM 33.87, and PM 34.57, and extend culvert at PM 40.27
- Replace sign panels
- Modify signal system at Gilman Springs Rd and SR-79 intersection, traffic census stations
- Implement roadside safety improvements at the gore area at Gilman Springs Rd interchange
- Install chainlink railing at Beaumont Ave Separation (Bridge No.53-0435) and Central Beaumont Overhead (Bridge No.56-0561) and tubular railing on Gilman Springs Rd (Bridge No. 56-0782) and San Jacinto River (Bridge No.56-0820) on top of existing bridge railing
- Install new sidewalk connecting East 1st Street to Central Beaumont Overhead
- Install class II bike lanes and apply enhanced crosswalk marking and striping

Property acquisitions and temporary construction easements (TCEs) would be needed for the construction of the project. The capital cost for this alternative is currently

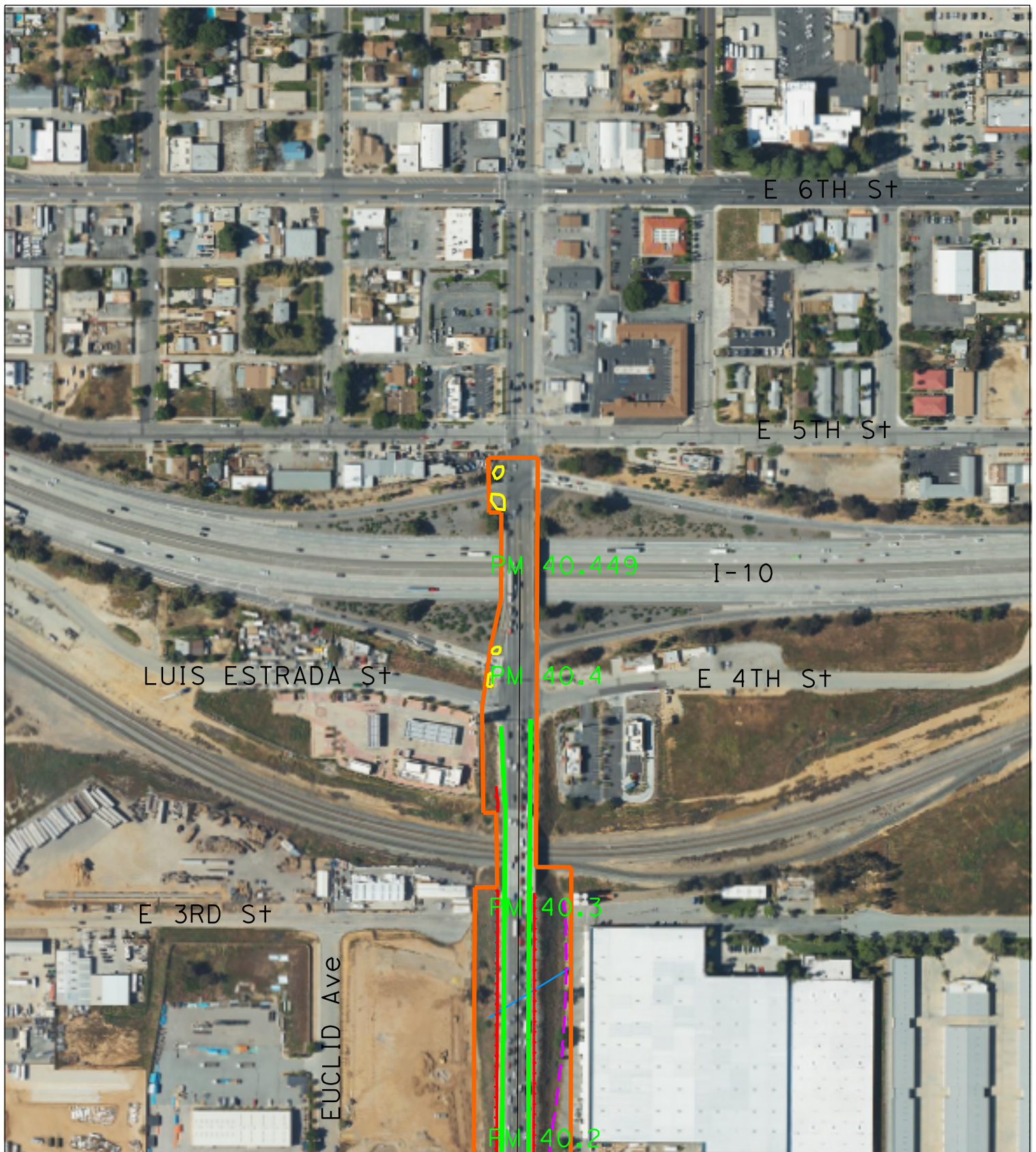
estimated at \$30,568,000. The proposed number of working days is 140. If there are any changes to the project design, the cost estimate would be updated.

This project contains a number of standardized project measures, which are employed on most, if not all, Caltrans projects and were not developed in response to any specific environmental impact resulting from the proposed project.



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Figure 2
Project Location
SR-79 CAPM Drainage Bridge Project



Legend

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Limits of Disturbance | Culvert |
| Centerline | Guardrail |
| ADA Curb Ramps | Staging Area |
| Rock Blanket | Bike Lane |
| | Cut and Fill |



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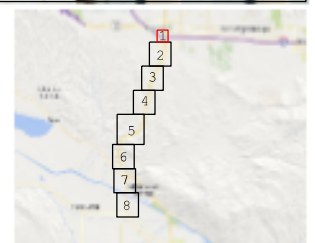
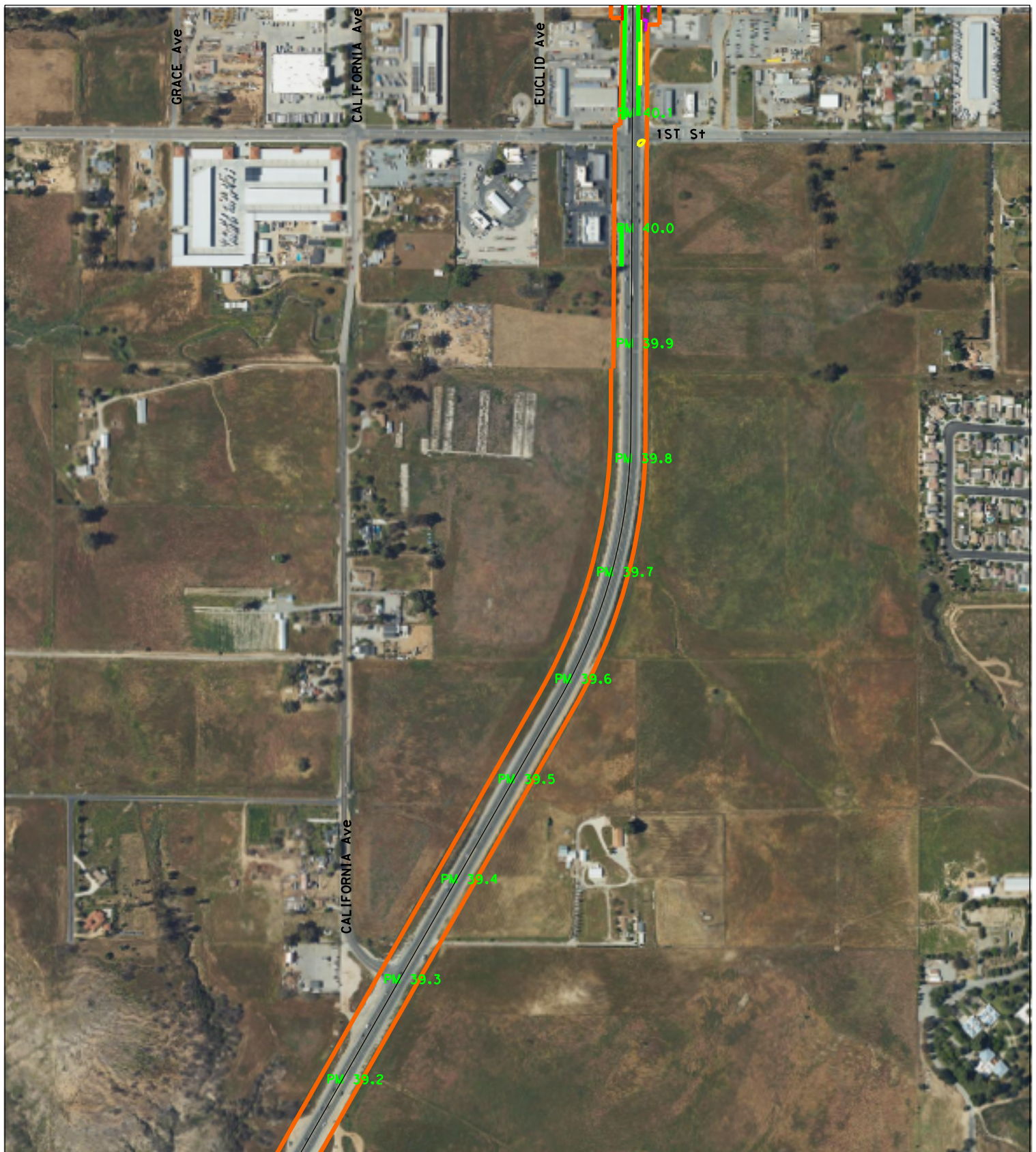


Figure 1-3 - Sheet 1 of 8
Build Alternative
SR-79 CAPM Drainage Bridge Project



Legend

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| Limits of Disturbance | Culvert |
| Centerline | Guardrail |
| ADA Curb Ramps | Staging Area |
| Rock Blanket | Bike Lane |
| | Cut and Fill |



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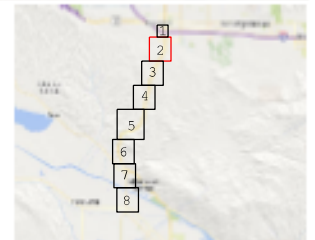
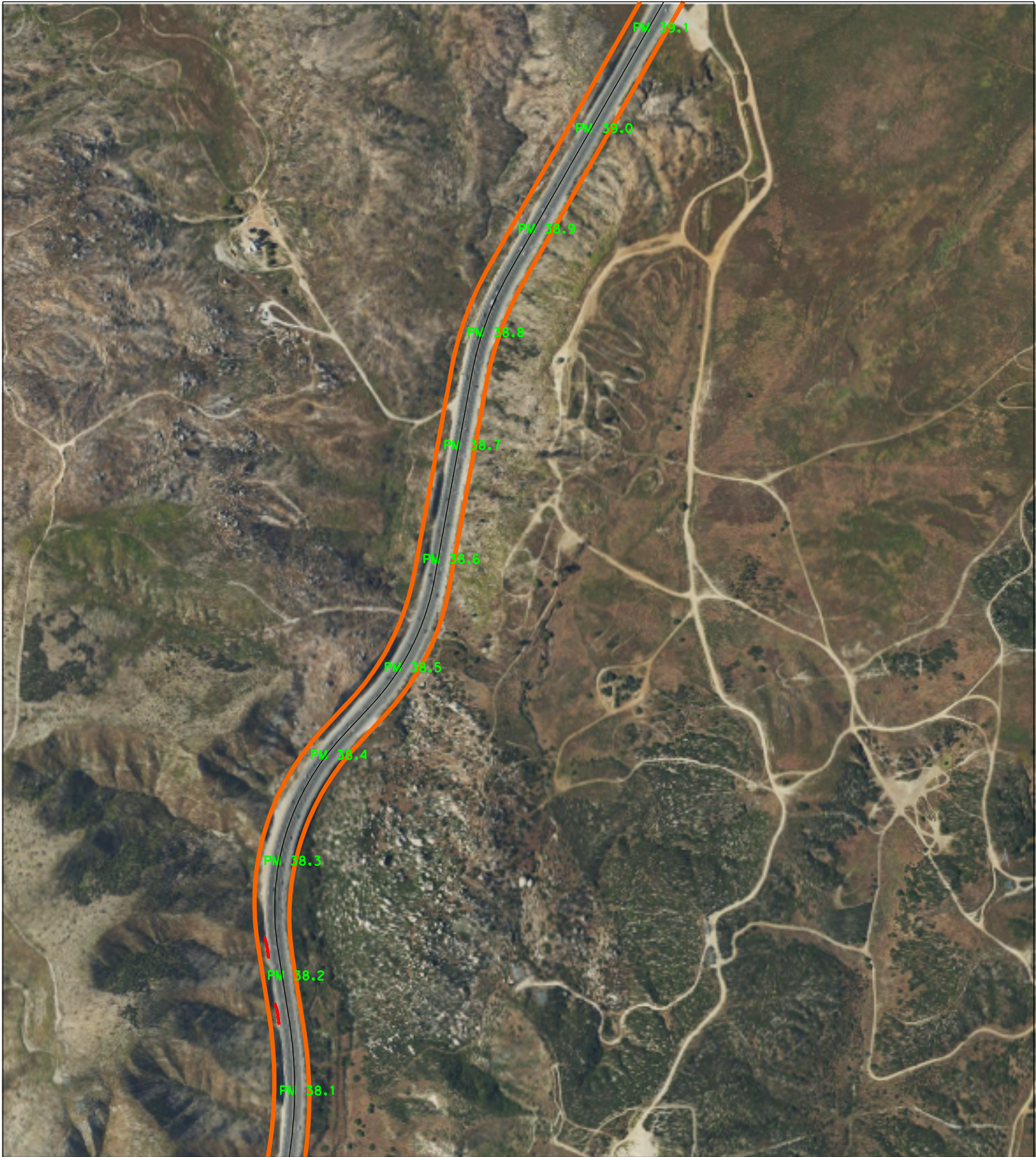


Figure 1-3 - Sheet 2 of 8
Build Alternative
SR-79 CAPM Drainage Bridge Project



Legend

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|  Limits of Disturbance |  Culvert |
|  Centerline |  Guardrail |
|  ADA Curb Ramps |  Staging Area |
|  Rock Blanket |  Bike Lane |
| |  Cut and Fill |

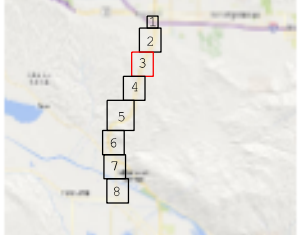
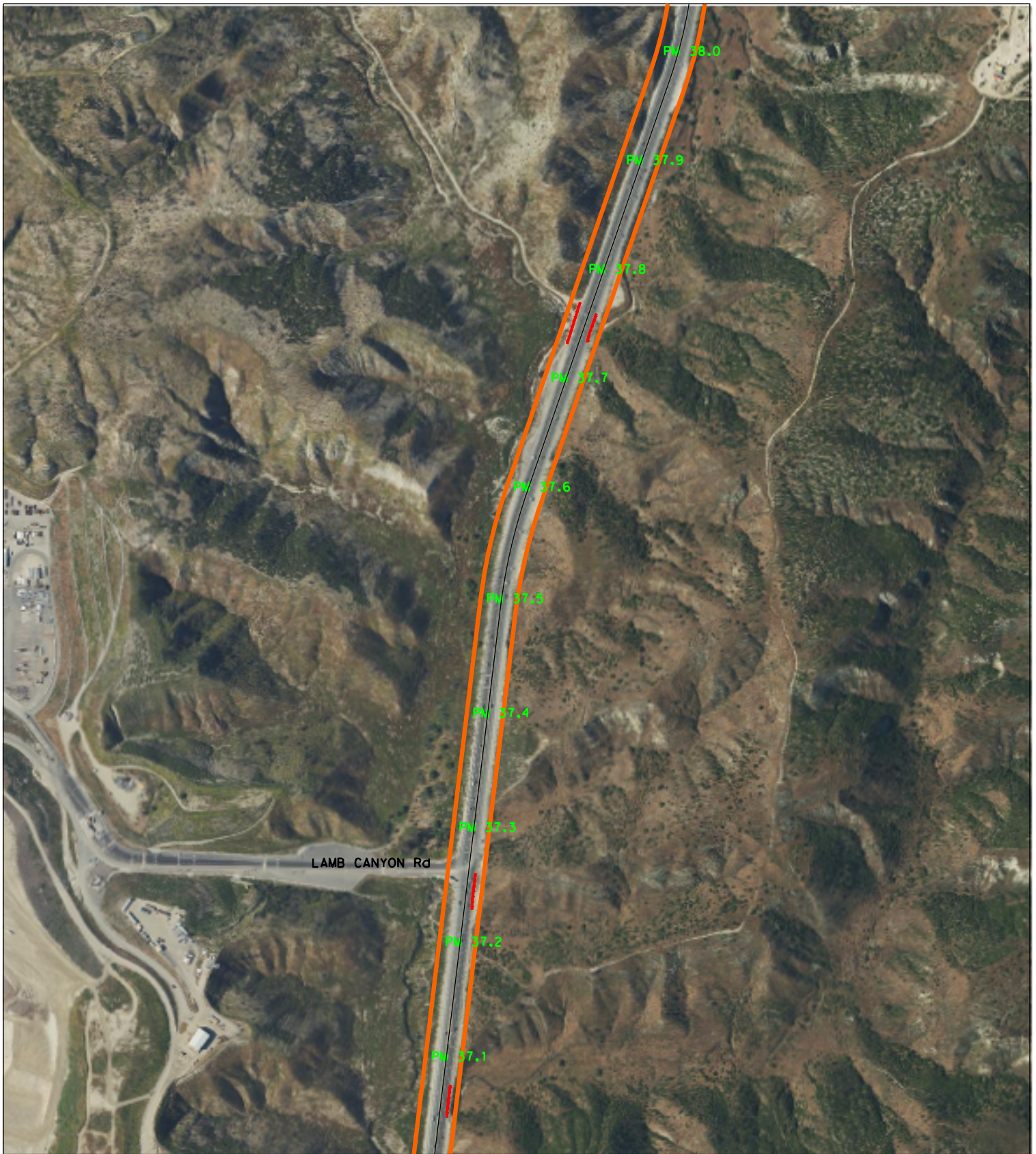


Figure 1-3 - Sheet 3 of 8
Build Alternative
SR-79 CAPM Drainage Bridge Project



Legend

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|  Limits of Disturbance |  Culvert |
|  Centerline |  Guardrail |
|  ADA Curb Ramps |  Staging Area |
|  Rock Blanket |  Bike Lane |
| |  Cut and Fill |



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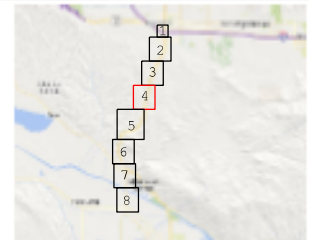
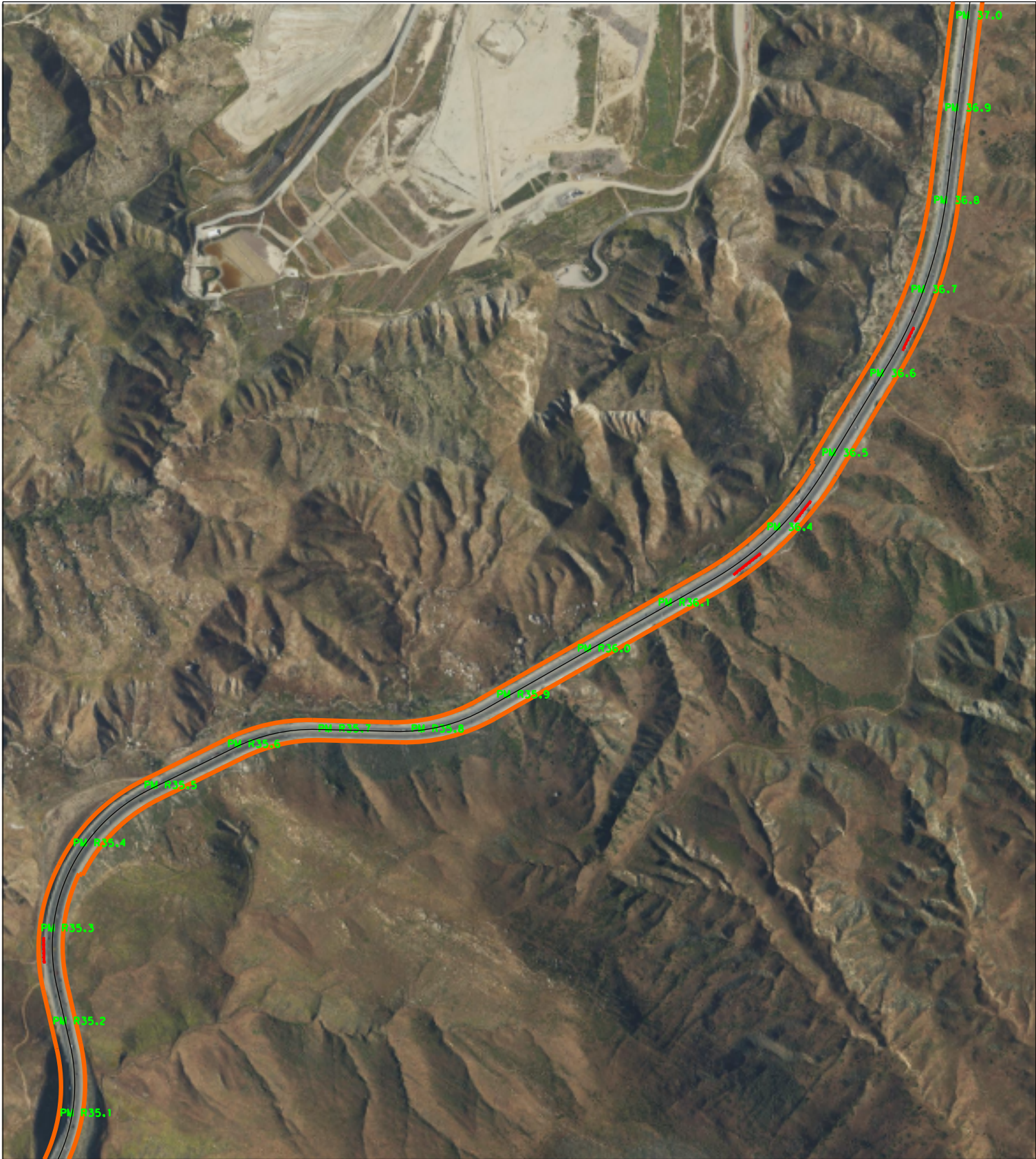


Figure 1-3 - Sheet 4 of 8
Build Alternative
SR-79 CAPM Drainage Bridge Project



Legend

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|  Limits of Disturbance |  Culvert |
|  Centerline |  Guardrail |
|  ADA Curb Ramps |  Staging Area |
|  Rock Blanket |  Bike Lane |
| |  Cut and Fill |

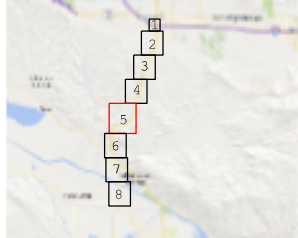
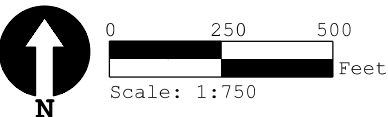
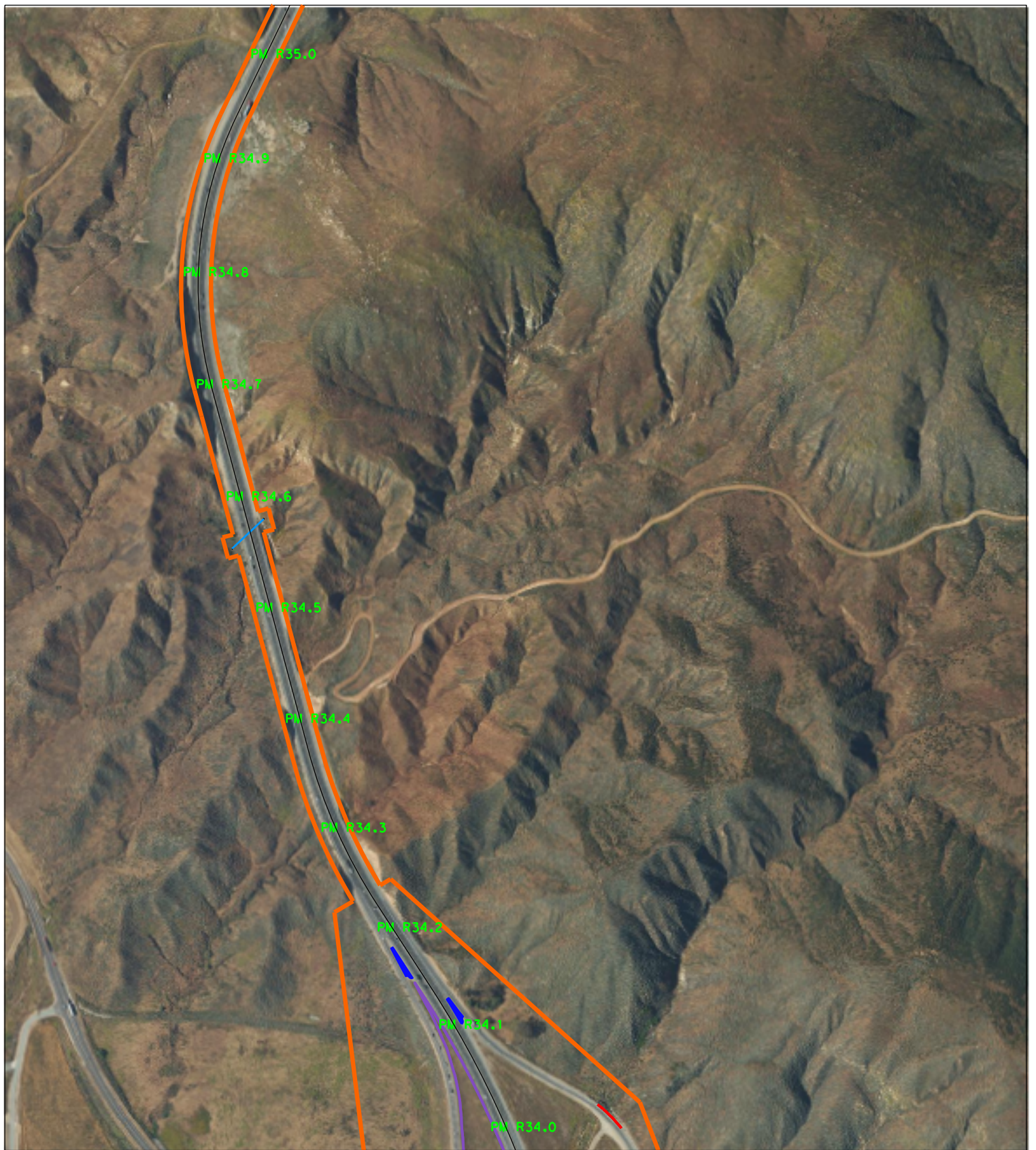
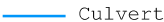
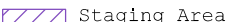
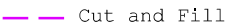


Figure 1-3 - Sheet 5 of 8
Build Alternative
SR-79 CAPM Drainage Bridge Project



Legend

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|  Limits of Disturbance |  Culvert |
|  Centerline |  Guardrail |
|  ADA Curb Ramps |  Staging Area |
|  Rock Blanket |  Bike Lane |
| |  Cut and Fill |

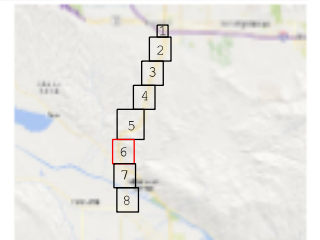
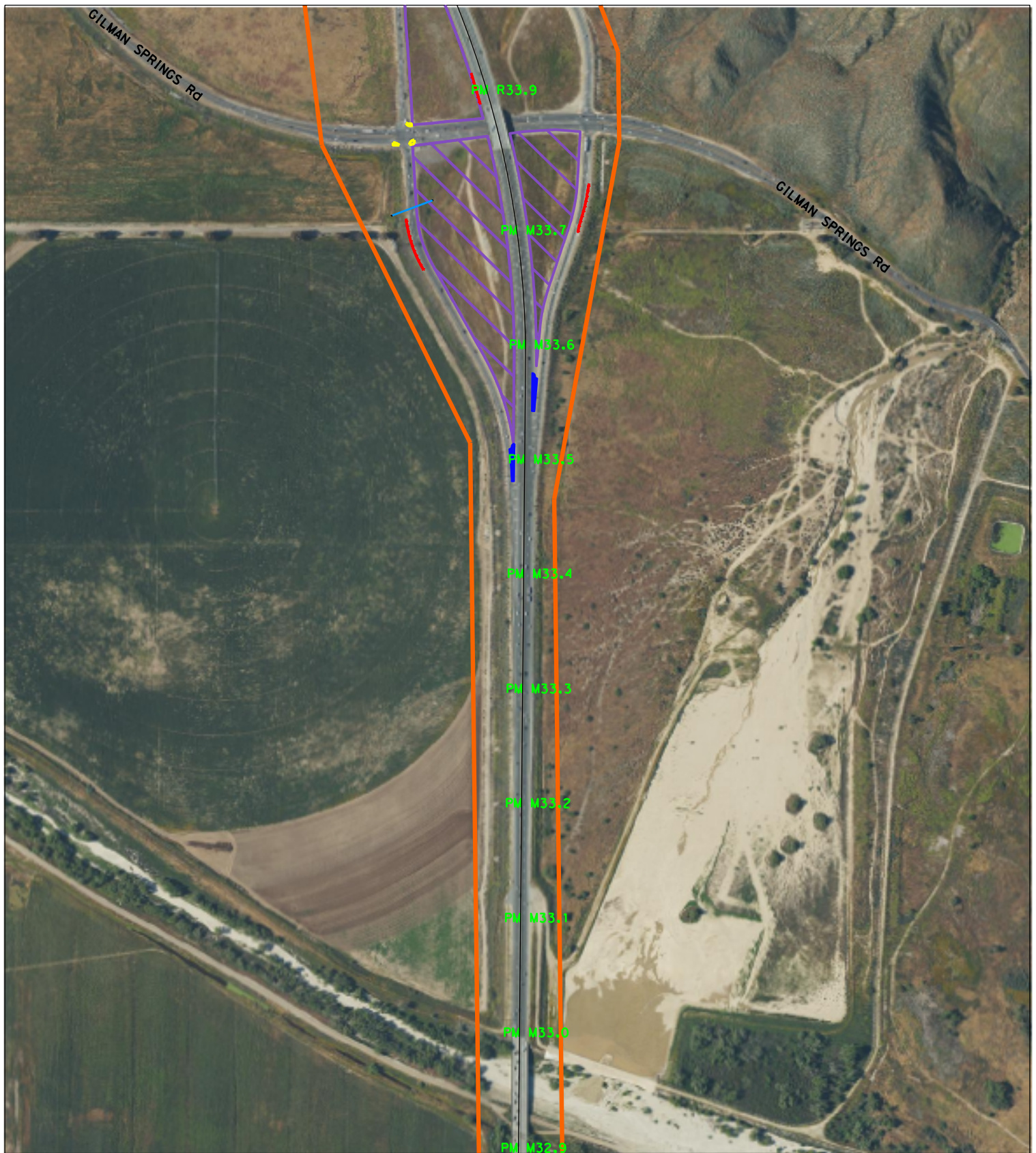


Figure 1-3 - Sheet 6 of 8
Build Alternative
SR-79 CAPM Drainage Bridge Project



Legend

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| Limits of Disturbance | Culvert |
| Centerline | Guardrail |
| ADA Curb Ramps | Staging Area |
| Rock Blanket | Bike Lane |
| | Cut and Fill |



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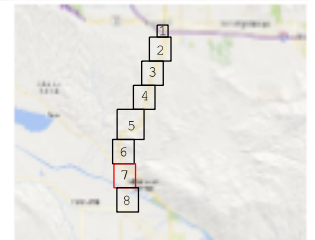
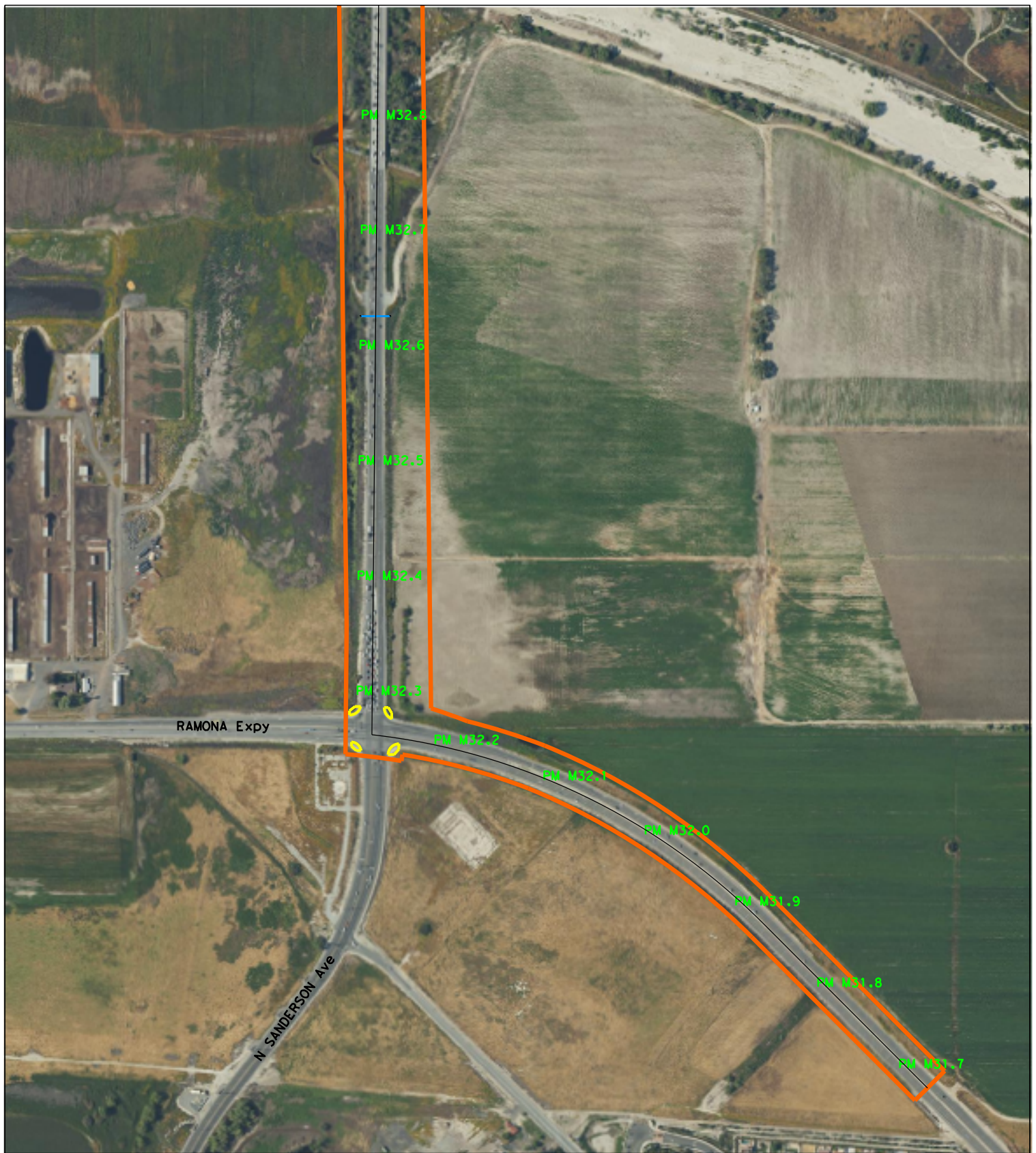


Figure 1-3 - Sheet 7 of 8
Build Alternative
SR-79 CAPM Drainage Bridge Project



Legend

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|-----------------------|--------------|
| Limits of Disturbance | Culvert |
| Centerline | Guardrail |
| ADA Curb Ramps | Staging Area |
| Rock Blanket | Bike Lane |
| | Cut and Fill |



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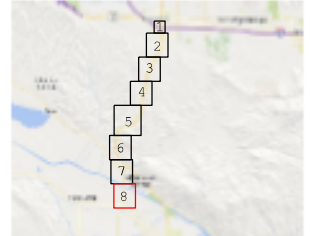


Figure 1-3 - Sheet 8 of 8
Build Alternative
SR-79 CAPM Drainage Bridge Project

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1.5 PERMITS AND APPROVALS NEEDED

The following permits, licenses, agreements, and certifications listed in Table 1-2 would be required for project construction.

Table 1-1. Required Permits, Reviews, and Approvals

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Statewide Stormwater Permit (order No. 2022-0033-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000003) and Construction General Permit (Order No. WQ 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002)	Caltrans is under authority for both permits and would submit a Notice of Intent to implement the Construction General Permit.
Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)	Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR)	Caltrans would apply for the WDR during the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (Final Design) phase of the Project.
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA)	Caltrans would apply for the 1602 (SAA) during the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (Final Design) phase of the Project.
Riverside Conservation Authority (RCA)	Western Riverside County Multiple Species Conservation Plan Consistency (WR-MSHCP) Determination	Prior to Project Approval, Caltrans would apply to the Riverside Conservation Authority for concurrence with a Consistency Determination.
United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Streamlined Biological Opinion	Prior to Project approval, Caltrans would apply to the USFWS for a Streamlined Biological Opinion.

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Chapter 2 CEQA Evaluation

2.1 DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE UNDER CEQA

CEQA requires Caltrans to identify each “significant effect on the environment” resulting from the project and ways to mitigate each significant effect. If the project may have a significant effect on any environmental resource, then an Environmental Impact Report must be prepared. Each and every significant effect on the environment must be disclosed in the Environmental Impact Report and mitigated if feasible. In addition, the CEQA Guidelines list a number of “mandatory findings of significance,” which also require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report. See the [SER, Volume 1, Chapter 36, “Environmental Impact Reports”](#) for more information. This chapter discusses the effects of this project and CEQA significance.

2.2 CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change refers to long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other elements of the Earth's climate system. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, established by the United Nations and World Meteorological Organization in 1988, is devoted to GHG emissions reduction and climate change research and policy. Research published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and other scientists over recent decades has shown an accelerated rate of climatological changes over the past 150 years, attributed to GHG emissions generated from the production and use of fossil fuels.

Human activities generate GHGs consisting primarily of carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), tetrafluoromethane, hexafluoroethane, sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), and various hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). CO₂ is the most abundant GHG; while it is a naturally occurring and necessary component of Earth's atmosphere, fossil-fuel combustion is the main source of additional, human-generated CO₂ that is the main driver of climate change. In the U.S. and in California, transportation is the largest source of GHG emissions, mostly CO₂.

The impacts of climate change are already being observed in the form of sea level rise, drought, extended and severe fire seasons, and historic flooding from changing storm patterns. The most important strategy to address climate change is to reduce GHG emissions. Additional strategies are necessary to mitigate and adapt to these impacts. In the context of climate change, “mitigation” involves actions to reduce GHG emissions to lessen adverse impacts that are likely to occur. “Adaptation” is planning for and responding to impacts to reduce vulnerability to harm, such as by adjusting transportation design standards to withstand more intense storms, heat, and higher sea levels. This analysis will include a discussion of both in the context of this transportation project.

2.2.1 Regulatory Setting

For a full list of laws, regulations, and guidance related to climate change (GHGs and adaptation), refer to Caltrans' Standard Environmental Reference (SER), Chapter 16, Climate Change.

2.2.1.1 Federal

To date, no nationwide numeric mobile-source GHG reduction targets have been established, nor have any regulations or legislation been enacted specifically to address climate change and GHG emissions reduction at the project level.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code [USC] Part 4332) requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making a decision on the action or project.

Early efforts by the federal government to improve fuel economy and energy efficiency to address climate change and its associated effects include The Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (42 USC Section 6201); and Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards. The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) sets and enforces corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standards for on-road motor vehicles sold in the United States. The Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) calculates average fuel economy levels for manufacturers and also sets related GHG emissions standards for vehicles under the Clean Air Act (U.S. EPA 2021). These standards are periodically updated and published through the federal rulemaking process.

2.2.1.2 State

California has been innovative and proactive in addressing GHG emissions and climate change by passing multiple Senate and Assembly bills and executive orders (EOs).

In 2005, EO S-3-05 initially set a goal to reduce California's GHG emissions to 80 percent below year 1990 levels by 2050, with interim reduction targets. Later EOs and Assembly and Senate bills refined interim targets and codified the emissions reduction goals and strategies. The California Air Resources Board (ARB) was directed to create a climate change scoping plan and implement rules to achieve "real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases." Ongoing GHG emissions reduction was also mandated in Health and Safety Code (H&SC) Section 38551(b). In 2022, the California Climate Crisis Act was passed, establishing state policy to reduce statewide human-caused GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels, achieve net zero GHG emissions by 2045, and achieve and maintain negative emissions thereafter.

Beyond GHG reduction, the State maintains a climate adaptation strategy to address the full range of climate change stressors, and passed legislation requiring state agencies to consider protection and management of natural and working lands as an important strategy in meeting the state's GHG reduction goals.

2.2.2 Environmental Setting

The project is in a mostly forested open space area. SR-79 is a major north-south route serving the rural areas of western San Diego and Riverside Counties. The nearest alternate route is I-10 in Beaumont. Traffic congestion during peak hours is common in the project area. A Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), guides transportation and housing development in the area of the project. The Riverside County General Plan, Circulation and Air Quality Elements address GHGs in the project area.

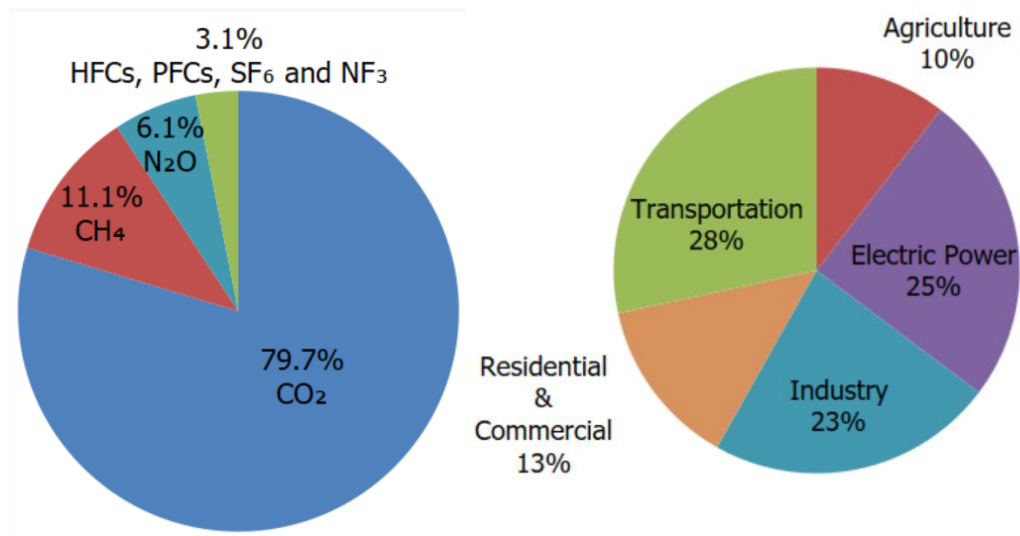
2.2.2.1 GHG Inventories

A GHG emissions inventory estimates the amount of GHGs discharged into the atmosphere by specific sources over a period of time. Tracking annual GHG emissions allows countries, states, and smaller jurisdictions to understand how emissions are changing and what actions may be needed to attain emission reduction goals. U.S. EPA is responsible for documenting GHG emissions nationwide, and the ARB does so for the state of California, as required by H&SC Section 39607.4. Cities and other local jurisdictions may also conduct local GHG inventories to inform their GHG reduction or climate action plans.

National GHG Inventory

The annual GHG inventory submitted by the U.S. EPA to the United Nations provides a comprehensive accounting of all human-produced sources of GHGs in the United States. Total national GHG emissions from all sectors in 2022 were 5,489.0 million metric tons (MMT), factoring in deductions for carbon sequestration in the land sector. (Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry provide a carbon sink equivalent to 15% of total U.S. emissions in 2022 [U.S. EPA 2024a].) While total GHG emissions in 2022 were 17% below 2005 levels, they increased by 1% over 2021 levels. Of these, 80% were CO₂, 11% were CH₄, and 6% were N₂O; the balance consisted of fluorinated gases. From 1990 to 2022, CO₂ emissions decreased by only 2% (U.S. EPA 2024a).

The transportation sector's share of total GHG emissions remained at 28% in 2022 and continues to be the largest contributing sector (Figure 3-1). Transportation activities accounted for 37% of U.S. CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel combustion in 2022. This is a decrease of 0.5% from 2021 (U.S. EPA 2024a, 2024b).

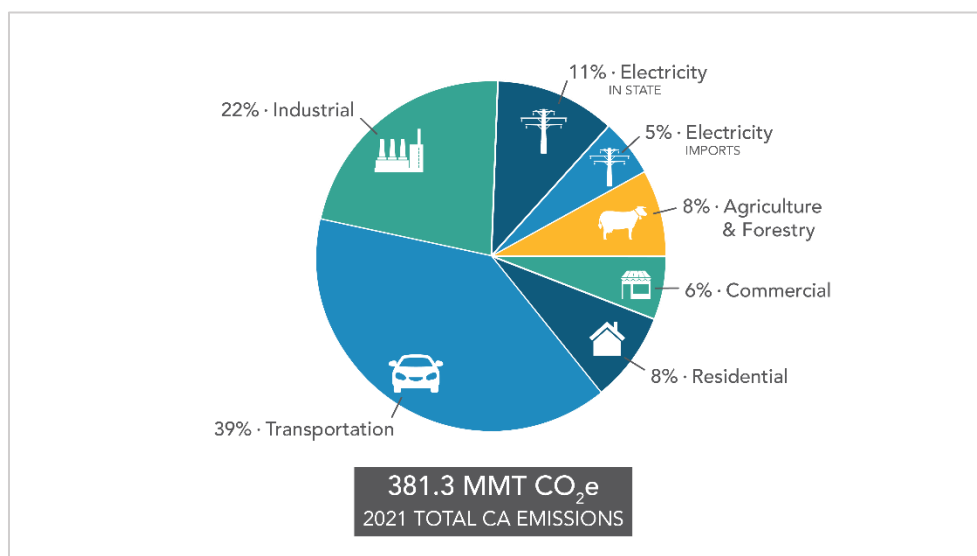


Source: U.S. EPA 2024b.

Figure 3-1. U.S. 2022 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

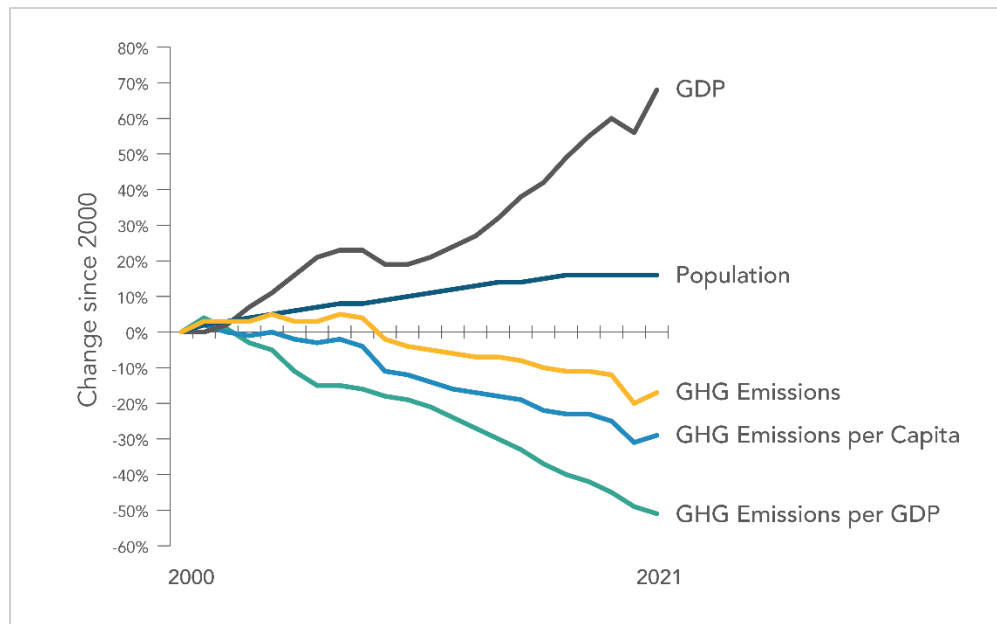
State GHG Inventory

ARB collects GHG emissions data for transportation, electricity, commercial/residential, industrial, agricultural, and waste management sectors each year. It then summarizes and highlights major annual changes and trends to demonstrate the state's progress in meeting its GHG reduction goals. Overall statewide GHG emissions declined from 2000 to 2021 despite growth in population and state economic output (Figure 3-3) (ARB 2023). Transportation emissions remain the largest contributor to GHG emissions in the state (Figure 3-2) (ARB 2023).



Source: ARB 2023.

Figure 3-2. California 2020 Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Economic Sector



Source: ARB 2023.

Figure 3-3. Change in California GDP, Population, and GHG Emissions Since 2000

AB 32 required ARB to develop a Scoping Plan that describes the approach California will take to achieve the goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and to update it every 5 years. The AB 32 Scoping Plan and the subsequent updates contain the main strategies California will use to reduce GHG emissions. ARB adopted the first scoping plan in 2008. The second updated plan, California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, adopted on December 14, 2017, reflects the 2030 target established in EO B-30-15 and SB 32. The *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality*, adopted September 2022, assesses progress toward the statutory 2030 reduction goal and defines a path to reduce human-caused emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels and achieve carbon neutrality no later than 2045, in accordance with AB 1279 (ARB 2022a).

2.2.2.2 Regional Plans

As required by *The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008*, ARB sets regional GHG reduction targets for California's 18 metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to achieve through planning future projects that will cumulatively achieve those goals, and reporting how they will be met in the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). Targets are set at a percent reduction of passenger vehicle GHG emissions per person from 2005 levels. The project is included in the RTP/SCS for SCAG. The regional reduction target for SCAG is 19 percent by 2035 (ARB 2021).

Table 3-1. Regional GHG Reduction Policies

Title	GHG Reduction Policies, Goals, or Strategies
Southern California Association of Governments 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (adopted May 10, 2024)	• Complete Streets • Transit and Multimodal Integration • Transportation System Management • Transportation Demand Management • Air Quality • Clean Transportation • Goods Movement
Riverside County General Plan (adopted 2018 & 2020)	Circulation Element (revised July 7, 2020), • Policy C 1.2: Support development of a variety of transportation options for major employment and activity centers including direct access to transit routes, primary arterial highways, bikeways, park-n-ride facilities and pedestrian facilities. • Policy C 1.7: Encourage and support the development of projects that facilitate and enhance the use of alternative modes of transportation, including pedestrian-oriented retail and activity centers, dedicated bicycle lanes and paths, and mixed-use community centers. • Policy C 5.2: Encourage the use of drought-tolerant native plants and the use of recycled water for roadway landscaping. • Policy C 20.14 (Previously C 20.12): Encourage the use of alternative non-motorized transportation and the use of non-polluting vehicles. Air Quality Elements (revised July 17, 2018), 1. Policy AQ 20.1: Reduce VMT by requiring expanded multi-modal facilities and services that provide transportation alternatives, such as transit, bicycle and pedestrian modes. Improve connectivity of the multi-modal facilities by providing linkages between various uses in the developments. • Policy AQ 20.2: Reduce VMT by facilitating an increase in transit options. In particular, coordinate with adjacent municipalities, transit providers and regional transportation planning agencies to develop mutual policies and funding mechanisms to increase the use of alternative transportation. • Policy AQ 20.3: Reduce VMT and GHG emissions by improving circulation network efficiency.
Riverside County Climate Action Plan (2019)	Transportation Measures • R2-T1: Alternative Transportation Options • R2-T2: Adopt and Implement a Bicycle Master Plan to Expand Bike Routes around the County • R2-T3: Ride-Sharing and Bike-to-Work Programs within Businesses • R2-T4: Electrify the Fleet • R2-T5: Roadway improvements including Signal Synchronization and Transportation Flow Management;

2.2.3 Project Analysis

GHG emissions from transportation projects can be divided into those produced during operation and use of the State Highway System (SHS) (operational emissions) and those produced during construction. The primary GHGs produced by the transportation sector are CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, and HFCs. CO₂ emissions are a product of burning gasoline or diesel fuel in internal combustion engines, along with relatively small amounts of CH₄ and N₂O. A small amount of HFC emissions related to refrigeration are also included in the transportation sector. (GHGs differ in how much heat each trap in the atmosphere, called global warming potential, or GWP. CO₂ is the most important GHG, so amounts of other gases are expressed relative to CO₂, using a metric called “carbon dioxide equivalent”, or CO₂e. The global warming potential of CO₂ is assigned a value of 1, and the GWP of other gases is assessed as multiples of CO₂.)

The CEQA Guidelines generally address greenhouse gas emissions as a cumulative impact due to the global nature of climate change (Pub. Resources Code, § 21083(b)(2)). As the California Supreme Court explained, “because of the global scale of climate change, any one project’s contribution is unlikely to be significant by itself.” (Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Assn. of Governments (2017) 3 Cal.5th 497, 512.) In assessing cumulative impacts, it must be determined if a project’s incremental effect is “cumulatively considerable” (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(1) and 15130).

To make this determination, the incremental impacts of the project must be compared with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects. Although climate change is ultimately a cumulative impact, not every individual project that emits greenhouse gases must necessarily be found to contribute to a significant cumulative impact on the environment.

2.2.3.1 Operational Emissions

The purpose of the project is to preserve and extend the service life of the existing pavement and improve the ride quality of the roadway; and improve curb ramps, drainages, slopes, TMS elements, and guardrails within the project limits. Because the project would not increase the number of travel lanes on SR-79, no increase in VMT would occur. While some GHG emissions during the construction period would be unavoidable, no increase in operational GHG emissions is expected.

2.2.3.2 Construction Emissions

Construction GHG emissions would result from material processing and transportation, on-site construction equipment, and traffic delays due to construction. These emissions will be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence can be reduced through innovations in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases. While construction GHG emissions are only produced for a short time, they have long-term effects in the

atmosphere, so cannot be considered “temporary” in the same way as criteria pollutants that subside after construction is completed.

Use of long-life pavement, improved TMPs, and changes in materials can also help offset GHG emissions produced during construction by allowing longer intervals between maintenance and rehabilitation activities.

The Caltrans Construction Emissions Tool (CAL-CET) was used to estimate construction and GHG emissions. The GHG estimates for construction emissions on-road/offsite operations have been deduced as Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e) in 863 metric tons during the 140 days of construction activity for the project with an annual average of 431 metric tons.

All construction contracts include Caltrans Standard Specifications related to air quality. Section 7-1.02A and 7 1.02C, Emissions Reduction, requires contractors to comply with all laws applicable to the project and to certify they are aware of and will comply with all ARB emission reduction regulations. Section 14-9.02, Air Pollution Control, requires contractors to comply with all air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes. Certain common regulations, such as equipment idling restrictions, that reduce construction vehicle emissions also help reduce GHG emissions.

2.2.3.3 CEQA Conclusion

The purpose of the project is to preserve, repair, and extend the service life of the existing pavement and improve the ride quality of the roadway. The GHG for the construction emissions on-road/offsite operations have been deduced as Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e) in 863 metric tons during the 140 days of construction activity for the project with an annual average of 431 metric tons. Furthermore, as this project would not increase the number of travel lanes on SR-79, no increase in operational GHG emissions is expected to occur. Therefore, environmental impacts resulting from project GHG emissions are considered to be less than significant. The project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.

Caltrans is firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce GHG emissions. These measures are outlined in the following section.

2.2.4 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies

2.2.4.1 Statewide Efforts

In response to Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, California is implementing measures to achieve emission reductions of GHGs that cause climate change. Climate change programs in California are effectively reducing GHG emissions from all sectors of the economy. These programs include regulations, market programs, and incentives that will transform transportation, industry, fuels, and other sectors to

take California into a sustainable, cleaner, low-carbon future, while maintaining a robust economy (ARB 2022b).

Major sectors of the California economy, including transportation, will need to reduce emissions to meet 2030 and 2050 GHG emissions targets. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research identified five sustainability pillars in a 2015 report: (1) Increasing the share of renewable energy in the State's energy mix to at least 50 percent by 2030; (2) Reducing petroleum use by up to 50 percent by 2030; (3) Increasing the energy efficiency of existing buildings by 50 percent by 2030; (4) Reducing emissions of short-lived climate pollutants; and (5) Stewarding natural resources, including forests, working lands, and wetlands, to ensure that they store carbon, are resilient, and enhance other environmental benefits (OPR 2015).

The transportation sector is integral to the people and economy of California. To achieve GHG emission reduction goals, it is vital that the state build on past successes in reducing criteria and toxic air pollutants from transportation and goods movement. GHG emission reductions will come from cleaner vehicle technologies, lower-carbon fuels, and reduction of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Reducing today's petroleum use in cars and trucks is a key state goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 (California Environmental Protection Agency 2015).

In addition, SB 1386 (Wolk 2016) established as state policy the protection and management of natural and working lands and requires state agencies to consider that policy in their own decision making. Trees and vegetation on forests, rangelands, farms, and wetlands remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through biological processes and sequester the carbon in above- and below-ground matter.

Subsequently, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-82-20 to combat the crises in climate change and biodiversity. It instructs state agencies to use existing authorities and resources to identify and implement near- and long-term actions to accelerate natural removal of carbon and build climate resilience in our forests, wetlands, urban greenspaces, agricultural soils, and land conservation activities in ways that serve all communities and in particular low-income, disadvantaged, and vulnerable communities. To support this order, the California Natural Resources Agency released *Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy* (California Natural Resources Agency 2022).

2.2.4.2 Caltrans Activities

Caltrans continues to be involved in the Governor's Climate Action Team as the ARB works to implement EOs S-3-05 and S-01-07 and help achieve the targets set forth in AB 32. EO B-30-15, issued in April 2015, and SB 32 (2016), set an interim target to cut GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The following major initiatives are underway at Caltrans to help meet these targets.

Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure

The California Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI) builds on executive orders signed by Governor Newsom in 2019 and 2020 targeted at reducing GHG emissions in transportation, which account for more than 40 percent of all polluting emissions, to reach the state's climate goals. Under CAPTI, where feasible and within existing funding program structures, the state will invest discretionary transportation funds in sustainable infrastructure projects that align with its climate, health, and social equity goals (California State Transportation Agency 2021).

California Transportation Plan

The California Transportation Plan (CTP) is a statewide, long-range transportation plan to meet our future mobility needs and reduce GHG emissions. It serves as an umbrella document for all the other statewide transportation planning documents. The CTP 2050 presents a vision of a safe, resilient, and universally accessible transportation system that supports vibrant communities, advances racial and economic justice, and improves public and environmental health. The plan's climate goal is to achieve statewide GHG emissions reduction targets and increase resilience to climate change. It demonstrates how GHG emissions from the transportation sector can be reduced through advancements in clean fuel technologies; continued shifts toward active travel, transit, and shared mobility; more efficient land use and development practices; and continued shifts to telework (Caltrans 2021a).

Caltrans Strategic Plan

The *Caltrans 2024-2028 Strategic Plan* outlines goals centered on safety, climate action, and stewardship. Climate-related strategies include implementing the Caltrans Climate Action Plan; expanding climate education, training, and outreach; strengthening partnerships to support climate resilience; promoting sustainable transportation solutions that reduce emissions; and continuing to engage underserved and disproportionately impacted communities in climate planning and implementation.

Caltrans Policy Directives and Other Initiatives

Caltrans Director's Policy 30 (DP-30) Climate Change (June 22, 2012) established a policy to ensure coordinated efforts to incorporate climate change into Caltrans decisions and activities. Other Director's policies promote energy efficiency, conservation, and climate change, and commit Caltrans to sustainability practices in all planning, maintenance, and operations. *Caltrans Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Mitigation Report* (Caltrans 2020) provides a comprehensive overview of Caltrans' emissions and current Caltrans procedures and activities that track and reduce GHG emissions. It identifies additional opportunities for further reducing GHG emissions from Department-controlled emission sources, in support of Caltrans and State goals.

2.2.4.3 Project-Level GHG Reduction Strategies

The following measures will also be implemented in the project to reduce GHG emissions and potential climate change impacts from the project.

- GHG-1** The contractor must comply with Standard Specification 7-1.02C (Emissions Reduction), which requires that the contractor certify awareness of ARB emissions reduction regulations and will comply with them.
- GHG-2** The project will maintain equipment in proper tune and working condition.

2.2.5 Adaptation Strategies

Reducing GHG emissions is only one part of an approach to addressing climate change. Caltrans must plan for the effects of climate change on the state's transportation infrastructure and strengthen or protect the facilities from damage. Climate change is expected to produce increased variability in precipitation, rising temperatures, rising sea levels, variability in storm surges and their intensity, and in the frequency and intensity of wildfires. Flooding and erosion can damage or wash out roads; longer periods of intense heat can buckle pavement and railroad tracks; storm surges combined with a rising sea level can inundate highways. Wildfire can directly burn facilities and indirectly cause damage when rain falls on denuded slopes that landslide after a fire. Effects will vary by location and may, in the most extreme cases, require that a facility be relocated or redesigned. Furthermore, the combined effects of transportation projects and climate stressors can exacerbate the impacts of both on vulnerable communities in a project area. Accordingly, Caltrans must consider these types of climate stressors in how highways are planned, designed, built, operated, and maintained.

2.2.5.1 Federal Efforts

Under NEPA Assignment, Caltrans is obligated to comply with all applicable federal environmental laws and FHWA NEPA regulations, policies, and guidance.

The *Fifth National Climate Assessment*, published in 2023, presents the most recent science and “analyzes the effects of global change on the natural environment, agriculture, energy production and use, land and water resources, transportation, human health and welfare, human social systems, and biological diversity; [It] analyzes current trends in global change, both human-induced and natural, and projects major trends for the subsequent 25 to 100 years ... to support informed decision-making across the United States.” Building on previous assessments, it continues to advance “an inclusive, diverse, and sustained process for assessing and communicating scientific knowledge on the impacts, risks, and vulnerabilities associated with a changing global climate” (U.S. Global Change Research Program 2023).

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration provides sea level rise projections for all U.S. coastal waters to help communities and decision makers assess their risk from sea level rise. Updated projections through 2150 were released in 2022 in a report and online tool (NOAA 2022).

2.2.5.2 State Efforts

Climate change adaptation for transportation infrastructure involves long-term planning and risk management to address vulnerabilities in the transportation system. A number of state policies and tools have been developed to guide adaptation efforts.

California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment (Fourth Assessment) (2018) provides information to help decision makers across sectors and at state, regional, and local scales protect and build the resilience of the state's people, infrastructure, natural systems, working lands, and waters. The Fourth Assessment reported that if no measures are taken to reduce GHG emissions by 2021 or sooner, the state is projected to experience an up to 8.8 degrees Fahrenheit increase in average annual maximum daily temperatures; a two-thirds decline in water supply from snowpack resulting in water shortages; a 77% increase in average area burned by wildfire; and large-scale erosion of up to 67% of Southern California beaches due to sea level rise. These effects will have profound impacts on infrastructure, agriculture, energy demand, natural systems, communities, and public health (State of California 2018).

Sea level rise is a particular concern for transportation infrastructure in the coastal zone. Major urban airports will be at risk of flooding from sea level rise combined with storm surge as early as 2040; San Francisco airport is already at risk. Miles of coastal highways vulnerable to flooding in a 100-year storm event will triple to 370 by 2100, and 3,750 miles will be exposed to temporary flooding. The Fourth Assessment's findings highlight the need for proactive action to address these current and future impacts of climate change.

To help actors throughout the state address the findings of California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment, AB 2800's multidisciplinary Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group published *Paying it Forward: The Path Toward Climate-Safe Infrastructure in California*. This report provides guidance on assessing risk in the face of inherent uncertainties still posed by the best available climate change science. It also examines how state agencies can use infrastructure planning, design, and implementation processes to respond to the observed and anticipated climate change impacts (Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group 2018).

EO S-13-08, issued in 2008, directed state agencies to consider sea level rise scenarios for 2050 and 2100 during planning to assess project vulnerabilities, reduce risks, and increase resilience to sea level rise. It gave rise to the 2009 *California Climate Adaptation Strategy*, the Safeguarding California Plan, and a series of technical reports on statewide sea level rise projections and risks, including the *State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance Update* in 2018. The reports addressed the full range of climate change impacts and recommended adaptation strategies. The current *California Climate Adaptation Strategy* incorporates key elements of the latest sector-specific plans such as the *Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy*, *Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan*, *Water Resilience Portfolio*, and the CAPTI (described above). Priorities in the 2023 *California Climate Adaptation Strategy* include acting in partnership with California Native American Tribes, strengthening protections for

climate-vulnerable communities that lack capacity and resources, implementing nature-based climate solutions, using best available climate science, and partnering and collaboration to best leverage resources (California Natural Resources Agency 2023).

EO B-30-15 recognizes that effects of climate change threaten California's infrastructure and requires state agencies to factor climate change into all planning and investment decisions. Under this EO, the Office of Planning and Research published *Planning and Investing for a Resilient California: A Guidebook for State Agencies*, to encourage a uniform and systematic approach to building resilience.

SB 1 Coastal Resources: Sea Level Rise (Atkins 2021) established statewide goals to "anticipate, assess, plan for, and, to the extent feasible, avoid, minimize, and mitigate the adverse environmental and economic effects of sea level rise within the coastal zone." As the legislation directed, the Ocean Protection Council collaborated with 17 state planning and coastal management agencies to develop the *State Agency Sea-Level Rise Action Plan for California* in February 2022. This plan promotes coordinated actions by state agencies to enhance California's resilience to the impacts of sea level rise (California Ocean Protection Council 2022).

2.2.5.3 Caltrans Adaptation Efforts

Caltrans completed climate change vulnerability assessments to identify segments of the State Highway System vulnerable to climate change effects of precipitation, temperature, wildfire, storm surge, and sea level rise.

The climate change data in the assessments were developed in coordination with climate change scientists and experts at federal, state, and regional organizations at the forefront of climate science. The findings of the vulnerability assessments guide analysis of at-risk assets and development of Adaptation Priority Reports as a method to make capital programming decisions to address identified risks.

Caltrans Sustainability Programs

The Director's Office of Equity, Sustainability and Tribal Affairs supports implementation of sustainable practices at Caltrans. The *Sustainability Roadmap* is a periodic progress report and plan for meeting the Governor's sustainability goals related to EOs B-16-12, B-18-12, and B-30-15. The roadmap includes designing new buildings for climate change resilience and zero-net energy and replacing fleet vehicles with zero-emission vehicles (Caltrans 2023).

2.2.5.4 Project Adaptation Analysis

Sea Level Rise

The project is outside the coastal zone and not in an area subject to sea level rise. Accordingly, direct impacts on transportation facilities due to projected sea level rise are not expected.

Precipitation and Flooding

Based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Maps (Map Numbers: 06065C0811G, 06065C0813G, 06065C1480G, and 06065C1460H), the majority of the project is located within Zone X (areas with minimal flood hazards). However, the segment of the project located between the San Jacinto River and Ramona Expressway is located within Zone AE (areas that have a 1 percent chance of flooding annually). Based on Caltrans District 8 Vulnerability Assessment Map (Caltrans 2025), the 100-year storm precipitation depth in the project area is expected to increase by up to 4.7% by 2055 and by up to 3.7% by 2085.

Wildfire

Based on the Caltrans District 8 Vulnerability Assessment Map (Caltrans 2025), the project location has moderate wildfire exposure for the 2010 to 2069 wildfire exposures. Based on the CALFIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zones map, the project corridor and adjacent areas are located in moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones for both the State Responsibility Area (SRA) and Local Responsibility Area (LRA) (CAL FIRE 2025). Caltrans standard specifications mandate fire prevention procedures, including a fire prevention plan, to avoid accidental fire starts during construction.

Temperature

Based on the Caltrans District 8 Vulnerability Assessment Map (Caltrans 2025), the average minimum air temperature in the project area is projected to increase by up to 4.9 degrees Fahrenheit by 2055, and by up to 7.7 degrees Fahrenheit by 2085. The average maximum temperature over seven consecutive days in the project area will increase by up to 6.6 degrees Fahrenheit by 2055, and by up to 10.4 degrees Fahrenheit by 2085. As such, the climate specific to the project's location will be taken into consideration when choosing pavement design and maintenance practices.

2.3 CEQA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with the projects would indicate that there are no impacts on a particular resource. A NO IMPACT answer in the last column reflects this determination. The words “significant” and “significance” used throughout the following checklist are related to CEQA, not NEPA, impacts. The questions in this form are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

Project features, which can include both design elements of the project, and standardized measures that are applied to all or most Caltrans projects such as Best Management Practices (BMPs) and measures included in the Standard Plans and Specifications or as Standard Special Provisions, are considered to be an integral part of the project and have been considered prior to any significance determinations documented below; see Chapter 1 for a detailed discussion of these features.

2.3.1 Aesthetics

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

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	No Impact
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	No Impact
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 a 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?	No Impact
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	No Impact

2.3.1.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics

a), b), c), and d): No Impact

The project is located on SR-79 from PM M31.7 to 40.4 and on I-10 at PM 7.6 at the junction of SR-79 in Riverside County. The topography of the project area is in mountainous terrain with steep slopes, with flatter terrain on the northern and southern termini of the project route.

The project site itself consists of paved roadways, disturbed shoulders, and culverts. Surrounding uses along SR-79 consist of mostly forested land, as well as vacant land, gas stations, auto repair shops, fast food restaurants, retail centers, residences, hotels, industrial buildings, and agricultural land. Elevations range from approximately 1,460 feet above mean sea level to approximately 2,624 feet above mean sea level. According to the Caltrans State Scenic Highway Map, SR-79 along the project route is not designated as an “Eligible” State scenic highway or an “Officially Designated” scenic highway. Based on the Landscape Architecture Scoping Questionnaire to Determine Visual Impact Assessment Level prepared for the project (Caltrans 2024), there are no identifiable scenic resources including protected viewsheds; federally, state, or locally designated scenic or historic resources; or any other visual resources within the project area. The project character would be highly compatible with the visual character of the existing landscape and result in no contrast with the existing landscape. The project includes installing chainlink or tubular railing on top of existing bridge railings, constructing new sidewalks, and installing new curb ramps; however, these improvements would be consistent with the existing landscape. The project would not result in a new source of light and glare when compared with existing conditions and would be considered low sensitivity to potential viewer groups. As the project involves reconstructing and updating existing facilities on SR-79, there is no concern related to specific project features. Furthermore, when considered with other cumulative projects, the project is unlikely to result in noticeable adverse cumulative visual impacts. The

project resulted in a score of 17, which is characterized as having no visual resource–related regulatory requirements and no or negligible visual changes to the environment.

2.3.1.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are not required for aesthetics.

2.3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

In determining whether impacts on 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 Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts on forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by CAL FIRE regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	No Impact
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	No Impact
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))?	No Impact
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	No Impact
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?	No Impact

2.3.2.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forestry Resources

a) and b): No Impact

The project is within a primarily forested area along SR-79 with commercial and rural development abutting both ends of the alignment. According to the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, lands near East 1st Street (PM 40.0) to approximately South California Avenue (PM 39.1), near

Lamb Canyon Landfill (PM 37.9 to 36.5) and from near Gilman Springs Road (PM M33.5) to Ramona Expressway (PM32.3) are designated as Farmland of Local Importance, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Prime Farmland. However, the project would not convert or affect any farmland considered prime, unique, statewide, or local importance. No farmland would be lost, and no agricultural parcels would be bisected, making one or more farmlands not practical for continued agricultural uses. No parcels within the project area are under a Williamson Act contract (California Department of Conservation 2025).

c) and d): No Impact

There are no timberland production areas within or adjacent to the project area. The project is not expected to conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production.

e): No Impact

The project would not involve other changes that would result in the conversion of farmland into non-agricultural uses or forest land into non-forest use. There are no other changes anticipated to farmland or forest land.

2.3.2.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are not required for agriculture and forestry resources.

2.3.3 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:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	No Impact
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?	No Impact
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	No Impact
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	No Impact

2.3.3.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality

a), b), and c): No Impact

The project is located in the South Coast Air Basin (Basin) which is within the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The project is not anticipated to conflict with or obstruct with air quality plans because it would not increase capacity or result in the addition of traffic lanes that would result in long-term air quality impacts. The purpose of the project is to preserve and extend the service life of the existing pavement and improve the quality of the roadway; and improve curb ramps, drainages, slopes, Transportation Management System (TMS) elements, and guardrails within the project limits. None of these improvements are expected to conflict with air quality plans.

An Air Quality Review Memorandum was prepared on May 5, 2026, for the project. The scope of the project was evaluated and determined to exempt under one or more of the following categories for projects listed under Table 1 of the Caltrans Carbon Monoxide Protocol or Table 2 of 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 93.126: “pavement resurfacing and/or rehabilitation.” All projects listed under Table 1 or Table 2 are exempt from all conformity analysis and therefore do not require an emission analysis and no impacts are anticipated. However, a construction greenhouse gas (GHG) emission analysis is required.

During construction, short-term degradation of air quality may occur due to the release of particulate emissions (airborne dust) generated by hauling, and other construction-related activities. Emissions from construction equipment are also expected and include CO, sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), directly emitted PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, and air toxic contaminants, such as diesel exhaust particulate matter.

These emissions would be temporary, lasting only during construction and limited to the immediate area surrounding the construction site. Furthermore, Caltrans 2024 Standard Specifications (or most recent) requires all projects to comply with applicable air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes.

d) No Impact

Some phases of construction, such as asphalt paving, are expected to result in short-term odors in the immediate paving site. Such odors are anticipated to be quickly dispersed below detectable thresholds as distance from the site increases. Operation of the project is not anticipated to result in objectionable odors; therefore, no long-term impacts would occur.

2.3.3.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are not required for air quality.

2.3.4 Biological Resources

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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 Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or NOAA Fisheries?	Less Than Significant Impact
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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	Less Than Significant Impact
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?	Less Than Significant Impact
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 native wildlife nursery sites?	No Impact
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	No Impact
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?	No Impact

2.3.4.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources

a) Less Than Significant Impact

As indicated in the *Natural Environment Study (Condensed Format)* (NЕСF) prepared for the project, the project activities would be limited to the project impact area (PIA) and, as such, there would be no permanent impacts on special-status plant or animal species.

The majority of the Project consists of pavement resurfacing, guardrail installation, pedestrian/ADA-improvements and installation of vegetation control. These activities would not impact surrounding habitat or wildlife and would not result in a substantial adverse effect on any candidate, sensitive, or special status species.

Off-highway work would be limited to culvert repairs and the gore area at SR-79/Gilman Springs Road Interchange. Project activities would temporarily impact riparian riverine resources. The project requires ground disturbance at three culvert repair locations (PM 32.78, 33.87, and 34.57).

For the proposed work on the culvert near PM 32.78, project activities overlap and may temporarily impact potential habitat for amphibians including western spadefoot.

Western spadefoot is currently a California Species of Special Concern. As of 2023, western spadefoot is proposed for listing and the Federal Endangered Species Act. As of early 2026, Western spadefoot is also a candidate for listing under the California Endangered Species Act. Although potentially suitable habitat may occur for amphibians near PM 32.78, the project would result in minimal disturbance to potential amphibian habitat (less than 0.001 acres). Caltrans would implement avoidance and minimization measures including pre-construction amphibian clearance surveys, and seasonal work avoidance of the amphibious breeding season.

The Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) designates western spadefoot as an adequately covered species and provides conservation measures for their protection. Caltrans would implement avoidance and minimization measures and obtain work authorization from RCA for potential impacts to amphibian habitat.

The Project Biological Study Area consists of a 500-foot buffer surrounding the limits of ground disturbance and overlaps potential habitat for MSHCP-covered species including San Bernardino kangaroo rat, burrowing owl, smooth tarplant, and Marvin's onion. However, since work activities would remain confined to the paved roadway, shoulders and vehicle turnouts, the Project would not impact surrounding habitat.

Caltrans would implement roadside safety improvements within the median gore at Gilman Springs Road interchange. This area does not provide suitable habitat for special-status wildlife.

With inclusion of avoidance and minimization measures, completion of the MSHCP-Consistency approval, and payment of fees for a CDFW Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement, the Project would not impact other special-status wildlife, or their respective habitat. Additionally, the Project would not impact natural communities of special concern.

Accordingly, the Project would not result in 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 Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or NOAA Fisheries.

With implementation of avoidance and minimization measures, impacts would be less-than-significant.

b) Less Than Significant Impact

Project activities would temporarily impact riparian riverine resources. The project requires ground disturbance at three culvert repair locations (PM 32.78, 33.87, and 34.57).

These features are protected under the MSHCP and are subject to jurisdiction of California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board. The project calls for repair or replacement of culverts in their existing

alignment. Therefore, there would be no permanent impacts (0.00 acres). Temporary impacts to waters of the State and riparian/riverine resources would result from personnel and equipment, incidental vegetation removal, and temporary access.

Upon completion of culvert repair, Caltrans will restore all habitat to its original condition. Caltrans will obtain a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement typically require compensatory mitigation for permanent impacts to Waters of the State. The total temporary impacts are 0.066 and there are no permanent impacts to Waters of the State, therefore compensatory mitigation will not be required. Furthermore, this project's impact on CDFW-protected resources is less-than-significant since the project has no compensatory mitigation.

Caltrans would also satisfy Waste Discharge Requirements from the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.

To satisfy Riverside Conservation Authority (RCA) requirements under the MSHCP, Caltrans would prepare a Demonstration of Biologically Superior or Equivalent Preservation (DBESP) to identify potential impacts and minimization measures to riparian/riverine resources and obtain RCA concurrence.

The Project overlaps Lambs Canyon in San Jacinto. This area provides suitable habitats for a variety of wildlife. However, with the exception of the culvert at PM 34.57, the Project would avoid off-highway work in Lambs Canyon and would not impact the surrounding habitat.

Caltrans would repair the culvert at PM 34.57, at the southerly boundary of Lambs Canyon. This culvert comprises riparian scrub habitat. Culvert repair at PM 34.57 may require construction of temporary access to the culvert outlet on the westerly side of SR-79. Caltrans would restore all habitat to its original condition on completion of culvert repair. As noted above, Caltrans would pursue respective permits and work authorization from CDFW, Santa Ana RWQCB, and RCA.

The Project would not encroach on suitable habitat or federal critical habitat for San Bernardino kangaroo rat. Further, the Project would not impact suitable habitat for burrowing owls. Caltrans would implement pre-construction small mammal and burrowing owl clearance surveys to ensure the Project does not impact these resources.

Pedestrian and ADA-upgrades would not encroach on suitable habitat for special status wildlife or riverine/riparian resources.

Therefore, with inclusion of avoidance, minimization measures, and obtaining work authorization and permits from CDFW, Santa Ana RWQCB, and RCA. Caltrans determined the Project would not result in 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 Wildlife.

c) Less Than Significant Impact

These culverts comprise riparian/riverine habitat as defined by the MSHCP and are subject to jurisdiction of CDFW and the Santa Ana RWQCB as Waters of the State. Culvert repair work only calls for in-kind repair or replacement of these culverts. Work would not require dewatering or other means of hydrologic interruption. This project would only require minor removal of material from the channel. There are 0.066 acres of Temporary impacts to Waters of the State. Pending the final design phase, Caltrans may install rock-slope-protection for erosion control at some culvert locations, resulting in temporary impacts to Waters of the State. Caltrans would implement Best Management Practices, avoidance and minimization measures to reduce potential construction impacts within Waters of the State. Additionally, prior to construction, Caltrans would obtain respective permits from CDFW and the Santa Ana RWQCB for work authorization. In connection with the Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement, Caltrans anticipates no permanent impacts to the Waters of the State for these proposed project activities. Caltrans would also satisfy Waste Discharge Requirements of the Santa Ana RWQCB pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Therefore, with implementation of avoidance and minimization measures, impacts are expected to remain less than significant.

Project activities would not encroach on vernal pools or marsh areas – no such habitat exists within the construction limits. Moreover, no activities or work would occur within the San Jacinto River, and the Project is not near the coastal zone.

Caltrans would repair a culvert near PM 32.78, which contains potentially suitable amphibian habitat. This culvert location comprises riparian/riverine habitat as defined under the MSHCP.

Caltrans would implement avoidance and minimization measures including pre-construction amphibian clearance surveys, biological monitoring, and avoidance of work during the breeding season.

d) No Impact

The project overlaps a CDFW-designated Area of Conservation with a ranking of “5”, denoting an “Irreplaceable and Essential Corridor” on SR-79 between approximately PM 35.55 and PM 38.72. The project would not impact this wildlife corridor as no off-highway work would occur within this roadway interval. No work would take place within adjacent agricultural lands, floodplain areas, or surrounding channels, which provide suitable wildlife corridors or wildlife habitat connectivity. The project includes maintenance and upgrade of already existing roadways, shoulders and select culverts, and poses no risk of reducing or worsening existing levels of habitat connectivity. Implementation of the project would have no impact on habitat connectivity of the project area and surrounding area. Further, the Project does not overlap with a migratory fish passage or native wildlife nurseries. Therefore, the Project would not 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 native wildlife nursery sites; no impact would occur.

e) No Impact

The Project is subject to the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). Caltrans would fully comply with the requirements of the MSHCP through preparation of a Demonstration of Biologically Superior or Equivalent Preservation and MSHCP Consistency Analysis. The Project may also impact habitat which may support western spadefoot – a federally-protected species. Lastly, Caltrans would apply for a CDFW Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement and satisfy Santa Ana RWQCB Waste Discharge Requirements.

By complying with the above regulations and permitting requirements, Caltrans would satisfy all applicable policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; no impact would occur.

f) No Impact

The project is within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). The MSHCP requires a determination of consistency with the Western Riverside County MSHCP. Therefore, prior to project approval, Caltrans would prepare a MSHCP Consistency Analysis and apply to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) for a determination of consistency with the MSHCP. In addition to MSHCP Consistency Analysis, Caltrans would also prepare a Demonstration of Biologically Superior or Equivalent Preservation for impacts to ephemeral culverts, as required under the MSHCP for impacts to riparian/riverine resources.

Likewise, Caltrans would apply to CDFW and the Santa Ana RWQCB for work authorization for impacts to Waters of the State.

Through demonstration of consistency with the MSHCP-Consistency Analysis, preparation of a DBESP, and Caltrans would comply with all provisions of applicable Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans. As such, the Project would result in no impact in this regard.

2.3.4.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Caltrans 2024 Standard Specifications (or most recent), Best Management Practices (BMPs), and the following measures would be implemented for Biological Resources.

BIO-1:Bio-General-1 Equipment Staging, Storing & Borrow Sites: All staging, storing, and borrow sites require the approval of the Caltrans biologist.

BIO-2: Bio-General-2 Temporary Artificial Lighting Restrictions: To address impacts to adjacent habitat and special status species, artificial lighting must be directed at the job site to minimize light spillover onto adjacent habitat if project activities occur at night.

BIO-3: Bio-General-3 Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP): A Contractor-supplied biologist must present a biological resource information program/WEAP for nesting and special status birds, special status herpetofauna including western spadefoot, special status mammals, special status plants, and habitats capable of supporting special status species prior to project activities to all personnel that will be present within the project limits for longer than 30 minutes at any given time.

BIO-4: Bio-General-4 Equipment Washing: To prevent the spread of invasive plants/seeds, the contractor must clean all equipment and vehicles inside and out before arriving onsite or moving between different project areas. Cleaning Methods may utilize pressure washing, compressed air, or manual brushing to remove all soil and organic materials. The contractor shall establish designated cleaning locations to isolate runoff, preventing wash water from entering water bodies. To manage wastewater, the contractor shall utilize Best Management Practices to prevent runoff from mixing with stormwater; using designated, contained, or filtered areas for cleaning. The contractor shall avoid using soaps or detergents that could harm the environment, opting for clean water or biodegradable options as necessary. The contractor shall adhere to Caltrans' Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) Best Management Practices (BMPs). A Caltrans-approved biologist shall inspect vehicles to ensure compliance before deployment.

BIO-5: Bio-6 Biological Resource Information Program: An education program will be developed and presented by the qualified biologist to all onsite personnel who will be in the project limits for longer than 30 minutes prior to the onset of ground-disturbing activities. At a minimum, the program will include the following topics: distribution, general behavior, and ecology of the Western Spadefoot, special status herpetological species in the area, special status riparian bird species, and special status small mammals present within the project area; Nevin's Barberry ecology, sensitivity of the species to human activities, legal protection afforded to these species, penalties for violations of Federal and State laws, notification procedures by workers or contractors if a special status plant species is found in a construction area. The program will consist of a class presented by a qualified biologist or a video, provided the qualified biologist is present to answer questions. Handout materials will be distributed for workers with important information about the regulated species for future reference and as a reminder of the program's content. Following the education program, the handouts will be posted in the contractor and resident engineer office, where they will remain through the duration of the project. The contractor, resident engineer, and the qualified biologist will be responsible for ensuring that employees are aware of the listed species. If additional employees are added to the project after initiation, they will receive instruction prior to working on the project.

BIO-6: Bio-7 Exclusion Fence: Prior to any ground-disturbance activities, exclusionary fencing (i.e., silt fence or other suitable non-penetrable fencing) will be installed along the boundary to prevent any construction activities from encroaching into adjacent areas and to prevent Western Spadefoot from moving into the construction area.

BIO-7: Bio-Invertebrate-1 – Project-Specific Measure 1 – Pre-construction Rare Insect Host Plant Surveys: Within 3 days prior to construction, a qualified biologist will conduct pre-construction clearance surveys to ensure no host plants occur within the proposed area of ground disturbance or vegetation removal.

BIO-8: Bio-Invertebrate-2 – Project-Specific Measure 2 – Preconstruction Invertebrate Species Survey: Prior to any ground disturbance, a qualified biologist shall survey for potential habitat suitability and presence of Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*). The habitat assessment for Crotch's bumble bee shall be performed according to the 2023 CDFW Survey Considerations for Candidate Bumble Bee (<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=213150>). The preconstruction Crotch's bumblebee survey must be conducted by a contractor-supplied biologist no more than 1 week prior to project activities within the Biological Study Area. The surveys shall include 100 percent visual coverage and include a minimum 50-foot buffer in adjacent habitat. If a Crotch's bumble bee or bumble bee nest is located, the Resident Engineer and Caltrans biologist must be contacted, and additional measures and/or agency coordination will be required.

BIO-9: Bio-Project-Specific Measure 2 – Pre-construction Small-Mammal Surveys: Within 3 days prior to construction, a qualified biologist will conduct pre-construction clearance surveys to ensure no special-status small mammals occur within the proposed areas of off-highway work, ground disturbance or vegetation removal.

BIO-10: Bio-Project-Specific Measure 3 – Pre-construction Bat Clearance Surveys: Within 3 days prior to construction, a qualified biologist will conduct pre-construction bat clearance surveys to ensure no special-status small mammals occur within the proposed area of off-highway work, ground disturbance or vegetation removal, including culvert locations and at the San Jacinto River bridge.

BIO-11: Bio-Project-Specific Measure 4 – Pre-Construction Surveys (Western Spadefoot). The pre-construction surveys will be conducted by a USFWS-approved qualified Biologist (i.e., one with Western Spadefoot surveying/handling experience) to determine their presence or absence within the construction footprint. The Biologist will walk the impact area to search for any potential breeding areas. A report documenting the pre-construction survey results and measures that will be required during construction will be provided to Caltrans and the Wildlife Agencies. The surveys and the relocation of Western Spadefoot shall be conducted as directed by the relocation plan approved by USFWS.

BIO-12: Bio-Project-Specific Measure 5 – Biological Monitor. The CDFW pre-approved biologist with the appropriate recovery permit for Western Spadefoot relocation will monitor all construction-related activities to ensure that all conservation

measures are being implemented and that there are no unanticipated impacts. These activities include, but are not limited to, blasting work, clearing and grubbing, and staging/ storage of equipment.

BIO-13: Bio-Avian-1 Preconstruction Nesting Bird Survey: If project activities cannot avoid the nesting season, generally regarded as Feb 1 – Sept 30, then preconstruction nesting bird surveys must be conducted 3 days prior to construction by a Contractor-supplied biologist to locate and avoid nesting birds. If an active avian nest is located during construction, a Caltrans biologist must establish a no-construction buffer. A Caltrans biologist will monitor the nest until the young have fledged or the nest is no longer active.

BIO-14: Bio-Avian-2 Preconstruction Burrowing Owl Clearance Survey: In accordance with the 2012 CDFW Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, pre-construction focused occupancy surveys shall be conducted in the locations where suitable habitat is present if temporary or permanent impacts extend into the BSA. Caltrans will perform one survey within 30 days prior to construction, and an additional survey within 24 hours of beginning construction.

BIO-15: Bio-Plant-1 Rare Plant Surveys, Flagging and Fencing: Within 1 week prior to construction, a qualified biologist will conduct a preconstruction survey for rare plants, including all areas of proposed off-highway work. Any rare plants discovered must be flagged for visual identification to construction personnel for work avoidance. If rare plants are discovered featuring multiple plants in a single location must be fenced with Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) temporary fencing.

BIO-16: Bio-12 Fence Monitoring: Fence and enclosure (onsite cleared areas) inspections shall occur throughout the duration of the project by the monitor and/or project personnel trained by the monitor prior to commencing construction activities and after construction activities are completed. If during construction the fence fails, work will cease until it is repaired, and afterwards the biological monitor will inspect (and clear) the site for ARTOs.

BIO-17: Bio-13 Fence Removal: All fencing shall be removed as a last order of work. During removal, a biological monitor familiar with Western Spadefoot and authorized to handle and relocate Western Spadefoot should be present.

BIO-18: Bio-14 Control of Work: No construction work within Western Spadefoot habitat shall occur until the area is cleared of the species. No work will be allowed if any of the exclusionary devices are not installed in accordance with respective specifications.

BIO-19: Bio-15 Animal Entrapment Avoidance: To prevent inadvertent entrapment of animals during the construction phase of a project, all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches should be covered at the close of each working day, by plywood or similar materials, or provided with one or more escape ramps constructed of earth fill or wooden planks.

Before such holes or trenches are filled, they should be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals. The contractor-supplied biologist will ensure compliance with entrapment avoidance at the close of the working day and conduct an inspection prior to the onset of work the following day.

BIO-20: Bio-16 Western Spadefoot in Project Area: If during construction activities western spadefoot is discovered within the project site, all construction activities shall stop, and the biologist shall be notified.

BIO-21: Bio-18 Western Spadefoot Seasonal Avoidance: For proposed culvert repair work at PM 32.78, Caltrans will avoid the wet season and breeding season for western spadefoot, from January through May. Work at this location will only occur in July through December during the calendar year during construction.

BIO-22: Bio-19 Branchiopod Seasonal Avoidance: For proposed culvert repair work at PM 32.78, Caltrans will avoid the breeding season for Riverside fairy shrimp and vernal pool fairy shrimp, from January through May. Work at this location will only occur in July through December during the calendar year during construction.

BIO-23: Bio-20 ESA Fencing: Prior to vegetation clearing or construction, highly visible barriers (such as orange construction fencing) will be installed providing a no work buffer around riparian and riverine communities adjacent to the project footprint and flagged as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) to be preserved. The ESAs will serve as an exclusionary buffer delineating area where no work shall be performed. More specifically, no grading or fill activity of any type will be permitted within these ESAs. In addition, heavy equipment, including motor vehicles, will not be allowed to operate within the ESAs. All construction equipment will be operated in a manner so as to prevent accidental damage to nearby preserved areas. No structure of any kind, or incidental storage of equipment or supplies, shall be allowed within these protected zones. Silt fence barriers will be installed at the ESA boundary to prevent accidental deposition of fill material in areas where vegetation is adjacent to planned grading activities.

2.3.5 Cultural Resources

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	Less Than Significant Impact
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	Less Than Significant Impact

2.3.5.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Cultural Resources

A Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) (Caltrans 2025a) was prepared for the project and approved on November 17, 2025. Caltrans, pursuant to Section 106 PA Stipulation IX.A, has determined a Finding of No Historic Properties Affected is appropriate for this undertaking because there are no historic properties within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) map.

The APE was established as the project footprint to include both direct impacts and potential indirect effects that may develop as a result of this undertaking. The APE was delineated to encompass the maximum extent of direct and indirect impacts within the project's horizontal and vertical construction footprints and is approximately 342.0 acres total. The horizontal component of the APE is 7.34 miles long and fluctuates from 95.0 feet wide in areas where only pavement is proposed to 505.0 feet wide to accommodate areas with both pavement and ADA curb ramp installation. The maximum vertical limit of the APE is 10.0 feet above grade for construction equipment access and bridge railing installation. It is important to note that the majority of the depth along the project APE is less than 1.0 foot below grade for pavement rehab. The APE maps can be found in Attachment A of the HPSR prepared for this project.

A formal record search was not completed for this project. However, record searches for previous projects—1E660 in 2015, the Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA) survey in 2011, and 49400 in 2008—completely encompass the APE and were utilized for the current study, as they have been incorporated into the Caltrans Cultural Resources Database (CCRD). The CCRD was queried in April 2025 and resulted in the identification of three previously recorded resources at the APE.

A Sacred Lands File (SLF) search was requested with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on June 16, 2025. A negative SLF response was received on July 8, 2025, along with a list of tribal government contacts. The following tribes were contacted: Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians, Cabazon Band of Cahuilla Indians, Cahuilla Band of Indians, Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla and Cupeño Indians, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Pala Band of Mission Indians, Pechanga Band of Indians, Quechan Indian Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation, Ramona Band of Cahuilla, Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians, Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians, Serrano Nation of Mission Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians, Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, and Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation.

Only one response was received. On July 25, 2025, Pala Band of Mission Indians responded and deferred to Tribes that are closer in proximity. Follow-up letters were sent out August 15, 2025, and September 30, 2025. Caltrans has received no further responses to date.

a) and b): Less-Than-Significant Impact

The record search identified three cultural resources within 0.25 miles of the immediate project area. One cultural resource (P-33-009498) is outside the APE and would not be affected by the project. The second cultural resource (P-33-000797) had its site record updated in 2011 to reflect that the site was no longer extant in the ROW. The third cultural resource, P-33-015752, was recorded as CBJ Dairy, was determined ineligible for listing on the NRHP, and is not a historic property. Additionally, four bridge structures are in the project area and railing work may take place on these structures. However, all four spans—56-0820, 56-0782, 56-0561, and 56-0435—are Category 5 (not eligible) bridges.

The project is within previously disturbed portions of SR-79 and I-10. The project is located in areas experiencing continual disturbances via construction and maintenance of each respective highway. The entirety of the project's limits was previously examined, and it was determined that the project is unlikely to disturb or encounter significant intact subsurface cultural deposits due to lack of surface materials related to significant cultural resources and extensive previous disturbances attributed to highway construction and maintenance. Furthermore, the survey results in 2025, 2015, 2011, and 2008 confirmed that there are no associated constituents of P-33-000797 in the Caltrans ROW.

Any surface and near-surface cultural deposits that may have been present within the APE would have been destroyed during the original construction activities. Given the infrastructure in the area and original construction activities, there is a low potential to encounter or impact historical and archaeological resources. Impacts would be less than significant.

c): Less-Than-Significant Impact

No human remains were discovered during field surveys conducted for the project, and no formal cemeteries are within the project site. If buried cultural materials, including human remains, are encountered during construction, it is Caltrans' policy that work stops in that area until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the finding. If human remains are discovered, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 would be followed. This code, in summary, states that further disturbances and activities would stop in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the county coroner shall be contacted under this circumstance. Pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the NAHC, who will then notify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD), as further detailed in measure **CR-2**.

2.3.5.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following measures will be implemented for Cultural Resources:

CR-1: If buried cultural resources are encountered during project activities, it is Caltrans policy that work stop within 60 feet of the area until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the find.

CR-2: If human remains are discovered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities shall cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner contacted. Pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the NAHC, who will then notify the MLD. At this time, the person who discovered the remains will contact Gabrielle Duff, District Environmental Branch Chief [(909) 501-5142] or Julie Scrivner, District Native American Coordinator [(909) 260-8265] so that they may work with the MLD on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of Public Resources Code 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

2.3.6 Energy

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	No Impact
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	No Impact

2.3.6.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Energy

a) and b): No Impact

The project is anticipated to use a minimal amount of energy during construction activities, such as roadway repaving, culvert and slope repair, guardrail replacement, and other construction activities. Construction-related effects on energy are likely to be greatest during energy use, associated with the handling and transport of construction materials to and from the project site. However, construction activities are expected to be short term in duration and, therefore, do not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during construction. The project would not conflict or obstruct any state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. There would be no changes to the operations, buildings, or energy-consuming land uses as a result of the project. As such, no impacts are anticipated.

2.3.6.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are not required for energy.

2.3.7 Geology and Soils

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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 Zoning 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.	No Impact
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	No Impact
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	No Impact
iv) Landslides?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	Less Than Significant Impact
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	Less Than Significant Impact
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?	No Impact
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	No Impact
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	No Impact

2.3.7.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils

a i): No Impact

The potential for surface rupture is evaluated based on the project's distance to an active earthquake fault where there is evidence of surface rupture in the last 11,700 years. The locations of potentially active faults are zoned and mapped under the Alquist-Priolo Act by the State of California. The project site is located within the Earthquake Fault Zone of the San Jacinto Fault. The closest segment of the San Jacinto Fault to the site is the Claremont Fault, located near the junction of SR-79 and Gilman Springs Road (CGS 2025). Therefore, it was determined that there is high potential for fault rupture to have an impact on the project in the event of a ground rupturing earthquake on the Claremont Fault. However, it should be noted that the project does not include any features that would cause, contribute or exacerbate a fault rupture event onsite.

Although the potential exists for fault rupture within the project site, the project would not feature a substantial number of people needed to construct or operate the project, or any structures meant for human occupancy in the short or long term. Implementation of

the project would not include a significant ground rupture risk greater than what is a part of existing conditions. Given the nature of the project, no exacerbation of existing geological conditions is anticipated, including those associated with potential fault rupture. No impact would occur.

a ii): No Impact

The project is in a seismically active region of Southern California and would be subjected to strong seismic ground shaking. Earthquake faults closest to the project limits include the San Jacinto Fault Zone (runs northwest to southwest near the project's southern terminus), and the Lakeview Fault (runs parallel to the San Jacinto Fault and is located more south).

The project proposes improvements to existing facilities that would be designed and constructed in accordance with Caltrans' current highway and structure seismic design standards, which would minimize potential impacts. With implementation of these standard measures, the project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects due to strong seismic shaking. No impact would occur.

a iii): No Impact

Liquefaction is the sudden loss in strength of a saturated, cohesionless soil caused by the buildup of pore water pressure during cyclic loading, such as that produced by an earthquake. The effects of liquefaction can include lateral and vertical ground displacements, slope instability and lateral spreading, and bearing failure. According to the Liquefaction Zones map in the County of Riverside General Plan, Safety Element, the project is not within an area susceptible to liquefaction; therefore, no impacts are anticipated (County of Riverside 2024).

a iv) and c): Less-Than-Significant Impact

The project is in mountainous terrain with steep slopes. According to the Landslide Risk map in the County of Riverside General Plan, Safety Element, most of the project corridor traverses' areas varying from low to moderate susceptibility to landslides. Areas of high susceptibility to landslides are located near PM R35.7 through PM R35.0 in Lamb Canyon (County of Riverside 2024). However, the project features roadside improvements to existing facilities along a transportation corridor and would restore culverts in fair condition to protect the embankment and roadway from potential slope failure. The project would follow Caltrans' latest seismic procedures and design requirements to minimize any potential effects related to liquefaction and seismically induced settlement. Therefore, the project is anticipated to result in less-than-significant impacts associated with potential landslides.

b): Less-Than-Significant Impact

Construction activities during the construction phase of the project would have the potential to displace soil and temporarily increase the potential for soils to be subject to wind and water erosion. The disturbed soil area is defined by Caltrans as consisting of

areas of exposed, erodible soil that are within the construction limits and that result from construction-related activities. Construction site BMPs, which are standard practices for erosion and water quality control, would be used on the project site. Temporary erosion control would be provided during construction, and permanent erosion control would be applied to all disturbed soil areas at completion of all soil disturbing activities. Impacts would be less than significant.

d): No Impact

Expansive soils are those that include a significant amount of clay and are subject to swelling and can result in a change in volume and can exert pressure on loads placed on them. The project corridor is predominantly comprised of soils that are very gravelly, coarse, and well-drained, as well as those that are coarse-loamy and fine-loamy and well-drained soil. Therefore, it is not anticipated that expansive soil would be present within the project corridor.

e): No Impact

The project would preserve, repair, and extend the life of the roadway pavement; repair culverts and slopes; upgrade TMS elements and guardrails; and improve the overall ride quality of SR-79 within the project limits; as such, it is not expected to affect existing or proposed septic tanks or alternate wastewater disposal systems, nor would the use of septic tanks be involved during construction. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

f): No Impact

According to the Paleontological Memorandum, because the project is in a previously disturbed area, no paleontological resources are anticipated to be encountered, and no further paleontological studies are warranted. Additionally, there are no unique geological features that are expected to be affected by the project.

2.3.7.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are not required for geology and soils.

2.3.8 GHG Emissions

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs?	No Impact

2.3.8.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for GHG Emissions

a): Less-Than-Significant Impact

The purpose of the project is to preserve, repair, and extend the service life of the existing pavement and improve the ride quality of the roadway. As the project would not increase the number of travel lanes on SR-79, no increase in operational greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is expected to occur. The GHG estimates for construction emissions on-road/offsite operations have been deduced as Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e) in 863 metric tons during the 140 days of construction activity for the project. Caltrans 2024 Standard Specifications (or most recent), BMPs, and avoidance and minimization measures GHG-1 and GHG-2 would be implemented. Therefore, environmental impacts resulting from project GHG emissions are considered to be less than significant.

b): No Impact

The project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions, including SCAG's 2024–2050 RTP/SCS, the Riverside County Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan, or the Riverside County Countywide Plan adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.

2.3.8.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following avoidance/minimization measure(s) would be implemented to minimize construction GHG emissions:

GHG-1: The contractor must comply with Standard Specification 7-1.02C (Emissions Reduction), which requires that the contractor certify awareness of ARB emissions reduction regulations and will comply with them.

GHG-2: The project will maintain equipment in proper tune and working conditions.

2.3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	Less Than Significant Impact
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?	Less Than Significant Impact
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	Less Than Significant Impact

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	Less Than Significant Impact
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two nautical 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?	No Impact
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	No Impact
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	No Impact

2.3.9.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials

a) and b): Less-Than-Significant Impact

Implementation of the project is not anticipated to 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. Typical construction-related hazardous materials, including fuel, solvents, paints, oils, and grease, would be used during construction. There is potential that any of these substances could be released during construction activities. However, compliance with federal, state, and local regulations would ensure that all hazardous materials are used, stored, and disposed of properly, which is anticipated to minimize potential impacts related to a hazardous materials release during the construction phase of the project.

Any transport of hazardous materials to the site and removal of hazardous waste from the site would comply with state and federal regulations and therefore is anticipated to result in a less-than-significant impact.

c): Less-Than-Significant Impact

The nearest schools adjacent to the project would be Mojave River Academy. Table 3-3 lists the schools, addresses, and approximate distances to the project.

Table 3-2. Schools within 0.25 Mile of the Project

School	Address	Distance from Project
Mojave River Academy	77 Beaumont, Beaumont, CA 92223	Adjacent to SR-79

Construction-related hazardous materials typical for roadway improvement projects, including fuel, solvents, paints, oils, and grease, would be used during construction of the project. It is possible that any of these substances could be released during

construction activities. However, impacts due to exposure to or disturbance of hazardous materials or wastes would generally be limited to the project site. While generally no impacts are anticipated, due to Mojave River Academy being adjacent to the project site, any impact would be less than significant.

d): Less-Than-Significant Impact

According to the Initial Site Assessment (Caltrans 2021), the project is not within an area included on a list of hazardous materials sites and has an overall low risk for hazardous waste involvement. There is potential for hazardous waste related to residue containing lead from paint and thermoplastic, as well as treated wood from guardrail posts. The project would adhere to Caltrans' standard practices in the handling and disposal of these materials. It is anticipated that there would be a less-than-significant impact in this regard.

e) and f): No Impact

The project is approximately 6.8 miles west of Banning Municipal Airport. This airport is a general aviation airport for private and smaller aircraft. The project is also approximately 6.6 miles north of the Hemet-Ryan Airport. Hemet-Ryan is a main CAL FIRE Air Attack Base, also used for civil purposes, Civil Air Patrol meetings, and more. The project does not include any features that would interfere with air traffic flight paths or other activities at the airports.

The project would preserve, repair, and extend the life of the roadway pavement; repair culverts and slopes; upgrade TMS elements and guardrails; and improve the overall ride quality of SR-79. As such, the project is not expected to interfere with emergency response or evacuation plans. During construction of the project, emergency response times could increase temporarily due to increased traffic congestion caused by construction, speed reductions, and the presence of construction personnel and equipment. A TMP, included as **TRA-1**, would be implemented to minimize delays and help ensure continued emergency access to the project area.

g): No Impact

The project corridor is within an area designated as a Very High Fire Severity Zone (County of Riverside 2020). According to CAL FIRE, Fire Severity Maps, much of the project corridor south of 1st Street in Beaumont traverses land designated as State Responsibility Areas (SRAs), meaning federal agencies have the primary and financial responsibility of preventing and suppressing wildfires in these areas. SR-79 also traverses land designated as Local Responsibility Areas in the southern portions of the project corridor (CAL FIRE 2025).

Although portions of the project corridor are within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone SRA, the project is not anticipated to exacerbate wildfire risk. As there are no structures proposed that would expose occupants to pollutant concentrations from wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire. The project would preserve, repair, and extend the life of the roadway pavement; repair culverts and slopes; upgrade TMS

elements and guardrails; and improve the overall ride quality and would not impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. During construction, a TMP, as included in measure **TRA-1**, would be implemented to minimize these delays and help to ensure continued emergency access to the project area. There would be no installation or maintenance of infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts on the environment, as the project would primarily be within existing ROW. Furthermore, the project is not anticipated to expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire instability, or drainage changes. The project would have a beneficial impact in repairing existing culverts and slopes, which would reduce the risk of these events occurring within the project area. In addition, the project would be testing for Lead Based Paint (LBP) and Asbestos Containing Material (ACM). Once the site investigation is complete, SSPs to comply with environmental commitments for ADL and LBP will be provided. There are no anticipated impacts within the project area.

2.3.9.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following measure would be implemented by the project for Hazardous Waste:

HAZ-1 NESHAP Notification SSP 14-9.02.

2.3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	No Impact
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	No Impact
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:	No Impact
(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	No Impact
(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	No Impact
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	No Impact
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	No Impact
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	No Impact

2.3.10.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality

a): No Impact

Temporary construction impacts on water quality have the potential to occur during ground-disturbing activities, material equipment use and storage at staging areas, and other construction activities. The project would be constructed entirely within existing state ROW; however, TCEs and drainage easements would be required for some culvert replacements. Therefore, the following two NPDES permits would be required: California Statewide Order No. 2022-0033-DWQ, Construction General Permit Order No. WQ 2022-0057 DWQ, NPDES Permit No. CAS000003; and NPDES General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Runoff Associated with Construction Activities CAS000002 Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES Permit No. CAS000002. Temporary impacts are anticipated to be minimized with implementation of construction BMPs to minimize construction runoff and protect water quality.

Compliance with the NPDES requirements would further reduce such polluting impacts during construction. Projects within state ROW are obligated to comply with the latest Caltrans and Regional Water Quality Control Board water quality standards relative to the treatment of post-construction stormwater runoff. Determination and implementation of BMPs within the ROW are defined based on the evaluation of existing site constraints, constituents of concern at the receiving waters, soil conditions, and hydraulic conditions. Prior to approval of the final design of the project, applicable post-construction BMPs would be identified to ensure that applicable Caltrans selection and siting criteria have been achieved. The BMPs would reduce long-term water quality impacts due to implementation of the project. Therefore, water quality impacts are not anticipated.

b): No Impact

The project is located within the Upper Santa Ana Valley – San Timoteo and San Jacinto groundwater basins (California Natural Resources Agency 2025). However, any project-related ground disturbance would be shallow, and the project would not require in-water work, such as dewatering or water diversion. The project would not adversely affect existing conditions associated with the groundwater table or have an adverse effect on aquifer recharge. In addition, construction activities would use commercially available water; groundwater sources would not be used for construction or operation of the project. Therefore, the project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Therefore, no impact would occur.

c) (i), (ii), (iii), and (iv): No Impact

Project improvements include pavement rehabilitation, cold plane and overlay of pavement, culvert replacements, curb ramp and slope repair, guardrail replacement, upgrade of the TMS, and implementation of a Class II bike route. The project would not alter existing

drainage patterns. Erosion control and stormwater BMPs would be incorporated as part of the project to reduce stormwater impacts. A SWPPP would be prepared and approved prior to construction in order to protect any disturbed surface areas, in accordance with the requirements stated in the NPDES General Permit, Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Storm Water Runoff Associated with Construction Activities (Construction General Permit, CAS000002 Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ CAS000002 for order number 2022-0057-DWQ), or subsequent permits in effect at the time of construction. Furthermore, BMPs would be designed and implemented to reduce the discharge of pollutants from the Caltrans storm drain system to the maximum extent practicable. In addition, the project is in a Significant Trash Generating Area, which requires the implementation of trash control BMPs within the project area. Erosion control measures would also be used to address site soil stabilization and reduce deposition of sediments into adjacent surface waters. Temporary water pollution control and permanent erosion control plans would be prepared during the plans, specifications, and estimate design phase of the project. No impacts are expected to occur with regard to runoff, drainage patterns, and water quality.

d): No Impact

Based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Maps (Map Numbers: 06065C0811G_LI and 06065C1460H), the project is mostly within Zone X (areas determined to be outside the 0.2-percent-annual-chance floodplain), with one culvert at PM 32.78 that is within Zone AE (base flood elevations not determined). The project is approximately 55 miles from the coastline of the Pacific Ocean; therefore, there is no risk of inundation by tsunamis. In addition, there are no major water bodies within or near the project limits. The nearest water body is Mystic Lake, approximately 3 miles west of the project; therefore, there is no risk of inundation by a seiche. No impacts due to flood, tsunami, or seiche are anticipated.

e): No impact

The project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin. There are no municipal or domestic water supply reservoirs or recharge facilities within the project limits. The proposed improvements to SR-79 would not result in impacts on groundwater. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

2.3.10.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures for hydrology and water quality are required.

2.3.11 Land Use and Planning

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Physically divide an established community?	No Impact
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	No Impact

2.3.11.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Land Use and Planning

a): No Impact

The project would preserve, repair, and extend the life of the roadway pavement; repair culverts and slopes; upgrade TMS elements and guardrails; and improve the overall ride quality of SR-79. These improvements would occur within existing facilities and would not physically divide an established community. No impact on established communities is anticipated.

b): No Impact

The project proposes improvements to existing facilities and would not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The project would be consistent with Riverside County policies (Policy C 3.2, Policy C 17.2) (County of Riverside 2024) and the SJVAP (Policy 12.1; County of Riverside 2021) to develop, maintain, and/or improve the trails and bikeways within the SJVAP.

2.3.11.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures are not required for land use and planning.

2.3.12 Mineral Resources

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?	No Impact
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?	No Impact

2.3.12.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Mineral Resources

a): No Impact

According to the Mineral Land Classification Maps prepared by the California Department of Conservation's Division of Mines and Geology (CGS 2025), the project is not within a designated Mineral Resource Zone and there are no known mineral or construction-quality aggregate deposits that may qualify as mineral resources. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of a known mineral resource and there would be no impact on mineral resources.

b): No Impact

The proposed project would not result in the loss of available mineral resources of value to the region, residents of the state, or locally important sites. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact.

2.3.12.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are not required for mineral resources.

2.3.13 Noise

Would the project result in:

Question	CEQA Determination
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 ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	No Impact
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	No Impact
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 nautical 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?	No Impact

2.3.13.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Noise

a), b), c): No Impact

According to the Noise Memorandum dated September 18, 2024, the project is not considered a Type I project under 23 CFR 772.7 in the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol. As such, the project is considered exempt from noise impact analysis requirements and does not require a noise analysis.

In addition, construction of the project would occur along the existing highway corridor, which currently experiences noise levels consistent with an active highway. Construction would be conducted in accordance with Section 14-8.02, “Noise Control,” of Caltrans’ 2022 SSP. In addition, any local noise ordinances that are more restrictive than the requirements stated in SSP 14-8.02 would be followed during construction. No nighttime construction activities are planned, and no noise impacts are anticipated.

Any groundborne noise or vibration would only occur during construction activities within an active highway and would be short term in duration. The generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise is not anticipated.

The project is not within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airstrip. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels and no impacts are anticipated to occur.

2.3.13.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following measure will be implemented for Noise:

NOI-1: SSP 14-8.02- Noise Control

Avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are not required for noise.

2.3.14 Population and Housing

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	No Impact
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	No Impact

2.3.14.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Population and Housing

a): No Impact

The project proposes to preserve, repair, and extend the life of the roadway pavement, repair culverts and slopes; upgrade TMS elements and guardrails; and improve the overall ride quality of SR-79. These improvements would not result in the construction of new homes or businesses, nor would there be a need for roads or other infrastructure that would induce unplanned population growth.

b): No Impact

The project would be constructed entirely within existing state ROW; however, TCEs and drainage easements would be required for some culvert replacements. TCEs and drainage easements would include the temporary use of adjacent properties for work associated with guardrail upgrades, culvert replacement, utility work, and staging.

No residents or businesses would need to be relocated as a result of the project, nor would any existing developments or people.

2.3.14.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are not required for population and housing.

2.3.15 Public Services

The project would 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 following public services:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Fire protection?	No Impact
b) Police protection?	No Impact
c) Schools?	No Impact
d) Parks?	No Impact
e) Other public facilities?	No Impact

2.3.15.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Public Services**a): No Impact**

Fire protection services within the project area are provided by the Riverside County Fire Department, Station 66. Riverside County Fire Department Station 78 is farther away, 2.6 miles south of the project. Table 3-4 provides a list of fire services within a 0.5-mile radius of the project area.

Table 3-3. Fire Services within 0.5 Mile of Project

Fire Service	Address	Distance from Project
Riverside County Fire Department Station 66	628 Maple Avenue, Beaumont	0.3 mile north

The project would not require permanent or temporary acquisition from any fire facility. Continuous uninterrupted access to SR-79 would be provided throughout construction of the project. However, construction activities have the potential to result in temporary, localized disruptions in construction areas, which could result in increased response times during construction. Construction-related delays would be addressed in the TMP prepared in coordination with a public information program prior to construction (see **TRA-1** in Section 2.3.17.2, *Transportation*). Implementation of the TMP would ensure that access is maintained for emergency services and fire service providers are contacted prior to construction.

The project is not expected to result in an increase in population or induce growth and, as such, would not cause an increase in demand for fire services beyond what was previously planned. Therefore, there would be no impact on fire services.

b): No Impact

Police protection services within the project area are provided by the Beaumont Police Department, at 660 Orange Avenue in Beaumont, which is approximately 0.2 mile from the project. The California Highway Patrol San Geronio Pass Office also provides police protection services and is 1.7 mile east of the project at 195 Highland Springs Ave, Beaumont. The City of Hemet Police Department is located approximately 5.5 miles southeast of the project.

The project would not require permanent or temporary acquisition from any police facility. As discussed above, continuous, uninterrupted access to SR-79 would be provided throughout construction of the project. However, construction activities have the potential to result in temporary, localized disruptions in construction areas, which could result in increased response times during construction. Construction-related delays would be addressed in the TMP prepared in coordination with a public information program prior to construction (see **TRA-1** in Section 2.3.17.2, *Transportation*). Implementation of the TMP would ensure that access is maintained for emergency services and police service providers are contacted prior to construction.

The project is not expected to result in an increase in population or induce growth and, as such, would not cause an increase in demand for police services beyond what was previously planned. Therefore, there would be no impact on police services.

c): No Impact

The nearest school adjacent to the project includes Mojave River Academy, which operates around the Beaumont School District. Table 3-5 lists the schools within 0.25 mile of the project.

Table 3-4. Schools within 0.25 Mile of Project

School	Address	Distance from Project
Mojave River Academy	77 Beaumont, Beaumont, CA 92223	Adjacent to SR-79

The project would not require permanent or temporary acquisition from any school. As discussed above, continuous, uninterrupted access to SR-79 would be provided throughout construction of the project. However, construction activities have the potential to result in temporary, localized disruptions in construction areas. Construction-related access and delays would be addressed in the TMP prepared in coordination with a public information program prior to construction (see **TRA-1** in Section 2.3.17.2, *Transportation*). Implementation of the TMP would ensure that access is maintained to the schools and that the school district and schools are contacted prior to construction.

The project is not expected to result in an increase in population or induce growth and, as such, would not cause an increase in demand for schools beyond what was previously planned. Therefore, there would be no impact on schools.

d): No Impact

Table 3-6 lists the parks within 0.5 mile of the project. The San Jacinto Wildlife Area adjacent to SR-79 is managed by the U.S. Forest Service. The project would not directly affect any park. As discussed above, continuous, uninterrupted access to SR-79 would be provided throughout construction of the proposed project. However, construction activities have the potential to result in temporary, localized disruptions in construction areas. Construction-related access would be addressed in the TMP prepared in coordination with a public information program prior to construction (see **TRA-1** in Section 2.3.17, *Transportation*). Implementation of the TMP would ensure that access is maintained to the parks.

The project is not expected to result in an increase in population or induce growth and, as such, would not cause an increase in demand for parks beyond what was previously planned. Therefore, there is no impact on the parks within the project area.

Table 3-5. Parks within 0.5 Mile of Project

Park	Address/Location	Distance from Project
Stewart Park	Intersections of Eighth and 11th Streets and Orange and Maple Avenues in Beaumont	0.3 mile north
Rangel Park	200–298 B Street, Beaumont, CA 92223	0.4 miles west
Lamb Canyon Trailhead	16411 Lamb Canyon Road, Beaumont, CA 92223	Adjacent to SR-79
San Jacinto Wildlife Area	17050 Davis Road, Lakeview, California 92567	Adjacent to SR-79
Colonial Lewis Millet Park	1996 N Ramona Boulevard, San Jacinto, CA 92582	0.4 mile south

e): No Impact

No other public facilities would be affected by the project.

2.3.15.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No additional avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are required.

2.3.16 Recreation

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	No Impact
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?	No Impact

2.3.16.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Recreation

a) and b): No Impact

The project would preserve, repair, and extend the life of the roadway pavement; repair culverts and slopes; upgrade TMS elements and guardrails; and improve the overall ride quality within SR-79. Implementation of the project would not generate a substantial increase in the use of any existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration could occur, nor would it require the construction or expansion of existing recreational facilities.

2.3.16.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures are not required for recreation.

2.3.17 Transportation

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?	No Impact
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	No Impact
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	No Impact
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	Less Than Significant Impact

2.3.17.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Transportation

a): No Impact

The project would preserve, repair, and extend the life of the roadway pavement; repair culverts and slopes; upgrade TMS elements and guardrails; add Class II bike lanes; and improve the overall ride quality within SR-79 project limits. As such, the project would not conflict with the County of Riverside General Plan, Circulation Element (County of Riverside 2020) or the SJVAP (County of Riverside 2021). The project would preserve, repair, and extend the life of the existing pavement; for that reason no impacts are anticipated.

b): No Impact

As the project involves preserving, repairing, and extending the life of the existing pavement; repairing culverts and slopes; upgrading TMS elements and guardrails; and improving the overall ride quality within SR-79 project limits, it does not involve any capacity-increasing elements; therefore, the project is unlikely to induce measurable and substantial increases in VMT and a VMT analysis is not required. As indicated in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(2), transportation projects that reduce or have no impact on VMT should be presumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact. As such, no impacts are anticipated in this regard.

c): No Impact

The project would not substantially increase hazards because of a design feature or incompatible uses. In general, the project would preserve, repair, and extend the life of the roadway pavement; repair culverts and slopes; upgrade TMS elements and guardrails; and improve the overall ride quality within the project limits. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated in this regard.

d): Less-Than-Significant Impact

Construction activities have the potential to result in temporary, localized, and site-specific disruptions during the construction period. This could lead to an increase in delay times for emergency response vehicles during construction; however, the project would include the Caltrans Standard Measure for preparation and implementation of a TMP (measure **TRA-1**, below), which would avoid or minimize any potential impacts. The project is expected to also provide continuous and uninterrupted access to SR-79 throughout the duration of construction. Less-than-significant impacts are anticipated during the construction period.

2.3.17.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Caltrans 2024 Standard Specifications (or most recent), BMPs, and the measure below would be implemented to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate any potential impacts on transportation:

TRA-1 Implement Traffic Management Plan: A traffic staging plan, as part of the TMP, will be implemented during project construction. The TMP will be prepared to minimize direct and cumulative construction impacts on the community. On completion, the final TMP will be available to the public and obtained by request from Caltrans. The TMP must be submitted with the construction plan to the police and fire departments of affected cities prior to commencement of construction activities. The TMP will include, but not be limited to, the following features:

- **Public Information:** Provide updates to affected residents, businesses, the general public, schools, and public transportation agencies through brochures and mailers, community meetings, websites, radio and newspaper advertisements, and social media.
- **Motorist Information:** Provide information using changeable message signs and ground-mounted signs.
- **Incident Management:** Implement a Construction Zone Enhanced Enforcement Program, and traffic handling.
- **Traffic Management During Construction:** Provide a traffic lane closure chart, detour route, pedestrian routes, and residential and commercial access routes.

2.3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

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:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) 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	Less Than Significant Impact
b) 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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	Less Than Significant Impact

2.3.18.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Tribal Cultural Resources

a) and b): Less-Than-Significant Impact

The project would involve preventive maintenance along an existing roadway, SR-79. Any project-related ground disturbance would be shallow and would not reach depths of native soil. Based on the HPSR and Archaeological Survey Report prepared for the project, Caltrans has determined a Finding of No Historic Properties Affected and there

are no historical resources present. Any surface and near-surface cultural deposits that may have been present within the APE would have been destroyed during the original construction of SR-79.

A Sacred Land File (SLF) search was requested with the Native American Heritage Commission on June 16, 2025. A negative SLF response was received on July 8, 2025, along with a list of tribal government contacts. The following tribes were contacted: Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians, Cabazon Band of Cahuilla Indians, Cahuilla Band of Indians, Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla and Cupeño Indians, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Pala Band of Mission Indians, Pechanga Band of Indians, Quechan Indian Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation, Ramona Band of Cahuilla, Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians, Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians, Serrano Nation of Mission Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians, Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, and Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation.

On July 25, 2025, Pala Band of Mission Indians was the only responds received, and they deferred to Tribes that are closer in proximity. Follow-up letters were sent out August 15, 2025, and September 30, 2025. Caltrans has received no further responses to date. The existing infrastructure in the area has a low/minimal likelihood of encountering intact subsurface cultural resources. Therefore, with implementation of **CR-1** and **CR-2**, related to archaeological and Native American discoveries, impacts on tribal cultural resources are anticipated to be less than significant.

2.3.18.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Refer to measures **CR-1** and **CR-2** in Section 2.3.5, *Cultural Resources*.

2.3.19 Utilities and Service Systems

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	No Impact
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	No Impact
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?	No Impact
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	No Impact

2.3.19.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems

a): Less Than Significant Impact

The proposed project scope would not result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment. Projects within state ROW are obligated to comply with the latest Caltrans and Regional Water Quality Control Board water quality standards relative to the treatment of post-construction stormwater runoff.

Determination and implementation of BMPs within the ROW are defined based on the evaluation of existing site constraints, constituents of concern at the receiving waters, soil conditions, and hydraulic conditions. Prior to approval of the final design of the project, applicable post-construction BMPs would be identified to ensure that applicable Caltrans selection and siting criteria have been achieved. The BMPs would reduce long-term water quality impacts due to implementation of the project. The existing utilities within the project limits belong to Southern California Gas Company, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District, City of Beaumont Sewer Utility, Waste Management, and City of Banning Utility. The relocation of the electrical poles would be further analyzed during the Final Design phase of the project. Impacts are to be determined, and avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures would be considered and implemented during the design phase.

There are a number of potential utilities identified within the project corridor. Utility providers and utilities are listed in Table 3-7 below.

Table 3-6. Utilities

Provider	Utility
Southern California Edison (SCE)	Electricity
Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas)	Gas
Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District	Water
City of Beaumont Sewer Utility	Sewage
Waste Management	Trash
City of Banning Utilities	Utilities, Water, and Sewer

b), c), d), and e): No Impact

The project would preserve, repair, and extend the life of the SR-79 roadway pavement; repair culverts and slopes; upgrade TMS elements and guardrails; create a Class II bike route within the existing roadway; and improve the overall ride quality within the project limits. As such, the project would not require water supplies to serve future development or result in the need for additional capacity for wastewater treatment. Caltrans standard measures would be taken to ensure proper disposal of construction materials is accomplished in an environmentally sensitive manner. It is Caltrans policy to recycle materials whenever possible. The project would be in compliance with all federal, state, and local solid waste statutes and regulations; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

2.3.19.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures are not required for utilities and service systems.

2.3.20 Wildfire

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

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	No Impact
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?	No Impact
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?	No Impact
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?	No Impact

2.3.20.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Wildfire

a), b), c), d): No Impact

According to the Caltrans District 8 Vulnerability Assessment Map (Caltrans 2025) and the CALFIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zones map, the project location has moderate wildfire exposure for the 2010 to 2069 wildfire exposures.

The project corridor and adjacent areas are located in moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones for both the State Responsibility Area (SRA) and Local Responsibility Area (LRA) (CAL FIRE 2025). Caltrans standard specifications mandate fire prevention procedures, including a fire prevention plan, to avoid accidental fire starts during construction. The project is not anticipated to exacerbate wildfire risk, as there are no structures proposed that would expose occupants to pollutant concentrations from wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire. The project would preserve, repair, and extend the life of the roadway pavement; repair culverts and slopes; upgrade Transportation Management System (TMS) elements and guardrails; and improve the overall ride quality within the project limits, and would not impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. There would be no installation or maintenance of infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts on the environment. Furthermore, the project is not anticipated to expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire instability, or drainage changes.

Additionally, the project proposes to repair existing culverts and slopes, which would improve the quality of the existing stormwater drainage system.

2.3.20.2 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures are not required for wildfire.

2.3.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	Less Than Significant Impact
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	No Impact

2.3.21.1 CEQA Significance Determinations for Mandatory Findings of Significance

a): Less Than Significant Impact. Based on the Natural Environment Study (Condensed Format), the project includes measures to avoid and/or minimize impacts to special-status species and their respective habitats. The culvert at PM 32.78 bears potentially suitable habitat to support western spadefoot. Pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act, western spadefoot was found to be absent from the PIA. Avoidance, minimization and MSHCP-prescribed conservation measures would be implemented; thus, direct impacts to western spadefoot are not anticipated. Furthermore, the project would not result in adverse modification of critical habitat for western spadefoot toad. The project would result in "no take" of State-listed species with the implementation of avoidance and minimization measures, including pre-construction clearance surveys. The project also includes avoidance and minimization measures to avoid potential impacts to federal or State-listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species. Refer to Section 2.3.4 Biological Resources for a complete listing of measures.

b): Less Than Significant Impact. Based on the HPSR prepared for the Project, there are three resources that appear to overlap into the project APE. One cultural resource (P-33-009498) is outside the APE and would not be affected by the project. The second cultural resource (P-33-000797) had its site record updated in 2011 to reflect that the

site was no longer extant in the ROW. The third cultural resource, P-33-015752, was recorded as CBJ Dairy, was determined ineligible for listing on the NRHP, and is not a historic property. Additionally, four bridge structures are in the project area and railing work may take place on these structures. However, all four spans—56-0820, 56-0782, 56-0561, and 56-0435—are Category 5 (not eligible) bridges.

The project lies within previously disturbed portions of SR-79 and I-10. The project is located in areas experiencing continual disturbances via construction and maintenance of each respective highway. The entirety of the project's limits was previously examined, and it was determined that the project is unlikely to disturb or encounter significant intact subsurface cultural deposits due to lack of surface materials related to significant cultural resources and extensive previous disturbances attributed to highway construction and maintenance. Furthermore, the survey results in 2025, 2015, 2011, and 2008 confirmed that there are no associated constituents of P-33-000797 in the Caltrans ROW. There is low potential to encounter or affect Historic Properties as there are no Historic Properties in the APE. Therefore, cumulatively considerable impacts on historical resources are not anticipated.

Further, based on the NES(CF) prepared for the project, the project does have jurisdictional delineation. However, the total temporary impacts to the Waters of the State are equal to 0.066 acres and no permanent impacts are anticipated. Therefore, this project is not anticipated to have significant adverse cumulative effects to jurisdictional waters or riparian vegetation.

Cumulatively considerable impacts to natural communities of concern, jurisdictional resources, and special-status plant and animals' species are not anticipated.

c): No Impact. Operation of the project is not expected to result in the exposure of persons to any substantially adverse natural or human-made hazards that could directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, such as geologic hazards, air emissions, hazardous materials, or flooding. No impacts are anticipated.

2.3.22 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

As indicated in Section 2.3.4, Biological Resources, Caltrans standard BMPs, the BMPs in the anticipated SWPPP, and Standard Specifications (latest version) would be implemented to minimize effects during construction. Furthermore, avoidance and minimization measures **BIO-General-1** through **BIO-20** would be implemented for the project.

Chapter 3 Comments and Coordination

Early and continuing coordination with the general public and public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process. It helps planners determine the necessary scope of environmental documentation and the level of analysis required, and to identify potential impacts and avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures and related environmental requirements. Agency and tribal consultation and public participation for this project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including interagency coordination meetings, public meetings, public notices, and Project Development Team meetings. This chapter summarizes the results of Caltrans' efforts to fully identify, address, and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination.

3.1 AGENCY COORDINATION

On January 28, 2022, letters were sent out to the County of Riverside, City of Beaumont, and City of San Jacinto to inform about the project. On March 15, 2022, the project manager did a presentation to the City of San Jacinto to go over the project schedule and cost.

The projects listed for the 2024 State Highway Operation and Protection Program will be shared with the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies. Prior to the contract bid, Public Affairs will coordinate a community outreach effort to inform the public of the project and any impacts that may take place.

3.2 NATIVE AMERICAN COORDINATION

A Sacred Land File (SLF) search was requested with the Native American Heritage Commission on June 16, 2025. A negative SLF response was received on July 8, 2025, along with a list of tribal government contacts. The following tribes were contacted: Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians, Cabazon Band of Cahuilla Indians, Cahuilla Band of Indians, Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla and Cupeño Indians, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Pala Band of Mission Indians, Pechanga Band of Indians, Quechan Indian Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation, Ramona Band of Cahuilla, Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians, Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians, Serrano Nation of Mission Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians, Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, and Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation.

Only once response was received. On July 25, 2025, Pala Band of Mission Indians responded and deferred to Tribes that are closer in proximity. Follow-up letters were sent out August 15, 2025 and September 30, 2025. Caltrans has received no further responses to date.

3.3 RESOURCE AGENCY COORDINATION

Caltrans obtained official species lists from USFWS and CDFW using the IPaC and CNDDDB online databases, respectively, on February 26, 2026. Caltrans obtained a National Marine Fisheries species list on February 25, 2026. No additional agency coordination has taken place to date.

On March 25, 2026, Caltrans coordinated with Christopher Briggs, Senior Biologist with CDFW, and John Taylor, Field Representative for USFWS.

Additionally, on April 3, 2026, Caltrans coordinated with Esperanza Sandoval and Nathan Kudla with the Riverside Conservation Authority (RCA).

3.4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This Draft Initial Study will be circulated and made available for public review and comment during the public review period. The public notice and opportunity to request a public hearing will be distributed to the state, regional, and local agencies and elected officials, as well as interested groups, organizations, and individuals as listed in Distribution List.

Chapter 4 List of Preparers

The following personnel contributed to the preparation of this environmental document.

4.1 California Department of Transportation

- Zahangir Alam, Ph.D., P.E. Project Manager
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- Olufemi Odufalu, Branch Chief, Environmental Engineering
- Farhana Islam, Transportation Engineer Civil, Noise
- Fatima Islam, Transportation Engineer Civil, Air Quality
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- Michael Grimes, Associate Environmental Planner, Biological Studies and Surveys.
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- Shannon Clarendon, Associate Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
- Bahram Karimi, Associate Environmental Planner, Paleontology
- Adam Compton Branch Chief, Environmental Scientist Regulatory Permits
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- Michael Huynh, Transportation Engineer Civil, Hydraulics
- Almabeth Anderson, Senior Landscape Archaeologist, Landscape
- Gabriela Cardenas, Associate Landscape Architecture, Landscape
- Greg Clark Branch Chief, Landscape Architecture/Stormwater
- Tariq Jouzi- Transportation Engineer Civil, Stormwater

4.2 ICF

- Brian Calvert, Environmental Project Director
- Brittany Buscomb, GIS
- Court Morgan, Environmental QA/QC
- Liane Chen, Environmental Project Manager

- Johnnie Garcia, GIS Manager
- Saadia Byram, Editing
- Youji Yasui, Environmental Project Manager

Chapter 5 Distribution List

A public notice of this Initial Study was distributed to state, regional, and local agencies, and elected officials. In addition, all property owners within a 500-foot radius of the project limits were provided the public notice. The Distribution List of Public Agencies and Elected Officials is followed by the list of Interested Parties, Property Owners, and Members of the Public.

5.1 Public Agencies and Elected Officials

CALIFORNIA DEPT. OF FISH & WILDLIFE (REGION 6) 3602 INLAND EMPIRE BOULEVARD, #C-220 ONTARIO, CA 91764	CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL 601 NORTH 7TH STREET SACRAMENTO, CA 95811	SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON CO PO BOX 800, ROSEMEAD, CA, 91770
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE 1400 TENTH STREET SACRAMENTO, CA 95814	CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION COMMISSION CHAIR 1120 N STREET ROOM 2221 SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-5605	CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL 195 HIGHLAND SPRINGS AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
WESTERN RIVERSIDE CO REG CONSERV AUTHORITY 3133 MISSION INN AVE, RIVERSIDE, CA 92507	RIVERSIDE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION PO BOX 12008, RIVERSIDE, CA 92502	BEAUMONT POLICE DEPARTMENT 660 ORANGE AVENUE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION 1550 HARBOR BOULEVARD, SUITE 100 WEST SACRAMENTO, CA 95694	SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS CO 101 ASH ST NO HW07, SAN DIEGO, CA 92101	BEAUMONT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT 350 BROOKSIDE AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
CITY OF SAN JACINTO PO BOX 488, SAN JACINTO, CA 92581	CITY OF BEAUMONT 550 E 6TH ST, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD 3737 MAIN ST, STE 500 RIVERSIDE, CA 92501
RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT STATION 66 628 MAPLE AVENUE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	RIVERSIDE COUNTY CLERK OF THE BOARD 385 N. ARROWHEAD AVE RIVERSIDE, CA 92415	RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIFTH DISTRICT SUPERVISOR 4080 LEMON ST., 5TH FLOOR RIVERSIDE, CA 92501
RIVERSIDE COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS 825 EAST THIRD STREET RIVERSIDE, CA 92415	RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT STATION 78 2450 COTTONWOOD AVE, SAN JACINTO, CA 92580	RIVERSIDE COUNTY LAND USE SERVICES-PLANNING 385 N. ARROWHEAD AVE RIVERSIDE, CA 92415
CITY OF HEMET 445 E FLORIDA AVE HEMET, CALIFORNIA	CAL FIRE SOUTHERN REGION 3800 N. SIERRA WAY RIVERSIDE, CA 92405	BEAUMONT CHERRY VALLEY WATER DIST PO BOX 2037, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
HEMET POLICE DEPARTMENT 450 E LATHAM AVE HEMET, CA 92543		

5.2 Interested Parties, Property Owners, and Members of the Public

ROSSETTI ANTHONY F 635 AMERICAN AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	AGUILERA LARRY & VERONICA E REVOCABLE TRUST 943 UNION ST, CHERRY VALLEY, CA 92223	LEWIS DAVID LELAND REVOCABLE LIVING TRUST 3309 LOS NOGALES RD, SIMI VALLEY, CA 93063
ROSANO JAMES A & CYNTHIA L FAMILY TRUST 6594 APPLEWOOD ST, HIGHLAND, CA 92346	SOUTHERN PACIFIC TRANSPORTATION CO 1700 FARNAM ST 10TH FL S, OMAHA, NE 68102	SANDOVAL RUBEN 4754 HILLSBORO WAY, STOCKTON, CA 95207
CALIFORNIA GSP RESCUE INC 700 E 4TH ST, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	4TH STREET INDUSTRIAL PARK 252 W 4 TH STREET BEAUMONT, CA 92223	THRIFTY OIL CO 13116 IMPERIAL HWY, SANTA FE SPRINGS, CA 90670
FERRELIGAS 1 LIBERTY PLZ, LIBERTY, MO 64068	LAMB CANYON 22 VISTA ENCANTADA, RANCHO MIRAGE, CA 92270	WALSH JACK 537 MAPLE AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
CERVANTEZ NICHOLAS JOSEPH PO BOX 609, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	DANIEL THOMAS L PO BOX 2041, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	BUILDING MANAGEMENT SERVICES INC 19625 HWY 79, GILMAN HOT SPRINGS, CA 92583
HAMILTON AMY PO BOX 3333, RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91729	LENTINI CARLO 36628 OAK RIDGE DR, YUCAIPA, CA 92399	PATEL GIRISHKUMAR 13337 SOUTH ST STE 164, CERRITOS, CA 90703
KURGINA 26611 TAMPICO PL, MISSION VIEJO, CA 92691	WLH TRUST 35435 SUMMERS LN, PHILOMATH, OR 97370	SCOTT AG PROP 18051 GILMAN SPRINGS RD, MORENO VALLEY, CA 92555
LIZMARTO 764 W RAMONA EXPRESSWAY STE C, PERRIS, CA 92571	JENSEN JUSTINE ASHLEY 28786 BRODIAEA AVE, MORENO VALLEY, CA 92555	CV ACRES PO BOX 67, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
RASTOGI FAMILY LTD PARTNERSHIP 1275 E LATHAM AVE, HEMET, CA 92543	JARAMILLO JESSE 551 EDGAR AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	DAVID SHIMSHON TRUST 1171 S ROBERTSON BLVD # 366, LOS ANGELES, CA 90035
BEAUMONT SPRINGS 13116 IMPERIAL HWY, SANTA FE SPGS, CA 90670	RENFROE KENNETH L PO BOX 10081, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92423	
KWON DAVID S 8 CLEAR VISTA DR, ROLLING HILLS ESTATES, CA 90274	NOPHSKER DOUGLAS PO BOX 249, CANYONVILLE, OR 97417	LAUNDER FRANK E 16303 OLD RANCHERO RD, HESPERIA, CA 92345
PIERCE HARDY LTD PARTNERSHIP 1019 ROUTE 519, EIGHTY FOUR, PA 15330	DALKOS CHRIS LIVING TRUST 3129 MARBER AVE, LONG BEACH, CA 90808	DURA CALIF 2315 BELOIT AVE, JANESVILLE, WI 53548
WESSMAN JOHN 201 N PALM CANYON DR STE 200, PALM SPRINGS, CA 92262	SOUTH BEAUMONT 15538 GALE AVE, HACIENDA HEIGHTS, CA 91745	LEE RICKY A 325 E 5TH ST, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
RG LEGACY INVESTMENTS 135 LONG LN, CITY INDUSTRY, CA 91746	AKRE JAN PO BOX 3005, NAPA, CA 94558	MORGAN JOSEPHINE 510 MAGNOLIA AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223

HAGGAI 2:19 REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS-BEAUMONT 226 E 6TH ST, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	OREILLY AUTO ENTERPRISES PO BOX 9167, SPRINGFIELD, MO 65801	SOUTHLAND PETROLEUM INC 51 CHEROKEE, IRVINE, CA 92602
READ SCOTT M PO BOX 2064, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	URENA HILARIO 550 EDGAR AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	BAKER WILLIAM H JR PO BOX 790118, VIRGIN, UT 84779
TAVARES JOSE G 540 EDGAR AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	DANIEL WILLIAM E PO BOX 2041, BEAUMONT, CA 92373	TELLEZ LEON S 539 ORANGE AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
M&T PURE TRUST ORGANIZATION & PRIVATE PENSION PLAN 1315 CALLE AVANZADO, SAN CLEMENTE, CA 92673	FAGO KENNETH & MARTHA REVOCABLE TRUST 10420 BEAUMONT AVE UNIT A, CHERRY VALLEY, CA 92223	ARYCO HVAC 140 E PALM AVE, MONROVIA, CA 91016-2851
ESTRELLA ROLANDO 505 EUCLID AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	RAMONA EXPRESSWAY 2751 FM 1055, DIMMITT, TX 79027	DIABLOS MICHELADAS MEXICAN GRILL INC 21464 SHAKESPEARE CT, MORENO VALLEY, CA 92557
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MR TACO BEAUMONT LLC PO BOX 7335, REDLANDS, CA 92374	AAA MANAGEMENT PROP PO BOX 9794, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92407	HIMA GERTRAUD ESTATE OF 35471 BRYON TR, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
KOZY MANUFACTURED HOUSING COMMUNITY 6653 EMBARCADERO DR STE C, STOCKTON, CA 95219	PATEL JAGDISH 625 E 5TH ST, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	LU FAMILY TRUST 730 CALUMET AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
LI DONGXIAO 11672 PETUNIA CT, JURUPA VALLEY, CA 91752	SPYKSMA TRUST 2249 W RAMONA EXPY, SAN JACINTO, CA 92582	77 BEAUMONT GATEWAY PLAZA 15641 BOYLE AVE, FONTANA, CA 92337
HILBERT PROP II 1250 E WALNUT STE 236, PASADENA, CA 91106	RENTZ MICHAEL T PO BOX 3375, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	NGUYEN KEN THANH NGOC 530 ORANGE AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
DESCH DOMENIC 290 E LUIS ESTRADA RD, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	FORGE TRUST CO CFBO DENNIS PARTAIN IRA 071638 59 HELEN AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	JONES DOUGLAS C 899 TAMARISK RD, PALM SPRINGS, CA 92262
INV, LINWIN 51 CHEROKEE IRVINE, CA 92602	HUANG MAY H 2062 FOOTHILL BLV, SANTA ANA, CA 92705	ALBERS CALIF SOUTH 6241 JOAQUIN ST, CHINO, CA 91710
JWDCO 601 S HARBOR BLVD, LA HABRA, CA 90631	BEAUMONT MOTORCYCLES 2301 W RAMSEY ST, BANNING, CA 92220	BEAUMONT REAL ESTATE INV 710 E PARKRIDGE AVE STE 106, CORONA, CA 92879
REGULAR BAPTIST CONFERENCE OF SOUTHERN CA 18080 GILLMAN SPRINGS RCH, MORENO VALLEY, CA 92555	ABARRO ERNESTO MANALO PO BOX 1202, BELLFLOWER, CA 90707	PRIVETT JOE W 402 EDGAR AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223

NEAL T BAKER ENTERPRISES INC 520 NEWPORT CNDR NO 630, NEWPORT BEACH, CA 92660	MORALES RUBEN 529 ORANGE AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	BATES MICHAEL R 845FORT STOCKTON DR. UNIT 511, SAN DIEGO, CA 92103
COUSSOULIS ARIANTHI C 341 W 2ND ST STE 1, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401	STC ONE LLC 2000 CORPORATE DR, CANONSBURG, PA 15317	JOHNSON LEE OTIS 530 EDGAR AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
PLUMLEY JEFFREY H 1912 HUNTINGTON DR, SAN MARINO, CA 91108	LAM JUSTIN WALLACE 106 BLAZE, IRVINE, CA 92618	SPIRIT REALTY 11995 EL CAMINO REAL, SAN DIEGO, CA 92130
VILLALOBOS FAMILY TRUST 549 ORANGE AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	JAGS HOSPITALITY 13337 133 SOUTH ST NO 164, CERRITOS, CA 90703	A B STEWARD II INC PO BOX 7399, REDLANDS, CA 92375
MATHEWS HAROLD A JR 461 DOROTHY ANNA DR, BANNING, CA 92220	888 JACINTO 301 S DOUBLEDAY AVE, ONTARIO, CA 91761	ZAMORA JAVIER 637 PALM AVE, BEAUMONT, CA 92223
CHERRY MOBILE PARK 10420 BEAUMONT AVE NO A, BEAUMONT, CA 92223	GALLEGOS NICOLAS 38263 WILLOW CT, MURRIETA, CA 92562	
FRANKLIN VINCENT 37444 WILDWOOD VIEW DR, YUCAIPA, CA 92223	AMRE CORP 5078 GRANADA CT, RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91737	ALBERS TEO S 13437 MOUNTAIN AVE, CHINO, CA 91710
BEAUMONT EQUITY GROUP 745 MCCLINTOCK DR STE 305, BURR RIDGE, IL 60527	JETLINK INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL INV 596 S GREENWOOD AVE, SAN MARINO, CA 91108	57 BEAUMONT 425 S SAN GABRIEL BLVD # 800, SAN GABRIEL, CA 91776
550 REAL ESTATE 4300 EDISON AVE, CHINO, CA 91710	LAM HARRY 3819 JASON CIR, TORRANCE, CA 90505	NORTH COUNTY BANK PO BOX 2609, CARLSBAD, CA 92018
KRICK RICHARD O 852 VIA PANORAMA, BANNING, CA 92220	AQLEH HUSAM F 9359 AVENIDA SAN TIMOTEO, CHERRY VALLEY, CA 92223	PAMA MGT #6534 4900 SANTA ANITA AVE # 2C, EL MONTE, CA 91731

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Appendix A Title VI/Non-Discrimination Policy Statement

California Department of Transportation

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
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September 2025

TITLE VI/NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the assurances set forth in the Caltrans' Title VI Program Plan, to ensure that no person in the United States shall on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Related non-discrimination authorities, remedies, and state law further those protections, including sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, age, low income, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

Caltrans is committed to complying with 23 C.F.R. Part 200, 49 C.F.R. Part 21, 49 C.F.R. Part 303, and the Federal Transit Administration Circular 4702.1 B. Caltrans will make every effort to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its services, programs, and activities, whether they are federally funded or not, and that services and benefits are fairly distributed to all people, regardless of race, color, or national origin (including LEP). In addition, Caltrans will facilitate meaningful participation in the transportation planning process in a non-discriminatory manner.

The overall responsibility for this policy is assigned to the Caltrans Director. The Caltrans Title VI Coordinator is assigned to the Caltrans Office of Civil Rights Deputy Director, who then delegates sufficient responsibility and authority to the Office of Civil Rights' managers, including the Title VI Branch Manager, to effectively implement the Caltrans Title VI Program. Individuals with questions or requiring additional information relating to the policy or the implementation of the Caltrans Title VI Program should contact the Title VI Branch Manager at title.vi@dot.ca.gov or at (916) 639-6392, or visit the following web page: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/title-vi>.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Dina A. El-Tawansy'.

Dina El-Tawansy (Sep 12, 2025 16:52:12 PDT)

DINA A. EL-TAWANSY
Director

Appendix B Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Summary

Permit Type	Agency	Date Received	Expiration	Notes
NPDES	State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)			
CGP				
WDR	Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)			
Section 1602	California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)			

Date of CEQA MMRP: July 31, 2026

Project Phase:

- ☒ PA/ED (DED/FED)
☐ PS&E Submittal _____ %
☐ Construction

Environmental Commitments Record (SR-79 CAPM Bridge Rail Project)

08-RIV-79/10
PM M31.70/40.40; 7.6

EA 08-1M340
PN 0821000120
Generalist:
ECL:

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures	Page	Environmental Analysis Source	Responsible for Development and/or Implementation of Measure	Timing/ Phase	SSP or NSSP:	Action(s) Taken to Implement Measure/if checked No, add Explanation here	PS&E Task Complete	Mitigation for significant impacts under CEQA?	
							Date / Initials	YES	NO
<u>CULTURAL RESOURCES</u>									
CR-1: If buried cultural resources are encountered during project activities, it is Caltrans policy that work stop within 60 feet of the area until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the find.	18	Archaeological Survey Report (ASR)	District Cultural Studies/ District Design/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Design/Const ruction					X

EA/Project ID: 08-1M340/0821000120
Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

Date of CEQA MMRP: July 31, 2026

Environmental Commitments Record (SR-79 CAPM Bridge Rail Project)

08-RIV-79/10
PM M31.70/40.40; 7.6

Project Phase:

- ☒ PA/ED (DED/FED)
☐ PS&E Submittal _____ %
☐ Construction

EA 08-1M340
PN 0821000120
Generalist:
ECL:

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures	Page	Environmental Analysis Source	Responsible for Development and/or Implementation of Measure	Timing/ Phase	SSP or NSSP:	Action(s) Taken to Implement Measure/if checked No, add Explanation here	PS&E Task Complete	Mitigation for significant impacts under CEQA?	
							Date / Initials	YES	NO
CR-2: If human remains are discovered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities shall cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner contacted. Pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the NAHC, who will then notify the MLD. At this time, the person who discovered the remains will contact Gabrielle Duff, District Environmental Branch Chief [(909) 501-5142] or Julie Scrivner, District Native American Coordinator [(909) 260-8265] so that they may work with the MLD on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of Public Resources Code 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.	18	ASR	District Cultural Studies/ District Design/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Final Design, Construction					X

EA/Project ID: 08-1M340/0821000120

Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

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ECL:

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
<u>NOISE</u>									
NOI-1: The project will comply with sound control provisions as included in Section 14-8.02, “Noise Control,” of the Department’s Standard Specifications and Special Provisions.	2-42	Environmental Document IS/ND	District Design/ District Environmental Engineering/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Prior to Construction, Construction	SSP 14-8.02				X
<u>BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</u>									
BIO-1: Bio-General-1: Equipment Staging, Storing & Borrow Sites. All staging, storing, and borrow sites require the approval of the Caltrans biologist.		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Prior to Construction, Construction					X
BIO-2: Bio-General-2: Temporary Artificial Lighting Restrictions. To address impacts to adjacent habitat and special status species, artificial lighting must be directed at the job site to		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/	Prior to Construction, Construction					X

EA/Project ID: 08-1M340/0821000120

Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
minimize light spillover onto adjacent habitat if project activities occur at night.			Resident Engineer/ Contractor						
BIO-3: Bio-General-3 Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP): A Contractor-supplied biologist must present a biological resource information program/WEAP for nesting and special status birds, special status herpetofauna including western spadefoot, special status mammals, special status plants, and habitats capable of supporting special status species prior to project activities to all personnel that will be present within the project limits for longer than 30 minutes at any given time.		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Prior to Construction					X
BIO-4: Bio-General-4 Equipment Washing: To prevent the spread of invasive plants/seeds, the contractor must clean all equipment and vehicles inside		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/	Prior to Construction, Construction					X

EA/Project ID: 08-1M340/0821000120

Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

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Project Phase:

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
and out before arriving onsite or moving between different project areas. Cleaning Methods may utilize pressure washing, compressed air, or manual brushing to remove all soil and organic materials. The contractor shall establish designated cleaning locations to isolate runoff, preventing wash water from entering water bodies. To manage wastewater, the contractor shall utilize Best Management Practices to prevent runoff from mixing with stormwater; using designated, contained, or filtered areas for cleaning. The contractor shall avoid using soaps or detergents that could harm the environment, opting for clean water or biodegradable options as necessary. The contractor shall adhere to Caltrans' Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) Best Management			Resident Engineer/ Contractor						

EA/Project ID: 08-1M340/0821000120

Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

Date of CEQA MMRP: July 31, 2026

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Project Phase:

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
Practices (BMPs). A Caltrans-approved biologist shall inspect vehicles to ensure compliance before deployment.									
BIO-5: Bio-6 Biological Resource Information Program: An education program will be developed and presented by the qualified biologist to all onsite personnel who will be in the project limits for longer than 30 minutes prior to the onset of ground-disturbing activities. At a minimum, the program will include the following topics: distribution, general behavior, and ecology of the Western Spadefoot, special status herpetological species in the area, special status riparian bird species, and special status small mammals present within the project area; ecology, sensitivity of the species to human activities, legal protection afforded to these	2-25	NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Prior to Construction					X

EA/Project ID: 08-1M340/0821000120
Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

Date of CEQA MMRP: July 31, 2026

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Project Phase:

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
species, penalties for violations of Federal and State laws, notification procedures by workers or contractors if a special status plant species is found in a construction area. The program will consist of a class presented by a qualified biologist or a video, provided the qualified biologist is present to answer questions. Handout materials will be distributed for workers with important information about the regulated species for future reference and as a reminder of the program's content. Following the education program, the handouts will be posted in the contractor and resident engineer office, where they will remain through the duration of the project. The contractor, resident engineer, and the qualified biologist will be responsible for ensuring that employees are aware of the listed species. If additional employees									

EA/Project ID: 08-1M340/0821000120

Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

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ECL:

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
are added to the project after initiation, they will receive instruction prior to working on the project.									
BIO-6: Bio- 7 Exclusion Fence: Prior to any ground-disturbance activities, exclusionary fencing (i.e., silt fence or other suitable non-penetrable fencing) will be installed along the boundary to prevent any construction activities from encroaching into adjacent areas and to prevent Western Spadefoot from moving into the construction area.		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Prior to Construction					X
BIO-7: Bio-Invertebrate-1 – Project-Specific Measure 1 – Pre-construction Rare Insect Host Plant Surveys: Within 3 days prior to construction, a qualified biologist will conduct pre-construction		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Prior to Construction					X

EA/Project ID: 08-1M340/0821000120
Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

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08-RIV-79/10
PM M31.70/40.40; 7.6

Project Phase:

- ☒ PA/ED (DED/FED)
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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
clearance surveys to ensure no host plants occur within the proposed area of ground disturbance or vegetation removal.									
BIO-8: Bio-Invertebrate-2 – Project-Specific Measure 2 – Preconstruction Invertebrate Species Survey: Prior to any ground disturbance, a qualified biologist shall survey for potential habitat suitability and presence of Crotch's bumble bee (<i>Bombus crotchii</i>). The habitat assessment for Crotch's bumble bee shall be performed according to the 2023 CDFW Survey Considerations for Candidate Bumble Bee (https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=213150). The preconstruction Crotch's		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Prior to Construction					X

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
bumblebee survey must be conducted by a contractor-supplied biologist no more than 1 week prior to project activities within the Biological Study Area. The surveys shall include 100 percent visual coverage and include a minimum 50-foot buffer in adjacent habitat. If a Crotch's bumble bee or bumble bee nest is located, the Resident Engineer and Caltrans biologist must be contacted and additional measures and/or agency coordination will be required.									
BIO-9: Bio-Project-Specific Measure 2 – Pre-construction Small-Mammal Surveys: Within 3 days prior to construction, a qualified biologist will conduct pre-construction clearance surveys to ensure no		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Prior to Construction					X

EA/Project ID: 08-1M340/0821000120
Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
special-status small mammals occur within the proposed areas of off-highway work, ground disturbance or vegetation removal.									
BIO-10: Bio-Project-Specific Measure 3 – Pre-construction Bat Clearance Surveys: Within 3 days prior to construction, a qualified biologist will conduct pre-construction bat clearance surveys to ensure no special-status small mammals occur within the proposed area of off-highway work, ground disturbance or vegetation removal, including culvert locations and at the San Jacinto River bridge.		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Prior to Construction					X
BIO-11: Bio-Project-Specific Measure 4 – Pre-Construction Surveys (Western Spadefoot).		NESCF	District Design/ District	Prior to Construction					X

EA/Project ID: 08-1M340/0821000120
Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
The pre-construction surveys will be conducted by a USFWS-approved qualified Biologist (i.e., one with Western Spadefoot surveying/handling experience) to determine their presence or absence within the construction footprint. The Biologist will walk the impact area to search for any potential breeding areas. A report documenting the pre-construction survey results and measures that will be required during construction will be provided to Caltrans and the Wildlife Agencies. The surveys and the relocation of Western Spadefoot shall be conducted as directed by the relocation plan approved by USFWS.			Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor						
BIO-12: Bio-Project-Specific Measure 5 – Biological Monitor. The CDFW pre-approved biologist with the appropriate recovery		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/	Construction					X

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
permit for Western Spadefoot relocation will monitor all construction-related activities to ensure that all conservation measures are being implemented and that there are no unanticipated impacts. These activities include, but are not limited to, blasting work, clearing and grubbing, and staging/ storage of equipment.			Resident Engineer/ Contractor						
BIO-13: Bio-Avian-1 Preconstruction Nesting Bird Survey: If project activities cannot avoid the nesting season, generally regarded as Feb 1 – Sept 30, then preconstruction nesting bird surveys must be conducted 3 days prior to construction by a Contractor-supplied biologist to locate and avoid nesting birds. If an active avian nest is located during construction, a Caltrans biologist		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Prior to Construction					X

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
must establish a no-construction buffer. A Caltrans biologist will monitor the nest until the young have fledged or the nest is no longer active.									
BIO-14: Bio-Avian-2 Preconstruction Burrowing Owl Clearance Survey: In accordance with the 2012 CDFW Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, pre-construction focused occupancy surveys shall be conducted in the locations where suitable habitat is present if temporary or permanent impacts extend into the BSA. Caltrans will perform one survey within 30 days prior to construction, and an additional survey within 24 hours of begin construction.		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Prior to Construction					X
BIO-15: Bio-Plant-1 Rare Plant Surveys, Flagging and Fencing: Within 1 week prior to		NESCF	District Design/ District	Prior to Construction					X

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
construction, a qualified biologist will conduct a preconstruction survey for rare plants, including all areas of proposed off-highway work. Any rare plants discovered must be flagged for visual identification to construction personnel for work avoidance. If rare plants are discovered featuring multiple plants in a single location must be fenced with Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) temporary fencing.			Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor						
BIO-16: Bio-12 Fence Monitoring: Fence and enclosure (onsite cleared areas) inspections shall occur throughout the duration of the project by the monitor and/or project personnel trained by the monitor prior to commencing construction activities and after construction activities are completed. If during construction the fence fails, work		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					X

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
will cease until it is repaired, and afterwards the biological monitor will inspect (and clear) the site for ARTOs.									
BIO-17: Bio-13 Fence Removal: All fencing shall be removed as a last order of work. During removal, a biological monitor familiar with Western Spadefoot and authorized to handle and relocate Western Spadefoot should be present.		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction, Post Construction					X
BIO-18: Bio-14 Control of Work: No construction work within Western Spadefoot habitat shall occur until the area is cleared of the species. No work will be allowed if any of the exclusionary devices are not installed in accordance with respective specifications.		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					X

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BIO-19: Bio-15 Animal Entrapment Avoidance: To prevent inadvertent entrapment of animals during the construction phase of a project, all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches should be covered at the close of each working day, by plywood or similar materials, or provided with one or more escape ramps constructed of earth fill or wooden planks. Before such holes or trenches are filled, they should be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals. The contractor-supplied biologist will ensure compliance with entrapment avoidance at the close of the working day and conduct an inspection prior to the onset of work the following day.		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					X
BIO-20: Bio-16 Western Spadefoot in Project Area: If		NESCF	District Design/ District	Construction					X

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
during construction activities western spadefoot is discovered within the project site, all construction activities shall stop, and the biologist shall be notified.			Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor						
BIO-21: Bio-18 Western Spadefoot Seasonal Avoidance: For proposed culvert repair work at PM 32.78, Caltrans will avoid the wet season and breeding season for western spadefoot, from January through May. Work at this location will only occur in July through December during the calendar year during construction.		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					X
BIO-22: Bio-19 Branchiopod Seasonal Avoidance: For proposed culvert repair work at PM 32.78, Caltrans will avoid the breeding season for Riverside fairy shrimp and vernal pool fairy shrimp, from January through May. Work at this location will only		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					X

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
occur in July through December during the calendar year during construction.									
BIO-23: Bio-20 ESA Fencing: Prior to vegetation clearing or construction, highly visible barriers (such as orange construction fencing) will be installed providing a no work buffer around riparian and riverine communities adjacent to the project footprint and flagged as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) to be preserved. The ESAs will serve as an exclusionary buffer delineating area where no work shall be performed. More specifically, no grading or fill activity of any type will be permitted within these ESAs. In addition, heavy equipment, including motor vehicles, will not be allowed to operate within the ESAs. All construction equipment will be		NESCF	District Design/ District Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Prior to Construction, Construction					X

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operated in a manner so as to prevent accidental damage to nearby preserved areas. No structure of any kind, or incidental storage of equipment or supplies, shall be allowed within these protected zones. Silt fence barriers will be installed at the ESA boundary to prevent accidental deposition of fill material in areas where vegetation is adjacent to planned grading activities.									
TRANSPORTATION									
TRA-1: Implement Traffic Management Plan. A traffic staging plan, as part of the TMP, will be implemented during project construction. The TMP will be prepared to minimize direct and cumulative construction impacts on the community. On completion, the final TMP will be available to the public and obtained by request			District Design / District Traffic Management / Resident Engineer / Contractor	Design, Construction					X

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
from Caltrans. The TMP must be submitted with the construction plan to the police and fire departments of affected cities prior to commencement of construction activities. The TMP will include, but not be limited to, the following features:									
• Public Information: Provide updates to affected residents, businesses, the general public, schools, and public transportation agencies through brochures and mailers, community meetings, websites, radio and newspaper advertisements, and social media. • Motorist Information: Provide information using changeable message signs and ground-mounted signs. • Incident Management: Implement a Construction									

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
Zone Enhanced Enforcement Program, and traffic handling. • Traffic Management During Construction: Provide a traffic lane closure chart, detour route, pedestrian routes, and residential and commercial access routes.									
HAZARDOUS WASTE									
Haz-1: SSP 14-9.02 NESHP Notification		Initial Site Assessment (ISA) Checklist dated: 2/10/2026	District Design/ District Environmental Engineering / Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Final Design, Construction					X
GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS									
GHG-1: The contractor must comply with Standard Specification 7-1.02C (Emissions Reduction), which requires that the contractor certify awareness of ARB emissions reduction	2-35	Environmental Document IS/ND	District Design /District Environmental Planning /	Final Design, Construction					X

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							Date / Initials	YES	NO
regulations and will comply with them.			Resident Engineer / Contractor						
GHG-2: The project will maintain equipment in proper tune and working condition.	2-35	Environmental Document IS/ND	District Design /District Environmental Planning / Resident Engineer / Contractor	Final Design, Construction					X

Appendix C List of Technical Studies

The following studies and/or technical analyses have been prepared and are incorporated by reference into this Initial Study:

- Air Quality Review Memorandum. June 2026.
- Construction GHG Emissions Estimate Memorandum. April 2026
- Historic Property Survey Report. June 2026.
- Hydraulic Study Memorandum. September 2025.
- Initial Site Assessment (ISA) Checklist. February 2026.
- Landscape Architecture Scoping Questionnaire to Determine Visual Impact Assessment Level. October 2024.
- Natural Environment Study (Condensed Format). April 2026
- Noise Review Memorandum. September 2024.
- Stormwater Quality Memorandum February 2022

Appendix D Federal Transportation Improvement Program

RIVLS02		Exempt Grouped Projects for Pavement Resurfacing and/or Pavement Rehabilitation - SHOPP Roadway Preservation Program				2025 FTIP Amendment #25-02		
Agency	County	District EA	Notes	Project Description	Program Year (FFY)	Federal Funds	State Funds	Total Project Cost (in \$1000's)
Caltrans	Riverside	1M340	New. 2024 SHOPP	On SR-79 in and near Beaumont, from 0.6 mile south of Sanderson Avenue to Route 10. Rehabilitate pavement and drainage systems, upgrade guardrail and facilities to American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, and replace sign panels. RW Cap and CON Cap/Sup Only.	2027/28	\$32,491	\$0	\$32,491
				FY 2027-28 100% SHOPP AC funded	Subtotal	\$150,611	\$0	\$150,611
				100% SHOPP AC funded	Total	\$524,521	\$0	\$524,521

2025 FTIP Amend. #25-02: PCR EA 1L820
David Lee, Caltrans District 8 FTIP Manager
Funding capacity is available in the FSTIP/FTIP.

Appendix E List of Acronyms

	Definiton
ARB	Air Resources Board
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
APE	Area of Potential Effects
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CAPTI	<i>California Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure</i>
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CTP	California Transportation Plan
Fourth Assessment	California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment
CAL-CET	Caltrans Construction Emissions Tool
CCRD	Caltrans Cultural Resources Database
DP-30	Caltrans Director's Policy 30
CO _{2e}	carbon dioxide equivalent
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CAFE	Corporate Average Fuel Economy
U.S. EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area
EO	executive order
FTIP	Federal Transportation Improvement Program
GHG	greenhouse gas
H&SC	Health and Safety Code
HPSR	Historic Property Survey Report
I-	Interstate
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
MPO	metropolitan planning organization
MMT	million metric tons
MLD	Most Likely Descendant
MSHCP	Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NESCF	Natural Environment Study Condensed Format
NOx	nitrogen oxides
PM	Post Mile
PIA	project impact area

	Definiton
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RTP/SCS	Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
ROW	right of way
RCA	Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
SLF	Sacred Lands File
Basin	South Coast Air Basin
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SHS	State Highway System
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SR	State Route
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
TCE	temporary construction easement
TEA	Transportation Enhancement Act
USC	United States Code
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
VOCs	volatile organic compounds