EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

APPLICANT: Fresno County Fire Protection District

APPLICATION NOS.: Initial Study No. 8903, Director Review and Approval Application No. 4821 and Variance Application No. 4206

DESCRIPTION: Allow the creation of a five-acre parcel from an existing 157-acre parcel, and a Director Review and Approval application to allow the construction and operation of a public fire station on the newly created five-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. The proposed five-acre parcel will be removed from Williamson Act Contract No. 4100 through a separate action.

LOCATION: The subject parcel is located on the southeast corner of W. Clarkson and S. Tuolumne Avenues approximately one mile east of the community of Cantua Creek (APN: 038-231-17) (Sup. Dist. 1).

AESTHETICS

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

A. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; or

B. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes to allow for a five-acre parcel to be created and removed from an existing Williamson Act Contract, to construct and operate a public fire station in an area that is predominantly used for agriculture. There are no scenic vistas, resources, or historical buildings identified in the area. The project will have no impact on any aesthetic resources.

C. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized

area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project site is located on the southeast corner of a large parcel in an agriculturally dominant area consisting of vineyards, orchards and field crops. The project would create a new 10,889 square foot public fire station building on the site and would change the existing visual character. However, this change is not expected to result in a significant impact on the surrounding agricultural landscape which is flat and lacking scenic resources.

D. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project proposes to allow for a five-acre parcel to be created and removed from an existing Williamson Act Contract, to construct and operate a public fire station in an area that is predominantly used for agriculture. The building will be fitted with lighting to be used during its 24-hour operation. The Fresno County Zoning Ordinance has regulatory standards in place related to the design and orientation of lighting to ensure that no new source of substantial light would adversely affect day or nighttime views of the area.

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

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

A. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

B. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Per the 2022 Fresno County Important Farmland Map, the subject parcel is designated as Prime Farmland. The project proposes to split five-acres from an existing approximately 157-acre parcel to construct and operate a public fire station. The entire

five-acres of the farmland will be permanently converted to non-agricultural use. This amounts to approximately 3.2% of the total parcel to be converted, which is considered less than significant. Furthermore, the subject parcel is under Williamson Act Contract No. 4100. The cancellation (RLCC 1082) will remove five-acres from the contract so as not to conflict with the existing Williamson Act Contract on the remaining larger agricultural parcel.

C. Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production; or

D. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located on land zoned for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production, and as such will not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of land for non-forest use.

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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGINIFICANT IMPACT:

The project proposes to construct a building on five-acres out of 157-acres of Farmland. The footprint of the building is small, approximately 3.2% of the total land, and would not result in the off-site conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

III. AIR QUALITY

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

A. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan; or

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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Reviewing Agencies and Departments did not express concern with the project to indicate that the project would result in a conflict with an applicable Air Quality Plan or result in cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. Project construction is anticipated to result in minor temporary increases in criteria pollutants,

however, the minor increases resulting from construction are not anticipated to result in a significant impact.

C. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or

D. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIGICANT IMPACT:

Emissions resulting from the operation of the public fire station will not result in significant pollutant concentrations. Emissions from fire fighting vehicles may cause a slight increase in nearby pollutants, but the amount is considered less than significant. The nearest sensitive receptors are single family residences located approximately half a mile (0.50 mile) west of the project site. In consideration of the proximity of the site to sensitive receptors, the project is not anticipated to result in substantial pollutant concentrations or adverse emissions and will have a less than significant impact.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) did not express concern with the project to indicate impacts to special-status species. No special status species has been identified on the project site that would be adversely affected by the operation of the proposed public fire station. Development of the project is not expected to negatively impact the area through habitat modification as the site is not occupied or has no significant habitat for special-status species.

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; or

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community was identified on the project site.

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes to allow for a five-acre parcel to be created and removed from an existing Williamson Act Contract, to construct and operate a public fire station in an area that is predominantly used for agriculture. The project does not cut off movement for any wildlife resident. No migratory wildlife corridor or native wildlife nursery site was identified on the project site.

E. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Reviewing Agencies and Departments did not identify a local policy or ordinance adopted for the protection of a biological resource that would be in conflict with the project proposal. No Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plans were identified as being in conflict with the project proposal.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

A. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or

B. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or

C. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION:

The project proposes to allow for a five-acre parcel to be created and removed from an existing Williamson Act Contract, to construct and operate a public fire station in an area that is predominantly used for agriculture. No reviewing Agencies and Departments express concern with the project to indicate that a cultural or historical resource is

present on the site and would be affected by the project proposal. However, a mitigation measure will be implemented in the event that a cultural resource is identified during ground-disturbing activities related to project development.

Mitigation Measure(s)

1. *In the event that cultural resources are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities, all work shall be halted in the area of the find. An Archeologist shall be called to evaluate the findings and make any necessary mitigation recommendations. If human remains are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities, no further disturbance is to occur until the Fresno County Sheriff-Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition. All normal evidence procedures should be followed by photos, reports, video, etc. If such remains are determined to be Native American, the Sheriff-Coroner must notify the Native American Commission within 24 hours.*

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

A. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation; or

B. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will be built to current building code standards which would take into consideration applicable energy efficiency standards. The project construction and operation would not result in a potentially significant impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. No state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency was identified during Agency and Department review.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

A. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

1. 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to Figure 8-1 of the 2024 Fresno County General Plan Background Report and the California Department of Conservation Earthquake Hazard Zone Application (EQ Zapp), the project is not located on a known earthquake fault zone.

2. Strong seismic ground shaking?

3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the Department of Conservation California Geological Survey the project is not located in an area near a known earthquake fault zone and is not susceptible to liquefaction.

4. Landslides?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the 2024 Fresno County General Plan Background Report the project area is in a low-risk area for landslides.

B. Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project would result in the development of the site where impervious surface would be added, and a loss of topsoil would occur. The subject site is relatively flat with small changes in elevation. The project would not result in a loss of topsoil or soil erosion where a significant risk of loss, injury, or death would occur.

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the 2024 Fresno County General Plan Background Report the project site is located in an area with low risk for landslides and liquefaction. There have been no known issues with subsidence in the project area. No geologic unit or unstable soil was identified on the project site.

C. 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the 2024 Fresno County General Plan Background Report the project site is not located in an area known to have expansive soils.

D. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater; or

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes the installation and use of a septic system to serve the public fire station. No Reviewing Agencies or Departments expressed concern with the soil capability to accommodate the proposed septic system.

E. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

There were no unique paleontological resources or unique geologic features identified on the project site.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

A. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGINIFICANT IMPACT:

The emissions produced during the construction activities of the public fire station are expected to temporarily increase but are considered less than significant. The public fire station is not anticipated to produce, in excess, any greenhouse gas emissions that would have a significant impact on the environment. Reviewing Agencies and Departments did not express concern with the project to indicate that there will be the generation of greenhouse gas emissions that could either directly, or indirectly, have a significant impact on the environment.

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

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

Reviewing Agencies and Departments did not express concern with the project to indicate that a conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases exists as a result of the project.

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

A. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; or

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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project proposes the construction and operation of a public fire station in a rural community. The project site will be the location of any required firefighting equipment and materials including propane, fuel and compressed air. The Fresno County Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division, states the applicant shall submit a Hazardous Materials Business Plan to them prior to occupying the facility. With adherence to development standards and requirements the project will have a less than significant impact on the creation of public hazards with hazardous materials.

C. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is located within 1.20 miles east of an existing school (Cantua Creek Elementary School), and therefore there will be no hazardous emissions within one-quarter mile of a school.

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the NEPAssist Database, the project site is not located on a listed hazardous materials site and the project would not result or create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

E. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The nearest airport is Mendota Municipal Airport located approximately 17.50-miles north from the proposed project site.

F. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or

G. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Reviewing Agencies and Departments did not identify any conflict with the project and any adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Additionally, no concerns were expressed that the project would result in a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

A. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality; or

B. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project proposes to allow for a five-acre parcel to be created and removed from an existing Williamson Act Contract, to construct and operate a public fire station in an area that is predominantly used for agriculture. A new well will be installed, and ground water will be used to meet the need of daily fire station activities, which is expected to be no more than 2,000 gallons per day, excluding emergency water used in vehicles. The area is not defined as being 'water-short' and Reviewing Agencies and Departments did not express any concern with the project degrading water quality standards or substantially decreasing groundwater supplies. Should the applicant choose to utilize surface water to meet the project needs, then the applicant must apply for and receive and allocation of agricultural surface water pursuant to the regulations of the Westlands Water District.

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 result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?

1. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;

2. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite?

3. 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project proposes to allow for a five-acre parcel to be created and removed from an existing Williamson Act Contract, to construct and operate a public fire station in an area that is predominantly used for agriculture. The project site historically was used as a vineyard. There are no identified drainage sites or channels located on the project site that would be eroded due to the development of the fire station. Abutting the project is an easement held by Westland Water District and a water distribution system, but there will be no impact on this facility from the operation of the public fire station. The proposed facility is located on relatively flat land and does not anticipate substantial erosion or siltation events occurring as a result of the project. Surface runoff is anticipated to be kept onsite per County of Fresno standards and is not expected to result in flooding on or offsite. Fresno County's Road Maintenance and Operations Division recommends a condition of approval to require an Engineered Grading and Drainage Plan to ensure stormwater runoff is adequately handled to not negatively impact the surrounding area. Other reviewing agencies and departments did not express concern with the project to indicate that the project would result in runoff water contributions that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide additional sources of polluted runoff.

4. Impede or redirect flood flows?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located within a flood hazard area. Applicable agencies reviewed the project site and did not have any comments regarding any requirements and asserted the project as proposed would not impede or redirect flood flows.

D. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located within a flood hazard area, and the project will not increase the risk of release of pollutants due to project inundation. Additionally, the project site is not located near a body of water where a tsunami or seiche risk is prevalent.

E. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project intends to construct an individual water well and septic system to accommodate the public fire station daily activities. Reviewing Agencies and Departments did not express concern with the project conflicting with a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

A. Physically divide an established community?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes to allow a five-acre parcel to be created with a Variance, removal of this five-acres from an existing Williamson Act Contract, and the construction and operation of a public fire station in an area that is predominantly used for agriculture. The project site historically was used as a vineyard. The nearest community is Cantua Creek. There is no urbanization around the proposed project site.

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes to allow a five-acre parcel to be created with a Variance, removal of this five-acres from an existing Williamson Act Contract, and the construction and operation of a public fire station in an area that is predominantly used for agriculture. The project proposes to allow for a reduced parcel size of five-acres where 20-acres is required through the use of a Variance. Though the proposed Variance conflicts with the Zoning Regulation of the subject parcel, it is not expected to have any impact on the environment.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

A. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state; or

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the 2024 Fresno County General Plan Background Report the project site is not located on or near an identified mineral resource or mineral producing site.

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

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; or

B. Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project anticipates the development of a public fire station and related facilities on a 5-acre portion of a large agricultural parcel. The project site historically was used as a vineyard. The project will introduce new sources of ambient and acute noise to the area. This additional noise will come from the additional vehicle traffic generated, outdoor facility activities, and emergency vehicle sirens. No Reviewing Agency or Department expressed any concern with the project exceeding the established standards regarding noise. The noise levels and vibrations associated with the project are not expected to result in significant impacts on the surrounding area.

C. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels; or

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The project site is not located in an airport land use plan. The nearest airport is Mendota Municipal Airport located approximately 17.50-miles north from the proposed project site.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

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

B. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The nearest residences are located half a mile west of the project site. The surrounding area is predominantly agricultural, and the construction and operation of the proposed

fire station would not displace people or housing. The nearest community of Cantua Creek may increase in density due to the availability of a new fire station in the area, but this increase is not expected to be substantial or unplanned. The project will not induce unplanned population growth or displace any number of people or housing.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

A. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically-altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically-altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services?

1. Fire protection;

2. Police protection;

3. Schools;

4. Parks; or

5. Other public facilities?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes the construction and operation of a public fire station and will add fire protection services to the area. This will not have an adverse environmental impact on the area or result in the need for additional public services. Reviewing agencies and departments did not provide concerns regarding the project or a need for additional governmental facilities or alteration to existing governmental facilities.

XVI. RECREATION

Would the project:

A. 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; or

B. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project anticipates the development of a public fire station and related facilities on a 5-acre portion of a large agricultural parcel. The project site historically was used as a

vineyard. There are no identified recreational facilities in the surrounding area that would be impacted by the proposed development of the parcel and there are no recreational facilities that would need to be constructed as a result of the project.

XVI. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

A. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities; or

B. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project does anticipate increasing traffic in the area, but the volume of trips is not expected to result in impacts related to vehicle miles traveled or any County-adopted program, plan, or ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system. Reviewing agencies and departments did not express concern with the project in terms of a transportation impact resulting from the project.

C. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?; or

D. Result in inadequate emergency access?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Reviewing Agencies and Departments did not express concern with the project design or access to indicate that a hazard due to design features or inadequate emergency access will result from the project.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

1. 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

2. 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION

Participating California Native American Tribes were notified of the project proposal and given the opportunity to enter into consultation with the County of Fresno in addressing potential tribal cultural resources occurring on the project site. No notified California Native American Tribe expressed concern with the project and did not enter into consultation. The subject parcel has been previously disturbed with farming operations. No reviewing Agency or Department provided comments to indicate that a listed or eligible historical resource is located on the project site. A Mitigation Measure will be implemented to establish procedure for the addressing of a tribal cultural resource, should it be identified during ground disturbing activities related to the project.

Mitigation Measure(s)
See Section V. Cultural Resources Mitigation Measure #1

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

A. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT:

The project proposes to allow a five-acre parcel to be created with a Variance, removal of this five-acres from an existing Williamson Act Contract, and the construction and operation of a public fire station in an area that is predominantly used for agriculture. The project site historically was used as a vineyard. The project proposes the relocation of an existing power pole and will require the development of an on-site storm water retention basin, but the construction and relocation of these items is not expected to cause significant environmental effects. Reviewing agencies and departments did not identify any significant environmental effects as a result of the project.

B. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project proposes to allow a five-acre parcel to be created with a Variance, removal of this five-acres from an existing Williamson Act Contract, and the construction and

operation of a public fire station in an area that is predominantly used for agriculture. A new individual water well will serve the project's anticipated 2,000 gallon per day water usage. The project site is not an area designated as low-water, and Reviewing Agencies and Departments did not express any concern for the area not being able to serve the project's water usage. The project will have a less than significant impact on water supplies in the area.

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will install a new septic system to serve the project and does not anticipate the use of a wastewater treatment provider. The project will have no impact on a wastewater treatment provider.

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; or

E. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project proposes to allow a five-acre parcel to be created with a Variance, removal of this five-acres from an existing Williamson Act Contract, and the construction and operation of a public fire station in an area that is predominantly used for agriculture. Reviewing agencies and departments did not provide comments to indicate that the project would result in solid waste generation in excess of State or local standards, or result in a conflict with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulation related to solid waste. The project's solid waste generation will have a less than significant impact on local infrastructure and regulations related to solid waste.

XX. WILDFIRE

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

A. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects; or

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; or

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; or

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

As depicted in the 2025 Fresno County Fire Hazard Severity Zones Map, produced by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the project site is located within an unzoned Local Responsibility Area near an Incorporated City.

Additionally, this project was routed for review by CalFire. Reviewing Agencies and Departments did not provide comments to indicate that the project would result in impairment to evacuation plans, exposure to pollutant concentrations, exacerbation of fire risk, or exposure to post-fire risks.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

A. 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The subject site has been determined to be previously disturbed and occupied with human activity. The project does not have the potential to substantially degrade the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a wildlife species and would not cause a wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels.

B. 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)?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

It has been determined that the project would result in impacts to Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources. These impacts were determined to be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation measures. With the implementation of

mitigation measures, the project is not anticipated to result in a cumulative considerable impact and would result in a less than significant impact regarding the identified section.

C. Have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

   FINDING: NO IMPACT:

   The project has been determined to not result in substantial adverse effect on human beings.

CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

Based upon the Initial Study No. 8903 prepared for Director Review and Approval Application No. 4821 and Variance Application No. 4206, staff has concluded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment. It has been determined that there would be no or less than significant impacts to Aesthetics, Agriculture & Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Energy, Geology/Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards & Hazardous Materials, Hydrology/Water Quality, Land Use/Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population/Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Utilities/Service Systems, Wildfire, or Mandatory Findings of Significance.

Potential impacts related to Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources have determined to be less than significant with mitigation.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration is recommended and is subject to approval by the decision-making body. The Initial Study is available for review at 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, street level, located on the southwest corner of Tulare and “M” Street, Fresno, California.

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