Interstate 10 Blythe Pavement Rehabilitation

Riverside County, California
DISTRICT 8 RIV-10 PM R134.0 to R156.5
PN 0816000090/EA 08-1C083

Draft Initial Study [with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration]/Environmental Assessment

Prepared by the
State of California Department of Transportation

The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 USC 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated December 23, 2016, and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

June 2019

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General Information about This Document

What's in this document:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans or Department), as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has prepared this Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA), which examines the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives being considered for the proposed project on Interstate 10 (I-10), from post mile (PM) R134.0 to R156.5 within the city of Blythe and unincorporated portions of Riverside County, California. Caltrans is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Caltrans is also the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This 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.
- Additional copies of this IS/EA, as well as the related technical studies, are available for review at:

Caltrans District 8
464 West Fourth Street
San Bernardino, CA 92401

Palo Verde Valley District Library
125 West Chanslor Way
Blythe, CA 92225

This IS/EA may be downloaded at the following website: http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist8

- We'd like to hear what you think. If you have any comments regarding the proposed project, please attend the public hearing and/or send your written comments to Caltrans by the deadline.
- Send comments via U.S. postal mail to:

  Antonia Toledo, Senior Environmental Planner
  California Department of Transportation, Environmental Planning
  464 West Fourth Street, 6th Floor, MS-820
  San Bernardino, California 92401-1400

- Send comments by email to: D8.Blythe_I-10Rehab1C083@dot.ca.gov
  Please use "I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehabilitation" in the subject line of the email.
- Be sure to send comments by the deadline: July 8, 2019.

What happens next:

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, the Department, as assigned by FHWA, 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 appropriated, 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, with large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to Caltrans, Attn: Terri Kasinga, Chief, Public and Media Affairs, 464 West Fourth Street, San Bernardino, CA, 92401; call (909) 383-4646 (voice); or use the California Relay Service, 1 (800)735-2929 (TTY), 1 (800) 735-2922 (voice), or 711.

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SCH#_____

DISTRICT 8 RIV-10 PM R134.0/R156.5
PN 0816000090 / EA 08-1C083

Restore and extend the life of existing pavement on Interstate 10 (I-10) from post mile (PM) R134.0 to R156.5 in Riverside County, California.

Draft INITIAL STUDY [with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration]/ Environmental Assessment

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

(Federal) 42 USC 4332(2)(C) and 49 USC 303 and/or 23 USC 138

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Department of Transportation

COOPERATING AGENCY

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

6/3/19

Date

David Bricker
Deputy District Director
District 8 Division of Environmental Planning
California Department of Transportation
CEQA Lead Agency
NEPA Lead Agency

The following persons may be contacted for information concerning this document:

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(909) 806-2541

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SCH #_____

PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans or Department) proposes to rehabilitate pavement on Interstate 10 (I-10) within the project area while improving safety and mobility for the traveling public between post mile (PM) R134.0 and R156.5 in Riverside County, California. A temporary detour route will also be constructed to maintain two-way traffic through the project corridor during construction. The total project area is approximately 745 acres.

Determination

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

The Department 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 proposed project would have no effect on:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and forest resources
- Land use and planning
- Mineral resources
- Noise
- Population and housing
- Recreation
- Utilities and service systems

In addition, the proposed project would have less-than-significant effects on:

- Air quality
- Cultural resources
- Geology and soils
- Hazards and hazardous materials

- Hydrology and water quality
- Public services
- Transportation and traffic
- Tribal cultural resources

With the following mitigation measures incorporated, the proposed project would have less-than-significant effects on:

- Biological Resources.

WET-1: **Impacts to Jurisdictional Waters.** The proposed project's impacts on jurisdictional areas will be mitigated and coordinated with USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW during the permitting process. A minimum ratio of 1:1 is anticipated, but subject to change during agency coordination.

BIO-39: Desert Tortoise Mitigation. It is anticipated that impacts to Desert Tortoise and its critical habitat will be mitigated at a minimum of 1:1 ratio. However, this is subject to change as mitigation for permanent impacts will be determined and finalized during the regulatory agency 2081 incidental take permit consultation period and/or permitting phase.

David Bricker
Deputy District Director
District 8 Division of Environmental Planning
California Department of Transportation

Date

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AC	asphalt/concrete
ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ACM	asbestos-containing material
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADL	aerially deposited lead
APE	Area of Potential Effects
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
ARPA	Archaeological Resources Protection Act
AB	Assembly Bill
BAU	business-as-usual
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMP	Best Management Practice
BSA	biological study area
CAFE	Corporate Average Fuel Economy
Cal-IPC	California Invasive Plant Council
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CH_4	methane
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO_2	carbon dioxide
CO_2e	carbon dioxide equivalent
Construction General Permit	NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CTP	California Transportation Plan
CWA	Clean Water Act
dBA	A-weighted decibels
Department	California Department of Transportation
DKF	desert kit fox
DSA	Disturbed Soil Area
DTC/C-AMA	Desert Training Center/California-Arizona Maneuver Area
DTCH	Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat

EIR	environmental impact report
EIS	environmental impact statement
EO	Executive Order
FESA	federal Endangered Species Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
GHG	greenhouse gas
Guidelines	Section 404 (b)(1) Guidelines
HMA-A	Hot Mix Asphalt Type A
HPSR	Historic Property Survey Report
HSA	hydrologic sub-area
I-10	Interstate 10
IP	individual permit
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IS/EA	Initial Study/Environmental Assessment
LCFS	low carbon fuel standard
LEDPA	least environmentally damaging practicable alternative
MDAQMD	Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District
$MMTCO_2e$	million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MS4	municipal separate storm sewer system
N_2O	nitrous oxide
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
ND	Negative Declaration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NES	Natural Environment Study
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOAA Fisheries Service	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service
NOI	Notice of Intent
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWP	nationwide permit
OHWM	ordinary high water mark
PA	Section 106 Programmatic Agreement
PCS	Pavement Condition Survey
PDT	Project Development Team

PIA	Project Impact Area
PIR	Project Initiation Report
PM	post mile
PTNCL	Prehistoric Trails Network Cultural Landscape
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
REC	recognized environmental concern
ROW	right of way
RSP	rock slope protection
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SDC	Seismic Design Criteria
SF_6	sulfur hexafluoride
SHOPP	State Highway Operation and Protection Program
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SLR	sea-level rise
STAA	Surface Transportation Assistance Act
SWMP	Storm Water Management Plan
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
THPO	tribal historic preservation officer
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TMP	Traffic Management Plan
TSM	Transportation System Management
U.S.	United States
U.S. EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USC	United States Code
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
WDR	Waste Discharge Requirement
WDR	Waste Discharge Requirement
WPCP	Water Pollution Control Program
WSC	Waters of the State of California
WUS	waters of the United States

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Chapter 1 Proposed Project

1.1 NEPA Assignment

California participated in the "Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program" (Pilot Program) pursuant to 23 United States Code (USC) 327, for more than five years, beginning July 1, 2007, and ending September 30, 2012. MAP-21 (P.L. 112-141), signed by President Obama on July 6, 2012, amended 23 USC 327 to establish a permanent Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program. As a result, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding pursuant to 23 USC 327 (National Environmental Policy Act [NEPA] Assignment Memorandum of Understanding [MOU]) with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The NEPA Assignment MOU became effective October 1, 2012 and was renewed on December 23, 2016 for a term of five years. Caltrans continues to assume FHWA responsibilities under NEPA and other federal environmental laws in the same manner as was assigned under the Pilot Program, with minor changes. With NEPA Assignment, FHWA assigned and Caltrans assumed all of the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary's responsibilities under NEPA. This assignment includes projects on the State Highway System and Local Assistance Projects off of the State Highway System within the State of California, except for certain categorical exclusions that FHWA assigned to Caltrans under the 23 USC 326 CE Assignment MOU, projects excluded by definition, and specific project exclusions.

1.2 Introduction

The proposed project would restore and extend the life of the existing pavement on Interstate 10 (I-10) from Caltrans post mile (PM) R134.0 to R156.5 in the city of Blythe and unincorporated portions of Riverside County, as shown in Figure 1-1 and 1-2.

Caltrans, as assigned by the FHWA, is the lead agency under NEPA; Caltrans is also the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The project is included in the 2018 State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) under the 201.122 Pavement Rehabilitation (2R) Program for delivery in the 2021/2022 fiscal year.

1.2.1 Existing Facility

Interstate 10 is a major east–west interstate and the southernmost cross-country highway in the United States, stretching from California State Route 1 (Pacific Coast Highway) in Santa Monica to Interstate 95 in Jacksonville, Florida. Original construction of the highway began in California in 1956. The 1990 Federal Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) identifies I-10 as a "National Network" route for STAA trucks. Within District 8, I-10 extends more than 194 miles, from the Los Angeles County/San Bernardino County border to the Arizona state border. The project area extends from the intersection of I-10 and Wiley's Well Road to the California/Arizona state line at the Colorado River.

1.2.2 Project Background

Rehabilitation of the portion of I-10 in Riverside County from two miles east of the Dillon Road interchange, PM R60.9, to the Arizona state line was recommend in an approved Project Initiation Report (PIR) submitted for programming in the 2018 SHOPP. The PIR proposed to restore and extend the service life of the existing pavement for a minimum of 40 years and, consequently, minimize expenditures associated with future maintenance. A secondary purpose is to improve safety and mobility for the traveling public by constructing a truck climbing lane and upgrading all guardrails, curb ramps, and roadside signs. The PIR recommended rehabilitation of three segments of I-10, as summarized in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1. Project Background

	Segment 1	Segment 2	Segment 3
Project Limits	R60.7/R74.3	R104.9/R134.0	R134.0/R156.5
EA	08-1C081	08-1C082	08-1C083

This project constitutes Segment 3 of the PIR recommendation and is being proposed as a stand-alone project.

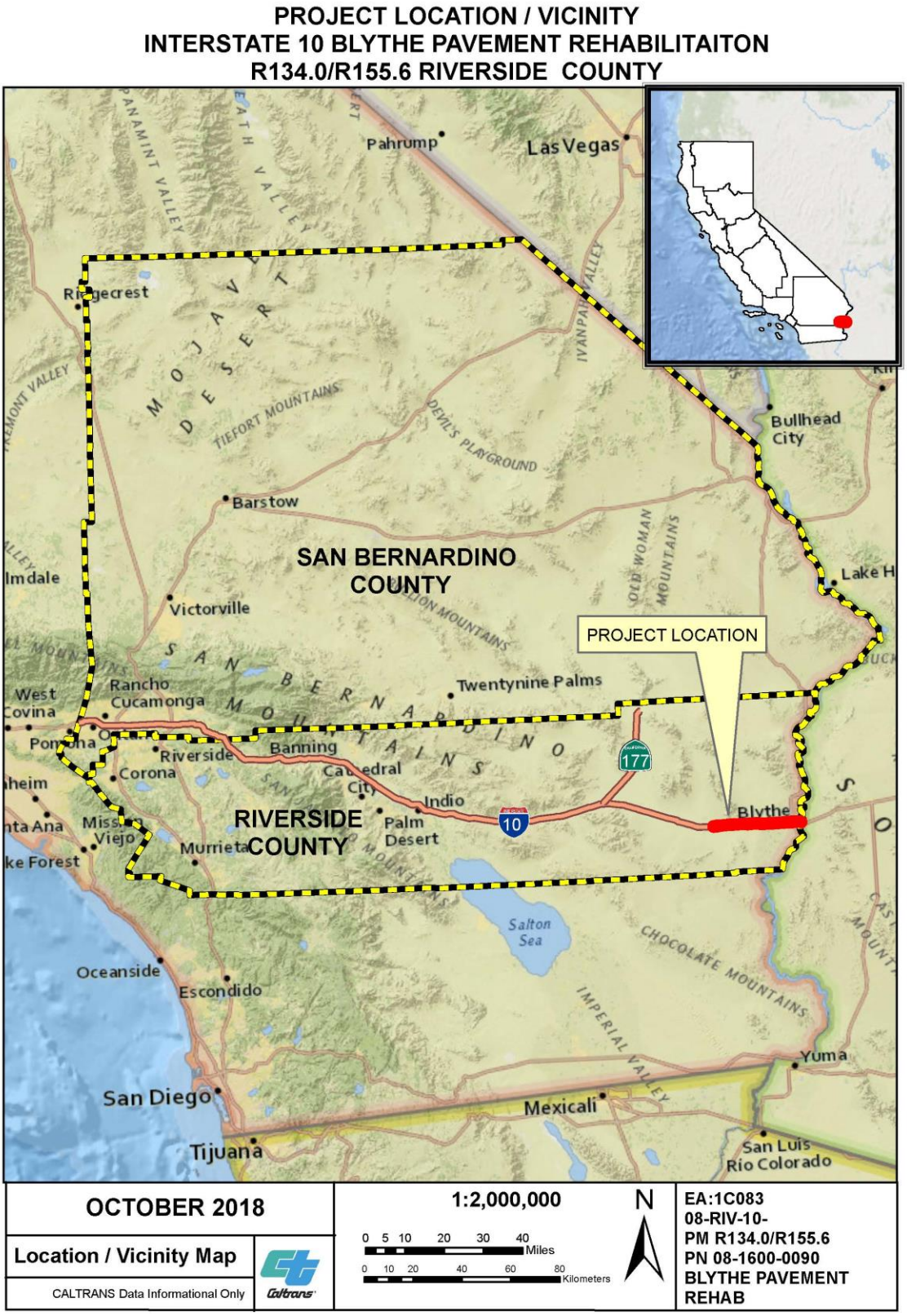

Figure 1-1. Regional Vicinity

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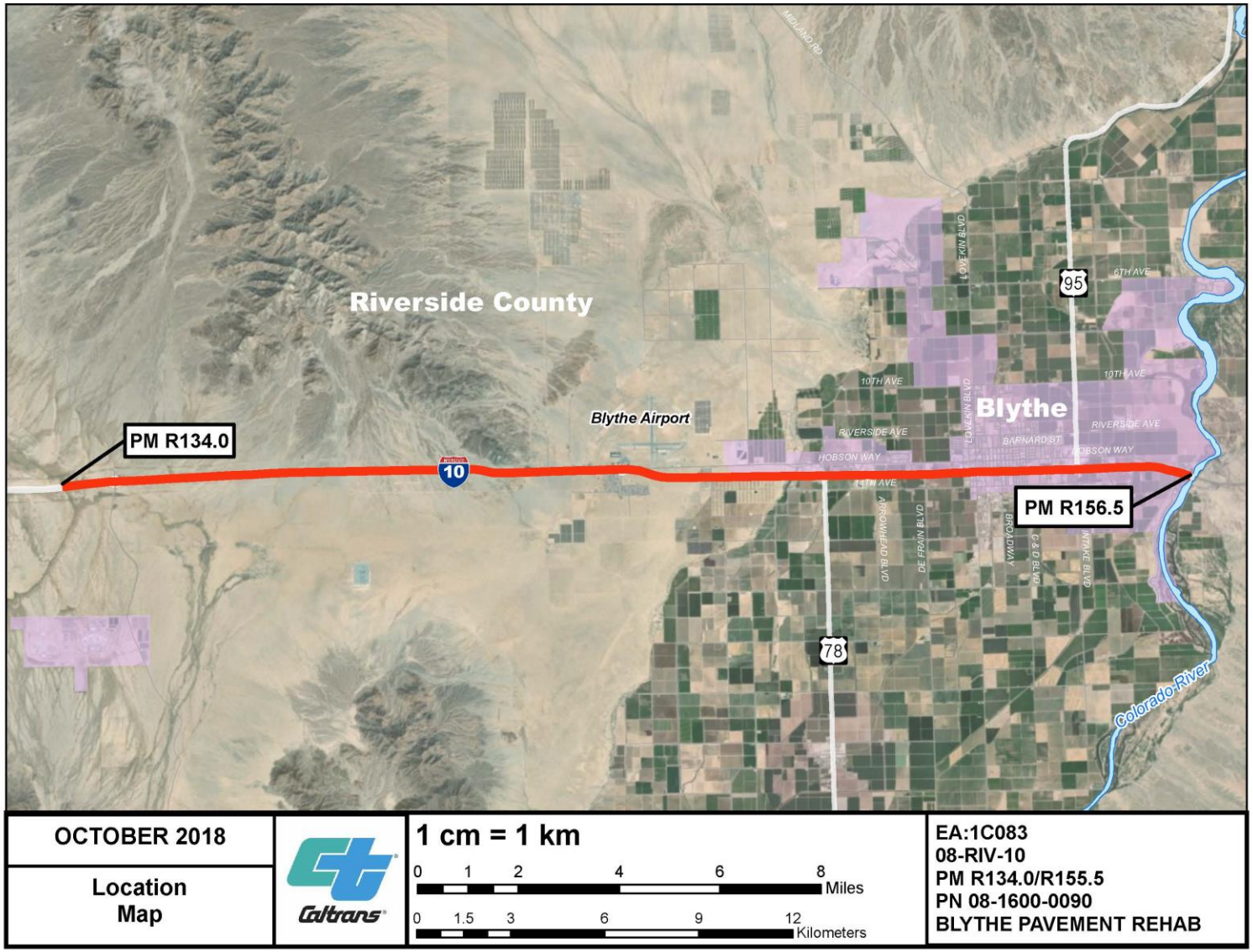

Figure 1-2. Project Location

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1.2.3 Purpose and Need

PROJECT PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this project is to restore and extend service life of existing pavement for a minimum of forty (40) years, enhance trip reliability, and consequently minimize expenditures associated with future maintenance. The secondary purpose is to improve safety and mobility for the traveling public by upgrading existing features to current design standard such as Metal Beam Guardrail (MBGR), bridge rails, drainage facilities, and pedestrian facilities.

PROJECT NEED

As indicated in Caltrans' 2013 annual Pavement Condition Survey (PCS), pavement within the project limits exhibits distress, cracking, rutting, and bleeding and is beyond normal maintenance repair and treatment, resulting in poor ride quality from heavy and continuous traffic. The project would address the current and future deficiencies of the existing pavement within the project limits.

Capacity, Transportation Demand, and Safety

The scope of this project does not include increasing the capacity of the facility or improving operations; as such, forecast traffic information and collision data are not needed.

Social Demands or Economic Development

Interstate 10 is a major east–west corridor with a high volume of traffic from trucks, which transport goods in and out of state. This route connects major metropolitan areas in Southern California to the metropolitan Phoenix area in Arizona and the rest of the nation.

Legislation

The project is funded from the SHOPP under 201.122 Pavement Rehabilitation (2R) Program for delivery in the 2021/2022 fiscal year. This project is classified as Category 4B, as defined in the Project Development Procedures Manual, seventh edition, Part 2, Chapter 8, Section 5, because the proposed improvements under consideration would not require a substantial additional right of way (ROW) and would not substantially increase traffic capacity.

Modal Interrelationships and System Linkages

Interstate 10 is a major interstate goods-movement corridor that links the Los Angeles metropolitan area and San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, which have the nation's highest density of warehousing facilities, to the rest of the Southwest. It is the primary link between major economic centers and geographic regions and classified as a "High Emphasis" and a "Gateway" route in the Interregional Road System.

Interstate 10 is federally classified as a Rural/Urban Principal Arterial. The highway is part of the Freeway and Expressway System as well as the following:

- National Highway System
- Strategic Highway Corridor Network of National Defense
- Interregional Road System

- National Network for Over-sized Trucks under the Federal STAA

Air Quality Improvements

The project is exempt from air quality conformity determination because it falls under one of the exempt projects (pavement resurfacing and/or rehabilitation) listed in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 93.126.

Roadway Deficiencies

As indicated in Caltrans' 2013 annual PCS, pavement within the project limits exhibits distress, cracking, rutting, and bleeding and is beyond normal maintenance repair and treatment, resulting in poor ride quality from heavy and continuous traffic.

Independent Utility and Logical Termini

FHWA regulations (23 CFR 771.111[f]) require the action evaluated to:

- Connect logical termini and be of sufficient length to address environmental matters on a broad scope.
- Have independent utility or independent significance (be usable and require a reasonable expenditure, even if no additional transportation improvements are made in the area).
- Not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements.

Logical termini should encompass an entire project. Cutting a larger project into smaller projects may be considered "improper segmentation." A project must have independent utility; that is, a project must be able to function on its own, without further improvements.

This Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) assesses conditions in the project area, which extends 22.5 miles, from PM R134.0 to 156.5, with 9.2 miles occurring in the city of Blythe and 13.3 miles occurring west of the city in unincorporated Riverside County. The project would address the current and future deficiencies of the existing pavement and improve the safety and mobility of the traveling public. The project is of sufficient length, with termini logically placed, for environmental issues to be addressed on a broad scope. The proposed project would improve the I-10 facility without any additional transportation improvements being made in the area. As such, the proposed project is considered a project with independent utility.

1.3 Project Description

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

Caltrans proposes to rehabilitate the pavement on I-10 in the project area while improving safety and mobility for the traveling public. There is one viable Build Alternative for this project and one No-Build Alternative.

1.4 Alternatives

1.4.1 No-Build (No-Action) Alternative

The No Build Alternative fails to address the project purpose and need, and it provides none of the project benefits cited for the Build Alternative. The No Build Alternative would maintain the existing pavement condition of I-10 within the project limits with no rehabilitation on the mainline lanes and ramps or associated improvements.

Without pavement rehabilitation the existing pavement condition will deteriorate further along the corridor resulting in operational deficiencies and will necessitate future costly maintenance measures. With no capital improvements, there is no capital cost for this alternative. There would be continued costs associated with maintenance, periodic rehabilitation, and any safety and operational improvements to the existing facility.

1.4.2 Build Alternative

Caltrans proposes to include the following project elements as part of the Build Alternative:

1. Remove existing mainline asphalt/concrete (AC) pavement and base;
2. Remove existing inside and outside shoulders;
3. Raise the profile grade by approximately one foot to achieve the recommended structural section. Raising the profile by one foot requires additional grading on the outside, beyond the existing hinge point, which in turn results in a wider area of environmental impact. To minimize the potential environmental impact, the proposed outside edge of travel way and shoulders would be shifted – in effect shifting the facility – four feet towards the median;
4. Remove and replace existing drainage inlets, all dikes, and overside drains;
5. Remove rumble strips;
6. Remove guardrails;
7. Install a Midwest Guardrail System with vegetation control;
8. Construct a one-foot-thick Continuously Reinforced Concrete Pavement or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement and associated base for travelway and shoulders, including outside shoulder backing on both roadbeds;
9. Regrade the median to accommodate temporary drainage during construction;
10. Upgrade existing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) facilities at ramp termini;
11. Cold plane and overlay existing ramps with Hot Mix Asphalt Type A (HMA-A);
12. Construct two temporary detour lanes and crossover lanes in the existing median for traffic handling during construction, including one-lane temporary detour and crossovers in the eastbound and westbound directions.
13. Install 0.55-foot HMA-A over 1.35-foot aggregate base for the detour pavement sections;
14. Leave both detour lanes, which will be striped, signaling to the public that they are not available for use, in place after completion of the project;
15. Remove all existing AC bridge decks to expose the existing Portland cement concrete bridge deck;

16. Widen all existing bridges and/or drainage crossings in both the eastbound and westbound directions toward the median to accommodate detour construction; and
17. Retrofit existing bridges and replace existing bridge railing, scouring, and rock slope protection (RSP).

All proposed improvements will be done within the existing ROW, with the exception of ADA upgrades within the city limits of Blythe.

The estimated capital cost for the Build Alternative is $168 million.

The Build Alternative includes the following standardized measures, which are included as part of the project description. Standardized measures, such as best management practices (BMPs) are those measures that are generally applied to most or all Caltrans projects. The following items are included as part of the Build Alternative; these items would be included in the project plans and/or specifications to reduce environmental impacts:

- Specifications related to discovery of unanticipated cultural materials or human remains.
- Specifications related the discovery of nesting and migratory birds.
- Specifications for removing yellow traffic stripe and pavement markings with hazardous waste residue.
- Specifications related to residue containing lead from paint and thermoplastic.
- Specifications for removing traffic stripes and pavement marking containing lead.
- Specifications for handling, removing, and disposing of earth material containing lead.
- Specifications for performing work involving residue from grinding or cold planning that contains lead from paint and thermoplastic.
- Specifications for construction site BMPs, including specifications related to compliance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (U.S. EPA's) Construction General Permit, discharges of stormwater from the job site, permits issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, and permits that govern stormwater and non-stormwater discharges resulting from construction activities at the job site.
- Specifications for wood waste treatment.
- Specifications related to inspecting and cleaning construction equipment prior to transporting it from one project location to another to avoid the introduction and spread of invasive plant species.
- Specifications related to complying with the provisions of the NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit) (Order No. 2009 0009 DWQ, as amended by Order No. 2010-0014-DWQ and Order No. 2012 0006 DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002), as well as any subsequent permit, during construction of the project. This shall include submission of the permit registration documents, including a Notice of Intent (NOI), risk assessment, site map, Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), annual fee, and signed certification statement to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) at least 14 days prior to the start of construction activity. The SWPPP shall (1) meet the requirements of the

Construction General Permit and identify potential pollutant sources associated with construction activities, (2) identify non-stormwater discharges, and (3) identify, implement, and maintain BMPs to reduce or eliminate pollutants associated with the construction site. The BMPs identified in the SWPPP shall be implemented during the project construction. A Notice of Termination shall be submitted to the SWRCB upon completion of construction and stabilization of the site.

- Specifications related to complying with the provisions of the General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges to Surface Waters that Pose an Insignificant (De Minimis) Threat to Water Quality, Order No. R8-2009-0003, NPDES No. CAG998001, for a discharge of project-related non-stormwater dewatering wastes. This shall include submittal of an NOI to the RWQCB at least 60 days prior to the start of construction and a notification of discharge at least five days prior to any planned discharges.
- Specifications related to complying with the provisions of the Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Colorado River RWQCB, a Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for impacts on jurisdictional areas. These regulatory permits shall be obtained prior to impacts occurring within identified jurisdictional areas.
- Specifications related to complying with the provisions of the Caltrans NPDES Statewide Stormwater Permit (Order No. 2012-0011-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000003), effective July 1, 2013 (known as the Caltrans municipal separate storm sewer system [MS4] permit). Project-specific BMPs and applicable hydromodification features shall be incorporated into final design. The BMPs shall be properly designed and maintained to target pollutants of concern and reduce runoff from the project site.

1.4.3 Transportation System Management and Transportation Demand Management Alternatives

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies increase the efficiency of existing facilities; they are actions that increase the number of vehicle trips a facility can carry without increasing the number of through lanes. Examples of TSM strategies include ramp metering, auxiliary lanes, turning lanes, reversible lanes, and traffic signal coordination. Other TSM strategies include encouraging the public to use public and private transit and ridesharing programs.

Although no specific TSM features are included as part of the project, the proposed project serves a TSM purpose by improving safety and mobility along I-10 within the project limits. The proposed project would improve the existing facility without increasing the number of through lanes. Therefore, the proposed project is considered consistent with TSM goals; it will support safe and efficient operation of I-10 within the project limits once it is completed.

1.4.4 Final Decision-making Process

After the public circulation period, all comments received will be considered. Caltrans will identify a preferred alternative and make the final determination regarding the project's effect on the environment. Under CEQA, if no immitigable significant adverse impacts are identified, Caltrans will prepare a Negative Declaration (ND) or Mitigated ND. Similarly, if Caltrans

determines that the action would not significantly affect the environment, Caltrans, as assigned by FHWA, will issue a Finding of No Significant Impact, in accordance with NEPA.

1.5 Permits and Approvals Needed

The permits, licenses, agreements, and certifications listed in Table 1-6 would be required for project construction.

Table 1-6. Required Permits, Reviews, and Approvals

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement	Caltrans will apply during the project specifications and estimates (final design) phase of the project.
	2081 Incidental Take Permit	Caltrans will apply during the project specifications and estimates (final design) phase of the project.
California Water Resources Board	NPDES Statewide Stormwater Permit (order No. 2012-0111-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000003) and Construction General Permit (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002)	Caltrans will apply for and obtain prior to start of construction.
State Water Resources Control Board	Porter-Cologne Act and Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification	Caltrans will apply during the project specifications and estimates (final design) phase of the project.
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Clean Water Act Section 404 Nationwide Permit	Caltrans will apply during the project specifications and estimates (final design) phase of the project.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation	Will be completed to address potential impacts on desert tortoise and southwestern willow flycatcher prior to ground breaking.

Chapter 2 Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

As part of the scoping and environmental analysis carried out for the project, the environmental issues listed below were considered, but no adverse impacts were identified. As a result, there is no further discussion of these issues in this document.

- **Land Use:** Residences and businesses would not be relocated as a result of the proposed project. Minor amounts of land for an additional ROW would be required at four parcels in the city of Blythe at the intersections of Lovekin Boulevard and Donlon Street, Lovekin Boulevard and Dekema Street, and Seventh Street and Donlon Street to construct ADA-mandated wheelchair ramps. No change in land use would occur as a result of these ROW acquisitions. As such, the proposed project would be consistent with the existing land use.
- **Coastal Zone:** The proposed project is not in the vicinity of the Coastal Zone.
- **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Jurisdiction:** The project area is outside NMFS jurisdiction. Therefore, an NMFS species list is not required, and no effects on NMFS species are anticipated.
- **Wild and Scenic Rivers:** The proposed project is not in the vicinity of a designated Wild and Scenic River.
- **Farmland and Timberlands:** According to the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, farmland or vacant lands that have been mapped as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Farmland of Local Importance are found in the vicinity of the proposed project, particularly near the city of Blythe. However, because the proposed project is a pavement rehabilitation project and all work would be conducted within the existing Caltrans ROW, the proposed project would have no effect on farmland. There are no timberlands near the proposed project; therefore, there would be no impact on timberlands.
- **Growth:** The proposed project would rehabilitate pavement within the existing transportation ROW. It would not change accessibility or influence growth. As such, no direct or indirect growth impacts would occur.
- **Utilities:** On-site and off-site drainage structures would be installed or improved to facilitate the flow of floodwater within the project limits. No other utilities would be affected by the proposed project.
- **Hydrology and Floodplains:** The proposed project is not within a designated Federal Emergency Management Agency one-percent-annual-chance (i.e., 100-year) floodplain and has no potential to affect any floodplain. The project would not result in significant floodplain encroachment, as defined in 23 CFR 650.105.
- **Paleontology:** The proposed project is within a previously disturbed area and has no potential to affect paleontological resources. Pavement replacement would take place atop one to 10 feet of existing aggregate fill. New guardrail posts would be placed in the same post holes that were used for the original guardrail. Temporary detour lanes would be

constructed by widening the median. All work and staging would take place within previously disturbed soil. As such, no adverse effects on paleontological resources are expected.

- **Noise:** No adverse noise impacts from project construction are anticipated because construction would be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications, Section 14-8.02 and Standard Special Provision 14-8.02. Construction noise would be short term and intermittent. No permanent noise impacts are anticipated because the proposed project is not a Type I project, as defined in Caltrans' Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol.

2.1 Human Environment

2.1.1 Parks and Recreational Facilities

There are four parks and recreational facilities within 0.5 mile of the project limits, as summarized in Table 2.1-1, below.

Table 2.1-1. Parks, Trails, and Other Recreational Facilities within 0.5 Mile of the Project Limits

Jurisdiction	Name	Location	Approximate Distance from the Project	Type	Amenities
City of Blythe	Miller Park	599 S. Lovekin Blvd., Blythe, CA 92225 (not exact address)	0.3 mile	Park	Approximately 16.2 acres; amenities include one lighted softball field, a lighted multipurpose field, a playground, and a covered picnic area.
City of Blythe	Appleby Park	E. Donlon St. and S. Second St., Blythe, 92225	0.04 mile	Park	A 3.85-acre neighborhood park with playground equipment.
City of Blythe	Queshan park	12200 Colorado River Road, Blythe, 92225	0.32 mile	Park	A 27.39-acre regional park with picnic areas and boat access at the Colorado River.
City of Blythe	Blythe Recreation Center	127 S. Main Street, Blythe, CA 92225	0.16 mile	Recreation Facility	Recreational facility that provides classes and open rooms to the public.

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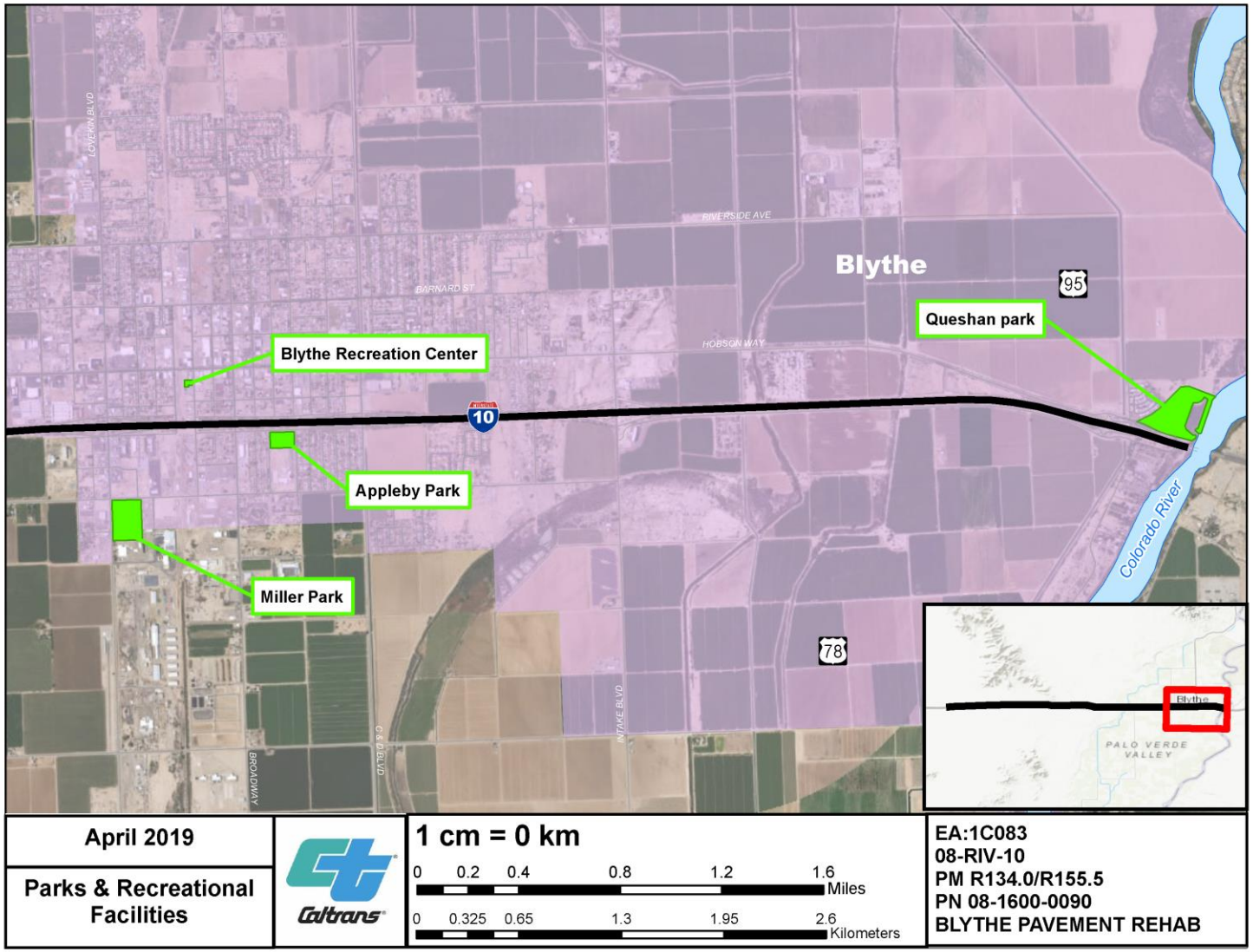

Figure 2.1-1 Parks and Recreational Facilities

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SECTION 4(F) RESOURCES

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966, codified in federal law at 49 United States Code (USC 303, declares that "it is the policy of the United States government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites." Section 4(f) specifies that the Secretary of Transportation may approve a transportation program or project requiring use of the publicly owned land of a park, recreation area, or wildlife or waterfowl refuge of national, state, or local significance or land of a historic site of national, state, or local significance (as determined by the federal, state, or local officials with jurisdiction over the park, area, refuge, or site) only if:

- There is no prudent and feasible alternative to using that land, and
- The program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or historic site resulting from the use.

Section 4(f) further requires consultation with the Department of the Interior and, as appropriate, the involved offices of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Housing and Urban Development when developing transportation projects and programs that use lands that are protected by Section 4(f). If historic sites are involved, then coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) is also needed.

Under Section 4(f) regulations, Section 4(f) does not apply to archaeological resources on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) if they are valuable only for data recovery and not for preservation in place (23 CFR Part 774.13[b][1]). Specifically, any archaeological sites that are important primarily because of what can be learned from data recovery, with the resources removed, are not considered 4(f) resources. There is one assumed-eligible NRHP historic property in the project footprint. However, because this resource is assumed eligible for the NRHP under Criterion D, it does not warrant preservation in place and therefore does not qualify for protection under Section 4(f). Further information on this resource can be found in Section 2.1.6, Cultural Resources. Other Section 4(f) resources include Miller Park, Appleby Park, Queshan Park, Blythe Recreation Center, and Ruth Brown Elementary School, all of which are within 0.5 mile of the project limits. Further evaluation is presented in Appendix A, Section 4(f) Determination.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

The project proposes to rehabilitate existing pavement within a Caltrans ROW. It would not result in the acquisition of public parkland for non-park use; therefore, the California Public Park Preservation Act of 1971 would not apply to this project. Temporary construction-related noise and equipment emissions impacts are anticipated to be minor because of the nature of disturbance. To minimize potential short-term air quality and noise impacts, measures **AQ-1** and **NOI-1** would be implemented during the construction of the Build Alternative. No permanent impacts on parks and recreational facilities would occur as part of the Build Alternative.

Section 4(f) Properties

Caltrans has analyzed all recreation, archaeological, and historic sites within 0.5-mile of the project area to determine whether any are protected Section 4(f) properties, as summarized in Appendix A, Section 4(f) Determination, of this document. Section 4(f) *de minimis* determination consideration was required for one cultural resource within the project APE. Consultation and

identification efforts for the proposed undertaking resulted in the identification of contributing elements to one historic property: General Patton's Desert Training Center/California-Arizona Maneuver Area (DTC/C-AMA). These elements (tank tracks) are within an existing transportation corridor. Essentially, a very small portion of the DTC/C-AMA is permanently incorporated into a transportation facility, representing "use" of an NRHP-eligible property, as defined in 23 CFR 774.17. According to the effect finding, destruction and/or further disturbances to these contributing elements, which constitute only a small portion of the overall DTC/C-AMA (< 0.01 percent), would not rise to the level of adverse. On December 24, 2018, Caltrans' Cultural Studies Office submitted Caltrans Section 106 documentation to SHPO for review of and concurrence with a de minimis impact finding for the resource. SHPO concurrence was received on January 28, 2019. No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures would be required in conjunction with completion of this analysis, pursuant to Caltrans' Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA) and Section 4(f).

Access to the other Section 4(f) resources would not be affected, and no use would occur. Therefore, those resources would not be affected by the proposed project.

No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, project improvements would not be carried out. Therefore, no existing or planned parks or recreational facilities in the area would be affected, and no direct or indirect adverse impacts on recreational and Section 4(f) resources would occur.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

The following measures would be implemented to minimize impacts during project construction:

NOI-1: Sound control will conform to the provisions of Section 14-8.02, Noise Control, of Caltrans' Standard Specifications (2015) and Standard Special Provision 14-8.02. According to the specifications, construction noise cannot exceed 86 A-weighted decibels (dBA) at 50 feet from the job site between 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

2.1.2 Community Impacts

COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND COHESION

Regulatory Setting

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, established that the federal government use all practicable means to ensure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings (42 United States Code [USC] 4331[b][2]). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in its implementation of NEPA (23 USC 109[h]) directs that final decisions on projects are to be made in the best overall public interest. This requires taking into account adverse environmental impacts, such as destruction or disruption of human-made resources, community cohesion, and the availability of public facilities and services.

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an economic or social change by itself is not to be considered a significant effect on the environment. However, if a social or economic change is related to a physical change, then social or economic change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.

Affected Environment

For purposes of this analysis, the most recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2013–2017 was used. This section discusses the population and housing characteristics for the communities within the study area located in western Riverside County and the City of Blythe. Census tract data from the six census tracts (459, 461.01, 461.02, 462, 469, and 470) within a 0.5 mile radius of the project alignment was used to characterize community character and cohesion.

Community Cohesion Indicators

Community cohesion is the degree to which residents feel a sense of belonging to their neighborhood, their level of commitment to the community, or a strong attachment to neighbors, groups, and institutions, usually as a result of continued association over time.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Environmental Handbook Volume 4, Community Impact Assessment (Handbook) defines a community as "a population rooted in one place, where the daily life of each member involves contact with, and dependence on other members." Physical barriers such as highways, waterways, open spaces, activity centers, sharply affect average home values, selected demographic characteristics, and resident perceptions can delineate communities or neighborhoods. The discussion below evaluates indicators, which include age, ethnicity, and housing demographics, that can be used to measure a community's level of cohesion.

- **Ethnic Homogeneity:** In general, homogeneity of the population contributes to higher levels of cohesion. Communities that are ethnically homogenous often speak the same language, hold similar beliefs, and are more likely to engage in social interaction on a routine basis.
- **Age:** In general, communities with a high percentage of elderly residents (65 years or older) tend to demonstrate a greater social commitment to their communities, because they tend to be more active in the community due to having more time available for community activities.
- **Housing:** In general, communities with a high percentage of families with children are more cohesive than communities comprised largely of single people because children tend to establish friendships with other children in their communities. While the US Census does not provide specific data regarding children per household, persons per household are used as a proxy for households with children. In addition, housing occupancy and tenure can also be indicators of community cohesion. A higher percentage of owner-occupied residences indicate a household's financial stake in their communities, while housing tenure allows households to establish greater social networks and develop an identity with the community.

Ethnic Homogeneity

Table 2.1-2 below summarizes the race and ethnicity of the study area. Apart from Census Tract 470, Hispanic or Latino populations account for over 50 percent of the total population within each of the study area Census Tracts.

Table 2.1-2. Race and Ethnicity

Jurisdiction	Total Population	White* (%)	Hispanic or Latino (%)	Black or African American (%)	American Indian and Alaska Native (%)	Asian (%)	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (%)	Some Other Race (%)	Two or More Races (%)
Riverside County	**2,355,002**	36.6	48.0	6.0	0.4	6.1	0.3	0.2	2.5
City of Blythe	**19,486**	26.8	55.9	12.6	0.1	2.0	0.3	0.1	2.2
Census Tract 459	1,484	35.1	58.1	3.9	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	1.5
Census Tract 461.01	3,178	32.4	50.1	13.1	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	3.2
Census Tract 461.02	1,569	17.3	66.6	14.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.4	0.5
Census Tract 462	3,364	13.9	70.6	12.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6
Census Tract 469	1,571	36.8	59.8	2.4	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7
Census Tract 470	1,634	49.8	37.7	7.3	0.0	3.7	0.0	0.0	1.4
Census Tract Total	**12,800**	28.8	58.0	10.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	2.0

*White alone, not Hispanic or latino

Source: DP05, U.S. Census Bureau 2017

Age

Table 2.1-3 below provides summarizes age indicators within the study area. The proportion of the population in the study area Census Tracts that are youth (under 18 years old) and elderly (65 years and older) is similar to the rest of Riverside County and higher than the City of Blythe.

Table 2.1-3. Age Indicators

Jurisdiction	Total Population	Median Age	Under 18 years old (%)	20 to 64 Years (%)	65 Years and Over (%)
Riverside County	**2,355,002**	**35.0**	**26.1**	**60.4**	**13.5**
City of Blythe	**19,486**	**37.4**	**18.8**	**71.2**	**10.0**
Census Tract 459	1,484	39.3	31.2	53.4	15.4
Census Tract 461.01	3,178	43.6	22.6	62.7	14.7
Census Tract 461.02	1,569	32.6	24.5	64.8	10.7
Census Tract 462	3,364	32.1	30.2	58.3	11.5
Census Tract 469	1,571	45.1	23.2	54.1	22.7
Census Tract 470	1,634	43.3	25.8	55.8	18.4
Census Tract Total	**12,800**	**38.9**	**26.3**	**58.8**	**14.9**

Source: DP05, U.S. Census Bureau 2017

Housing

Table 2.1-4 summarizes some key housing statistics for the study area. The average household size is lower than the rest of Riverside County, though home ownership is higher. Housing tenure (households that moved in prior to year 2000) within all studied Census Tracts is higher than the rest of the county.

Table 2.1-4. Housing Characteristics

Jurisdiction	Number of Housing Units	Number of Households	Average Household Size	Percent of Household Members in Same Housing Unit (prior to year 2000) (%)	Owner Occupied (%)
Riverside County	**826,704**	**711,724**	**3.25**	**19.5**	**65**
City of Blythe	**6,426**	**5,091**	**2.64**	**31**	**53.3**
Census Tract 459	843	551	2.6	43.4	62.1
Census Tract 461.01	1,546	1,231	2.57	26.1	39.6
Census Tract 461.02	910	716	2.52	22.6	29.9
Census Tract 462	1,434	1,254	2.8	33	47.8
Census Tract 469	1,244	558	2.83	30.8	78
Census Tract 470	1,076	613	2.5	25	66.9
Census Tract Total	**7,053**	**4,923**	**2.6**	**29.7**	**50.5**

Source: DP02 and DP04, U.S. Census Bureau 2017

Community Cohesion Summary

Community cohesion indicators for the study area are generally similar to the rest of Riverside County or the City of Blythe. Ethnic homogeneity is high, while the proportion of elderly populations, housing tenure, and home ownership is similar, indicating moderate levels of community cohesion along the project study area.

Economic Conditions

Certain characteristics of a neighborhood could help indicate populations sensitive to disruption of community. Such characteristics include elevated poverty status percentages, which makes communities especially vulnerable to project impacts on neighborhood community and character. As defined by the U.S. Census, poverty status includes individuals who fall below certain monetary threshold levels, which vary by family size and composition. Table 2.1-5 provides information regarding certain economic indicators of the study area. Among the study area Census Tracts, the median household income is $37,055 and 44.4 percent of the population is below the poverty level according to the U.S. Census. The median household income is lower and the percentage of the population in poverty is higher than the rest of Riverside County, respectively. Similarly, unemployment rates are higher than the rest of the county.

Table 2.1-5. Economic Conditions

Jurisdiction	Median Household Income (Dollars as of 2016)	Population Determined as Poverty Status (Percent)	Employed in Civilian Labor Force	Unemployment (%)
Riverside County	**60,807**	**15.6**	**54**	**5.9**
City of Blythe	**39,840**	**26.2**	**33.3**	**3.7**
Census Tract 459	43,882	12.1	51.8	5.7
Census Tract 461.01	41,016	24.2	55.5	5.4
Census Tract 461.02	21,000	52.2	48.3	11.9
Census Tract 462	30,676	43.6	48.2	7.4
Census Tract 469	41,923	21.8	44.6	10.9
Census Tract 470	50,331	16.6	50.2	3.5
Census Tract Total	**37,055**	**44.4**	**94.2**	**11.0**

Source: DP03 and DP05, U.S. Census Bureau 2017

Community Facilities and Services

Community facilities and services are important aspects of neighborhood identity and can be essential resources for the community. Community facilities contribute in many ways to community cohesion. Community facilities are those services and institutions that the local population relies on for their health and welfare and as a means to interact with other members of the community. Community facilities include schools, libraries, recreation facilities, health providers, emergency services, community centers, boys and girls clubs, and other similar institutions. The severity of the impact of the transportation project on community cohesiveness will depend on how much the community uses and relies on the facility, and the degree to which the project will impede or enhance the ability of residents to access the facility. As described prior in Section 2.1.1, Parks and Recreational Facilities, there are four parks and/or recreation

facilities within a 0.5 mile of the project area in the City of Blythe. In addition, as detailed in Section 2.1.3, Emergency Services, there are 10 emergency services facilities within 0.5 mile of the project area. In addition, Ruth Brown Elementary School is within 0.5 mile of the project area.

Environmental Consequences

Build Alternative

Construction of the Build Alternative would require small amounts (sliver acquisition) of land for additional ROW to construct ADA-mandated wheelchair ramps at local street intersections. Parcels where additional right of way is required are located at the intersections of Lovekin Boulevard and Donlon Street (APN 836141015 and APN 848100032), Lovekin Boulevard and Dekema Street (APN 848031033), and 7th Street and Donlon Street (APN 848171037). Relocation of businesses or residences and temporary construction easements would not be required. Businesses located adjacent to these intersections are all gas stations and operations at these locations would not be disrupted. Affected properties would be able to continue operation throughout construction. With implementation of **COM-1**, the property owners would be justly compensated for their losses.

Construction of the Build Alternative could result in temporary noise and air quality disruptions from construction activities (i.e., transport and use of equipment). Temporary construction-related noise and equipment emissions impacts are anticipated to be minor because of the nature of disturbance. To minimize potential short-term air quality and noise impacts, measures **AQ-1** and **NOI-1** would be implemented during the construction of the Build Alternative. During construction, two temporary detour lanes and crossover lanes would be constructed in the median. With construction of these temporary detour lanes, impacts related to lane closures during construction would be minimized. Other temporary impacts (e.g., impacts related to nighttime construction, flagging) could also occur and result in traffic delays along I-10 in the project vicinity. However, the proposed project would include preparation and implementation of a TMP as part of measure **T-1**. Construction could result in temporary effects on access and quality of life, which contribute to community character and cohesion; however, the effects would be relatively minor given the nature of the Build Alternative activities and would cease following completion of construction.

Construction activities are not anticipated to severely disrupt business activity such that a loss of sales taxes for affected communities are anticipated.

Following construction, neighborhood integrity and community cohesion would generally return to the way it was before project construction since the project would be rehabilitating existing pavement and improving safety and mobility. As such, the project would not result in a substantial social or economic change in the study area.

No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative would not result in any changes to existing conditions. Therefore, the No Build Alternative would not result in effects on community character or cohesion.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Implementation of Standard Caltrans procedures and Caltrans Standard Specifications measures as well as measure **T-1** (detailed in Section 2.1.4, Traffic and Transportation) would

reduce temporary impacts of the Build Alternatives during construction and would alleviate impacts on emergency providers, community facilities, and business owners during construction and operations.

COM-1 Where acquisition is unavoidable, the provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970 (49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 24), as amended, and the Caltrans *Right of Way Manual* (California Department of Transportation 2018) will be followed. An independent appraisal of the affected property will be obtained, and an offer for the full amount of the approved appraisal will be offered.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Regulatory Setting

All projects involving a federal action (funding, permit, or land) must comply with Executive Order (EO) 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, signed by President William J. Clinton on February 11, 1994. This EO directs federal agencies to take the appropriate and necessary steps to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse effects of federal projects on the health or environment of minority and low-income populations to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law. Low income is defined based on the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. For 2019, this was $25,750 for a family of four.

All considerations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and related statutes, have also been included in this project. The Department's commitment to upholding the mandates of Title VI is demonstrated by its Title VI Policy Statement, signed by the Director, which can be found in Appendix B of this document.

Affected Environment

For purposes of this analysis, the most recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2013–2017 was used. Census tract data from the six census tracts (459, 461.01, 461.02, 462, 469, and 470) within a 0.5-mile radius of the project alignment was used to characterize community character and cohesion and identify environmental justice populations within the study area. This section discusses the population and housing characteristics for the communities within the study area located in western Riverside County and the City of Blythe. Minority and low-income populations ("environmental justice populations") are identified by analyzing the demographic and economic characteristics of the affected area and comparing those to the characteristics of the larger community.

Minority Populations

U.S. DOT Order 5610.2(a) defines a minority as a person who is a member of the following population groups: Black, Hispanic or Latino, Asian American, American Indian and Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. Minority populations were identified where either of the following is true:

- The minority population of the affected area exceeds 50 percent.

- The minority population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis.

Riverside County was used as the community of comparison, and "meaningfully greater" was conservatively defined as any census block group within the Environmental Justice Study Area with a minority population that is 5 percent or greater than that of Riverside County. As shown in Table 2.1-6, Riverside County had an approximate 61 percent minority population by race and 48 percent Hispanic or Latino population. Approximately 69 percent of the population within the study area self-identify as belonging to a minority population. Of the six census tracts studied, two had minority population percentages that were meaningfully greater than that the rest of Riverside County. All but one of the census tracts consisted of over 50 percent Hispanic or Latino Populations.

Table 2.1-6. Summary of Minority and Low-Income Populations

Jurisdiction	Total Population	Percent Minority	Percent Hispanic or Latino	Median Household Income	Build Alternatives Proposed Relocations
Riverside County	**2,355,002**	**61.0**	**48.0**	**60,807**	**N/A**
City of Blythe	**19,486**	**71.0**	**55.9**	**39,840**	**No**
Census Tract 459	1,484	63.3	58.1	43,882	No
Census Tract 461.01	3,178	64.4	50.1	41,016	No
Census Tract 461.02	1,569	82.2	66.6	21,000	No
Census Tract 462	3,364	83.5	70.6	30,676	No
Census Tract 469	1,571	62.5	59.8	41,923	No
Census Tract 470	1,634	48.7	37.7	50,331	No
Census Tract Total	**12,800**	**69.2**	**58.0**	**$37,055**	**No**

Source: DP03 and DP05, U.S. Census Bureau 2017

Low-Income Populations

U.S. DOT Order 5610.2(a) defines low income as "any individual whose median household income is at or below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines." U.S. DOT Order 5610.2(a) defines a "low income population" as "any readily identifiable group of low-income persons who live in geographic proximity, and, if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons (e.g., migrant workers or Native Americans) who would be similarly affected by a proposed U.S. DOT program, policy, or activity."

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' 2019 Poverty Guidelines for 2019 identifies the poverty level for a family or household of four as having an income of $25,750 or less. A household includes all persons occupying a housing unit. As shown in Table 2.1-2, the median household income for the studied census tracts was approximately $37,055, which is above the poverty threshold for a family of four. Census Tract 461.02 was the only census tract within the study area that had a median household income that was equal to or below the poverty threshold for a family of four in 2019.

Environmental Consequences

FHWA Environmental Justice Order 6640.23A defines a disproportionately high and adverse effect on environmental justice populations as an adverse effect for which either of the following is true:

a) The adverse effect is predominantly borne by a minority population and/or a low-income population.

b) The adverse effect will be suffered by the minority population and/or low-income population and is appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect that would be suffered by the non-minority population and/or non-low-income population.

An adverse effect is defined as "the totality of significant individual or cumulative human health or environmental effects" (FHWA Order 6640.23A). When determining whether an action would disproportionately affect an environmental justice population, mitigation and enhancement measures and potential offsetting benefits to the affected minority or low-income populations are considered.

The data used to complete this analysis indicates that five of the six census tracts within the study area is defined as a minority population for purposes of this analysis. As such, there are environmental justice populations distributed throughout the Environmental Justice Study Area.

Build Alternative

Populations along the project corridor would experience short-term noise impacts during construction. Noise impacts from the project would originate from construction activities (transport and use of equipment) and operation of the new facility (additional traffic volume). In addition to noise impacts, populations along the project corridor would experience visual and air quality impacts during construction. These temporary impacts would be distributed throughout the corridor and would affect all of the census block groups within the study area comparably, regardless of demographic or socioeconomic characteristics. These temporary impacts would be reduced through the implementation of Standard Caltrans procedures that would be adopted during construction to address temporary construction activities. During construction, two temporary detour lanes and crossover lanes would be constructed in the median. With construction of these temporary detour lanes, impacts related to lane closures during construction would be minimized. Other temporary impacts (e.g., impacts related to nighttime construction, flagging) could also occur and result in traffic delays along I-10 in the project vicinity. However, the proposed project would include preparation and implementation of a TMP as part of measure **T-1**. Construction impacts would be short term, lasting only the length of construction, and cease upon completion of construction. Therefore, the proposed construction activities would not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on any minority or low-income population.

Small amounts of land for an additional ROW would need to be acquired to construct ADA-mandated wheelchair ramps. However, relocations and temporary construction easements would not be required.

Following construction, effects on neighborhood integrity and community cohesion would be generally similar for all of the communities affected communities since the project would be

rehabilitating existing pavement and improving safety and mobility. As such, the project would not result in a substantial social or economic change in the study area. No minority or low-income populations would be adversely affected by the proposed project. Therefore, the project would not cause disproportionately high and adverse effects on any minority or low-income population in accordance with the provisions of EO 12898. No further environmental justice analysis is required.

No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative would not result in any changes to existing conditions. Therefore, the No Build Alternative would not result in effects on minority or low-income populations.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Implementation of Standard Caltrans procedures and Caltrans Standard Specifications measures would reduce temporary impacts of the Build Alternatives during construction and would alleviate impacts on emergency providers, community facilities, and business owners during construction and operations.

2.1.3 Emergency Services

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The emergency services shown in Table 2.1-7 are within 0.5 mile of the proposed project.

Table 2.1-7. Emergency Services

Name	Emergency Service	Address	Distance from Project
Blythe Border Control Station	Law Enforcement	16870 W. Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	0.2 mile north
Blythe Police Department	Law Enforcement	240 N. Spring St., Blythe, CA 92225	0.14 mile north
California Highway Patrol	Law Enforcement	430 S. Broadway, Blythe, CA 92225	0.2 mile south
Riverside County Fire Station No. 45	Fire Protection	17280 W. Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	0.15 mile north
Blythe Fire Department	Fire Protection	201 N. Commercial St., Blythe, CA 92225	0.34 mile north
Riverside County Fire Department Station No. 43	Fire Protection	140 W. Barnard St., Blythe, CA 92225	0.44 mile north
Palo Verde Hospital	Medical Facilities	250 N. 1st St., Blythe, CA 92225	0.36 mile north
Desert View Medical Center	Medical Facilities	205 N. 1st St., #A, Blythe, CA 92225	0.35 mile north
Blythe Health Clinic	Medical Facilities	321 W. Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	0.22 mile north
Blythe Pediatrics	Medical Facilities	149 W. Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	0.22 mile north

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

The Build Alternative could increase response times for emergency vehicles during construction; however, the proposed project would include preparation and implementation of a Traffic Management Plan (TMP), as required by measure **T-1**. Construction impacts would be short term, lasting only the length of construction, and cease upon completion of construction. Once completed, the pavement would be rehabilitated, which would be a beneficial impact, and access would return to normal for fire, police, and medical personnel on I-10.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative consists of leaving the existing pavement as is. Minor maintenance expenditures may be made to extend the life of the existing pavement, but timing and extent of other maintenance activities is uncertain. Existing and future pavement conditions would continue to deteriorate.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

Measure **T-1,** as discussed in Section 2.1.4, Traffic and Transportation, would be implemented to minimize impacts on emergency services.

2.1.4 Traffic and Transportation

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Information in this section is based on the PIR (Caltrans 2017) prepared for the project.

The project does not propose to increase the capacity of the facility or improve operations; as such, forecast traffic information and collision data are not needed. The project proposes to rehabilitate pavement on I-10 in the project area while improving safety and mobility for the traveling public.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

During construction, two temporary detour lanes and crossover lanes would be constructed in the median. With construction of these temporary detour lanes, impacts related to lane closures during construction would be minimized. Other temporary impacts (e.g., impacts related to nighttime construction, flagging) could also occur and result in traffic delays along I-10 in the project vicinity. However, the proposed project would include preparation and implementation of a TMP as part of measure **T-1**. The TMP could include public information communications, such as mailers, handouts, brochures, and press releases; information for motorists from changeable message signs or temporary signs; construction strategies, such as traffic plans; and information regarding construction staging, lane modifications (e.g., reduced lane widths or lane closures); and alternate routes/detours. Construction impacts would be short term, lasting only the length of construction, and cease upon completion of the project. Once the project is complete, both detour lanes, which will be striped, signaling to the public they are not available for use, will be left in place. The project would also upgrade existing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) facilities at ramp termini, thus providing a beneficial impact to pedestrian facilities in the project area.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

T-1 A TMP will be prepared and implemented for construction of the project. Public information and awareness campaigns, motorist information strategies, and incident management strategies in the TMP will inform the public about the proposed project.

2.1.5 Visual/Aesthetics

REGULATORY SETTING

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, establishes that the federal government use all practicable means to ensure all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically (emphasis added) and culturally pleasing surroundings (42 United States Code [USC] 4331[b][2]). To further emphasize this point, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in its implementation of NEPA (23 USC 109[h]), directs that final decisions on projects are to be made in the best overall public interest taking into account adverse environmental impacts, including among others, the destruction or disruption of aesthetic values.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) establishes that it is the policy of the state to take all action necessary to provide the people of the state "with…enjoyment of aesthetic, natural, scenic and historic environmental qualities" (CA Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21001[b]).

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Information in this section is based on the *Questionaire to Determine Visual Impact Level* prepared for the proposed project (Caltrans 2019f). The project site is in the Colorado Desert section of the Sonoran Desert. This stretch of I-10 is primarily flat, open land with sparse vegetation. Twenty-two dry streams cross under the project limits. Remote mountain ranges are visible to the north and south from the I-10, however, the project is not within a designated State Scenic Highway.

Land uses abutting the corridor are primarily General Commercial uses, but also Medium-Density and Medium- to Low-Density Residential, Low-Density Residential, Public/Quasi-Public, General Industrial, and some Agricultural uses towards the east end of the project. In California, I-10 serves as a primary connection for commuter traffic and goods movement from west to east in Riverside County. It is 196 miles long within District 8 and includes four-to-eight mixed-flow lanes and two HOV lanes across the Inland Empire and desert regions of both Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

Viewer groups of the proposed project are neighbors and highway users. It is anticipated that the average response of all viewer groups will be low.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

Temporary Impacts

Potential temporary visual impacts would result from earth moving activities, limited removal of vegetation, and other construction activities (e.g., staging/stockpiling construction materials, the presence of construction equipment, and temporary traffic barricades). Construction activities

would include grading work, bridge work, road widening, grinding, other routine construction activities, and truck shipments. The resulting temporary impact would have no adverse effect to the viewers because negligible visual changes to the environment are proposed.

Permanent Impacts

The Build Alternative involves substantial grading, primarily in the median and to a lesser extend along the outside shoulders. The project proposes a one-lane temporary detour and crossovers in each direction. Pavement for the detour within the median will remain after the completion of the project. A portion of the paving will be designated as a temporary traveled 11-foot inside shoulder in each direction, and the remaining portion will be striped in a chevron manner to prevent use from the traveling public. This additional pavement changes traveler's view from an earthen median to AC pavement. The visual impacts resulting from the additional pavement would be low.

All existing bridges and/or drainage crossings within the project limits would be widened towards the median. The visual impacts of the widening of the existing bridges would be low.

The visual character of the proposed project would be compatible with the existing visual character of the corridor. The rehabilitation of the AC pavement would be in the same location of the existing pavement. The necessary widening for the detour lanes would occur within the median, and not increase the overall width of the corridor. Proposed materials for the rehabilitation and bridge widening will match the existing in like-kind, therefore providing a compatible visual character with the existing visual character of the project corridor.

The visual quality of the existing corridor will not be altered by the propose project. The general alignment and elevation of I-10 will remain as existing and not change the current views of the traveler. The proposed project improvements are primarily replacement items. The introduction of new elements has been minimized to locations where necessary to serve only the project purpose. With implementation of measure **VIA-1**, the median would also be hydroseeded within the project limits for vegetation restoration and erosion control. Additionally, with implementation of measure **VIA-2**, restoration planning would be provided at affected interchanges. As a result, changes to visual resources as measured by changes in visual character and visual quality would be low.

No-Build Alternative

There would be no visual impacts associated with the No-Build Alternative because there would be no construction activities associated with this project. The existing facility would remain as is and no soil or vegetation disturbance would occur. The No-Build Alternative, however, would not preclude Caltrans from engaging in maintenance activities or implementation of other smaller rehabilitation projects, as necessary.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

The visual character of the proposed project would be compatible with the existing setting. However, to minimize potential visual impacts due to vegetation removal, the following measure is proposed.

VIA-1: **Hydroseeding.** After completion of detour-lane construction, disturbed soil will be agronomically tested, amended as recommended and hydroseeded with a native-plant seed mix to restore disturbed soil.

VIA-2: **Planting**. After completion of detour-lane construction, disturbed soil will be agronomically tested, amended as recommended and plants will be installed within affected interchanges.

2.1.6 Cultural Resources

REGULATORY SETTING

The term "cultural resources," as used in this document, refers to the "built environment" (e.g., structures, bridges, railroads, water conveyance systems, etc.), places of traditional or cultural importance, and archaeological sites (both prehistoric and historic), regardless of significance. Under federal and state laws, cultural resources that meet certain criteria of significance are referred to by various terms including "historic properties," "historic sites," "historical resources," and "tribal cultural resources." Laws and regulations dealing with cultural resources include:

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended, sets forth national policy and procedures for historic properties, defined as districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects included in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and to allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) the opportunity to comment on those undertakings, following regulations issued by the ACHP (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 800). On January 1, 2014, the First Amended Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA) among the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the ACHP, the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and the Department went into effect for Department projects, both state and local, with FHWA involvement. The PA implements the ACHP's regulations, 36 CFR 800, streamlining the Section 106 process and delegating certain responsibilities to the Department. The FHWA's responsibilities under the PA have been assigned to the Department as part of the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program (23 United States Code [USC] 327).

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) applies when a project may involve archaeological resources located on federal or tribal land. The ARPA requires that a permit be obtained before excavation of an archaeological resource on such land can take place.

Historic properties may also be covered under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, which regulates the "use" of land from historic properties. See Appendix A for specific information regarding Section 4(f).

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires consideration of cultural resources that are historical resources and tribal cultural resources as well as "unique" archaeological resources. PRC Section 5024.1 established the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and outlined the necessary criteria for a cultural resource to be considered eligible for listing in the CRHR and, therefore, a historical resource. Historical resources are defined in PRC Section 5020.1(j). In 2014, Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) added the term "tribal cultural resources" to CEQA; AB 52 is commonly referenced instead of CEQA when discussing the process for identifying tribal cultural resources as well as measures to avoid, preserve, or mitigate effects on them. As defined in PRC Section 21074(a), a tribal cultural resource is an eligible CRHR or local register site, feature, place, cultural landscape, or object that has cultural value to a California Native American tribe. Tribal cultural resources must also meet the definition of a historical resource. Unique archaeological resources are referenced in PRC Section 21083.2.

PRC Section 5024 requires state agencies to identify and protect state-owned historical resources that meet the NRHP listing criteria. It further requires Caltrans to inventory state-owned structures in its rights of way. Sections 5024(f) and 5024.5 require state agencies to provide notice to and consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) before altering, transferring, relocating, or demolishing state-owned historical resources that are listed or eligible for inclusion in the NRHP or registered or eligible for registration as California Historical Landmarks. Procedures for compliance with PRC Section 5024 are outlined in the January 1, 2015, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)[1] between Caltrans and the SHPO. For most federal-aid projects on the State Highway System, compliance with the Section 106 PA will satisfy the requirements of PRC Section 5024.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Information for this section comes from the approved Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) (Caltrans 2018a) and Archaeological Survey Report (Caltrans 2018b) completed for this project. Identification efforts used the California Historic Resources Information System to search out and review archaeological, ethnohistoric, and historic records. The search, which was conducted at the Eastern Information Center of the University of California, Riverside, covered a 0.5-mile radius around the project footprint. In addition, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and local Native American groups and individuals were consulted, and an archaeological survey of the project APE was conducted.

Native American Consultation

On January 26, 2018, the NAHC was asked to search its Sacred Lands File and provide a list of Native American contacts. A response was received on February 21, 2018, stating that the Sacred Lands File did not contain information regarding sacred lands in the project area. However, the NAHC provided a list of Native American individuals and organizations that should be contacted.

Initial contact letters were sent out on March 19, 2018, to five tribes from the list the NAHC provided. The outreach efforts are summarized below.

- Anthony Madrigal, tribal historic preservation officer (THPO), Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians. A letter was sent on March 19, 2018. A response was received on April 19, 2018, stating that there are four culturally sensitive areas in the project area. The THPO requested all available cultural reports, which were sent on October 8, 2018. Subsequent emails were sent to the THPO on November 5 and December 4, 2018, requesting comments on the finding of no adverse effect on historic properties and the document transmittal to the SHPO. No further response or comment has been received to date.
- Charles F. Wood, chairperson, Chemehuevi Indian Tribe. A letter was sent on March 19, 2018, and follow-up emails were sent April 30 and June 5, 2018. No response has been received to date.
- Brian Etsitty, acting tribal historic preservation officer, Colorado River Indian Tribe. A letter was sent on March 19, 2018. A letter was also sent to Dennis Patch, chairperson. A response was received April 30, 2018, from Mr. Etsitty, stating that he would look into the

[1] The MOU is available at http://www.dot.ca.gov/ser/vol2/5024mou_15.pdf.

project and notify Caltrans should he have any questions or concerns. No further response from the tribe has been received to date.

- Timothy Williams, chairperson, Fort Mojave Indian Tribe. A letter was sent on March 19, 2018. Follow-up letters were sent to Linda Otero, director of the cultural society, on April 30 and June 5, 2018. No response has been received to date.
- Carrie Garcia, cultural resources manager, and Joseph Ontiveros, tribal historic preservation officer, Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians. A letter was sent on March 19, 2018. On April 27, 2018, the THPO responded, stating that the project is in proximity to known cultural resources. The THPO requested consultation and appropriate treatment of human remains/burial goods should they be encountered. On May 23, 2018, a government-to-government meeting was held, with the THPO expressing concern regarding specific areas in proximity to Palen Lake and Ford Dry Lake where village sites are located. Caltrans provided the draft HPSR, including attachments, on October 8, 2018, illustrating that the project limits and APE do not include any sites, isolates, or constituents associated with any village site. On November 5, 2018, a follow-up letter was sent, requesting comments on the finding of no adverse effect on historic properties. On December 6, 2018, a meeting was held with the THPO to discuss the lack of integrity and context resulting from the placement of imported construction fill at three prehistoric lithic scatters. The THPO agreed, stating that the lithic scatters were not in situ but, rather, brought in with construction fill. Therefore, further disturbances by the undertaking would not be problematic. However, because of the unknown source of the construction fill associated with the three sites, the THPO requested tribal monitoring between PM R142.8 and R143.6 in case human remains or grave goods are encountered in the potentially culturally contaminated construction fill during pavement removal. Caltrans agreed to tribal monitoring and sent an email on December 17, 2018, delineating the area of interest as sensitive to Soboba and supporting the tribe's monitoring request. Caltrans also sent an email and letter to notify the tribe of findings regarding the three prehistoric sites and the document transmittal to the SHPO. Caltrans has received no further comments to date.

Area of Potential Effects

In accordance with Section 106 PA Stipulation VIII.A, the APE for the project was established in consultation with Shannon Clarendon, co-principal investigator, prehistoric archaeology, and Wilfredo Ochoa, project manager, on November 7, 2018. The APE was established to include all direct and indirect impacts within the project's horizontal and vertical construction footprint. The width of the APE fluctuates between 30 to 50 feet from the edge of pavement and includes the entire median throughout the 21.6-mile length of the project, as shown in Appendix A of the HPSR. The APE extends a maximum 2.5 feet above grade for guardrail replacement and 4 inches above grade for pavement replacement. Pavement replacement would take place atop one to 10 feet of existing aggregate fill, and new guardrail posts would be placed in the same post holes that were used for the original guardrail. The project would occur within an existing transportation corridor; as such, an extension of the APE to account for indirect effects is not warranted.

Records Search

A records search was conducted at the Eastern Information Center of the University of California, Riverside on April 4, 2018. The records search encompassed a 0.5-mile buffer around the project footprint. Search efforts included a review of the NRHP, CRHR, National Historic Landmarks, California Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, and

the California Historical Resources Information System. The records search found that four cultural resources had been previously recorded within a 0.5-mile radius of the project area: P-33-011044, historic-period canal; P-33-011046, historic-period canal; P-33-011058, historic-period canal; and P-33-011045, historic-period canal.

Field Survey, Methods, and Results

An intensive pedestrian survey of the project area and APE was conducted between May 1 and 8, 2018, by a five-person field crew. The survey included the outside shoulders and median of the Caltrans ROW between PM R134.0 and R156.5. In addition, the project area was reviewed using Google Earth, historical aerial photographs, and U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps; Caltrans "as-builts" were appropriate during pre-field research to determine the level of previous disturbance in the project area.

The survey identified 11 new cultural resources in the APE: SRI-2028, historic-period canal; SRI-2029, historic-period canal; SRI-2030, historic-period canal; SRI-IO-2001, historic-period tobacco tin; SRI-IO-2012, historic-period amber medicine bottle; SRI-IO-2014, prehistoric-period chert core; SRI-2024, historic-period canal; SRI-2025, historic-period canal; SRI-1013, prehistoric lithic scatter; SRI-1028, prehistoric lithic scatter; and SRI-1032, prehistoric lithic scatter. A subsequent survey was performed on December 5, 2018, to confirm previous disturbances to cultural resources that require management within the APE.

Three of the newly recorded sites, SRI-1013, SRI-1028, and SRI-1032, are considered elements of the Prehistoric Trails Network Cultural Landscape (PTNCL), an extensive network of trails that crossed the desert regions of southeastern California, from the Pacific coast to the Colorado River. This cultural landscape has been continuously studied and recorded, mainly in northeastern Riverside County, for more than 60 years. It 2010, the name, Prehistoric Trails Network Cultural Landscape, began to appear in cultural resource assessments, and Caltrans will continue to refer to this resource as such throughout this study. In 2012, as part of the Genesis Solar Energy Project in Blythe, the California Energy Commission determined that the PTNCL was eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criteria 1 and 4; however, it has yet to be formally evaluated for the CRHR or the NRHP. PTNCL site types are divided into three categories: destinations, trails, and trail-associated sites or features. For the purposes of this project only, on August 7, 2018, the PTNCL was assumed eligible for listing on the NRHP, per Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the PA, under Criterion D for its potential to yield data important to the prehistory of the region. Contributing elements of the PTNCL (SRI-1013, SRI-1028, and SRI-1032) were identified within the APE; however, after field review, the evidence suggests that these three lithic scatters were deposited as construction fill. In addition, features from the DTC/C-AMA were also identified. The DTC/C-AMA is considered the largest military training ground in the history of military maneuvers. This historic property stretches eastward from Indio, California, to Prescott, Arizona, and from Yuma, Arizona, to Searchlight, Nevada, covering approximately 18,000 square miles. This property was listed on the CRHR on June 12, 1989, but has not been formally evaluated for the NRHP. For the purposes of this project only, on September 9, 2018, the DTC/C-AMA was assumed eligible for listing on the NRHP, per Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the PA, under Criterion A for its association with World War II; Criterion B for its association with General George S. Patton; Criterion C for the design and layout of the individual camps, tactical maneuvering areas, firing ranges, and other associated features; and Criterion D for the data potential of the entirety of the DTC/C-AMA. The period of significance is 1942 to 1944. Contributing elements (tank tracks) were located within the APE.

Ultimately, the ancient sediments, desert pavements, and arid environment in the western portion of the project area and the repeated soil disturbances in the eastern portion of the project area suggest an extremely low probability for encountering in situ cultural deposits during ground-disturbing activities, especially in areas where construction of the I-10 introduced one to 10 feet of fill.

Lastly, 22 bridges in the APE are listed as Category 5 bridges (i.e., not NRHP eligible) in the Caltrans Historic Bridge Inventory. Those determination remain valid.

Subsurface Sensitivity

Sediments in the westernmost portions of the project area (PM R134.0 to R144.0) originated from Quaternary alluvial and colluvium deposits from the neighboring mountains and the Colorado River, which once ran through the project area. Although this type of sediment is normally highly mollic, suggesting that buried deposits are likely, changes in regional climate following sediment deposit toward more arid temperatures negate any suggestion of buried deposits. Hot and dry climates result in less soil movement and, thus, fewer opportunities for cultural deposits to be buried by natural and organic processes. The identification of desert pavements adjacent to the alluvial surfaces further suggests that the likelihood of encountering in situ buried deposits is extremely low. Investigations into disturbances throughout the APE suggest that the project area contains substantial amounts of fill from unknown locations.

The expectation that archaeological sites on desert pavement will not extend below the ground surface is supported by three kinds of evidence. First, there are a number of instances in which excavation units in desert pavement settings have failed to locate buried cultural remains. Examples include excavations in Death Valley and on the Twentynine Palms Marine Corps Base in Southern California (Caltrans 2018). Second, geomorphological studies have suggested that desert pavements develop over thousands of years (Caltrans 2018). Third, many desert pavement surfaces have been dated to the late Pleistocene or early Holocene epochs, thousands of years before the associated archaeological sites. Under these circumstances, artifacts may have worked their way into a pavement, and features may have intruded through it, but neither artifacts nor features can underlie it (Caltrans 2018).

Desert pavements are found on alluvial fans and piedmonts below the mountains of the Mojave and Sonoran Deserts. The rock surface of desert pavements stabilizes fine sediments underneath and can increase rainwater infiltration. When they are disturbed, desert pavements lose this function, and surface runoff increases, as does erosion and downhill sedimentation. The depositional age of the sediments within the alluvial portions of the APE precedes the presence of prehistoric groups in the area, and therefore, the likelihood of encountering intact cultural subsurface deposits is extremely low.

Development in the eastern portion of the project area further suggests that the possibility of encountering intact subsurface cultural deposits is unlikely. PM R144.0 to R155.6 has undergone major development and construction throughout its historic and modem chronology. The levels of urban and agricultural disturbances are depicted on historic and modern aerial photography, from 1948, 1970, and 1981. The aerial photographs suggest that the APE has experienced heavy disturbance from roadway expansion, maintenance, and signage as well as the construction of curbs, sidewalks, fencing, transmission lines, and transportation facilities. The urbanization of Blythe was facilitated through housing developments, agriculture, and landscaping, which have modified the soil. Housing developments suggest at least five to 10 feet of direct and adjacent soil disturbances. These disturbances provide subterranean

pathways for conduits, plumbing, and housing foundations. Ultimately, development and natural processes in the eastern portion of the project area have resulted in a loss in archaeological integrity. Furthermore, as noted above, excavation units in desert pavement settings have failed to locate buried cultural remains; therefore, the probability of encountering in situ cultural deposits during ground-disturbing activities is extremely low.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

Temporary Impacts

Two properties are assumed NRHP eligible within the APE: the PTNCL and the DTC/C-AMA.

Lithic scatters SRI-1013, 1028, 1032, considered to be elements of the PTNCL, are located in the APE between PM R142.8 and R143.6 within the median, within the outside shoulders, or both. The project will result in further disturbances and physical destruction to SRI-1013, SRI-1028, and SRI-1032; however, because of their lack of integrity and context (most likely transferred fill deposits from unknown locations), any further disturbance or destruction of these contributing elements will not diminish the larger surrounding eligible property. As previously noted, the surrounding area has been disturbed throughout the APE by highway construction. The APE has been bisected by roads and other disturbances, and SRI-1013, SRI-1028, and SRI-1032 are not in situ. In addition, removal or further destruction of existing fill with cultural material from unknown sources within the APE does not constitute an adverse effect on the procurement area specifically, let alone the PTNCL as a whole. Physical destruction of SRI-1013, SRI-1028, and SRI-1032 will not adversely affect the integrity or NRHP/CRHR eligibility of the PTNCL; thus, the undertaking poses no adverse effect on the PTNCL under 36 CFR 800.5(a)(2)(i). With implementation of **CUL-3**, the area of the APE between PM R142.8 and R143.6 will be designated as an Archaeological Monitoring Area.

Contributing elements (tank tracks) associated with the DTC/C-AMA are located in the APE within the outside eastbound shoulder between PM R142.0 and R143.0. These features are a relatively common occurrence throughout the DTC-C/AMA and should be considered lesser-ranked contributing elements compared with primary contributing features such as airfields, medical facilities, depots, etc. Although the project would result in further disturbances and physical destruction of the identified tank tracks within the APE, the tracks have already experienced a loss in integrity because of previous roadway construction. However, the undertaking will not result in the physical destruction of intact subsurface cultural deposits because the tank tracks exist as surface manifestations atop desert pavement; therefore, these features have no subsurface extensions. These factors support the conclusion that the effects of implementing the project within this minute portion of the DTC/C-AMA, as well as the destruction of the tank tracks within the APE, would not rise to the level of an adverse effect on the DTC/C-AMA as a whole, particularly given its 18,000-square-mile extent. As such, the physical destruction of the tank tracks within this sliver portion of CHL-985 (DTC/C-AMA) will not adversely affect the overall integrity or NRHP/CRHR eligibility of the cultural landscape as a whole; therefore, there would be no adverse effect on CHL-985 (DTC/C-AMA) as a whole under 36 CFR 800.5(a)(2)(i).

With implementation of **CUL-1**, impacts on cultural materials discovered during construction would be avoided and/or minimized.

With implementation of **CUL-2**, if human remains are discovered, the Caltrans District 8 Environmental Branch and NAHC would work with the most likely descendent regarding the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains.

Permanent

No long-term impacts on historical or archaeological cultural resources would occur.

No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, no modifications to existing structures or the land would occur; therefore, no effects on historical or archaeological cultural resources would result from project construction or operation.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

Environmental commitments **CUL-1** and **CUL-2,** are included to ensure that potential effects on cultural resources and human remains, should they be discovered during construction, would be avoided. In addition, environmental commitment **CUL-3** would be prevent destruction of human remains should they be encountered in the Culturally Sensitive Area.

CUL-1: If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earthmoving activity within and around the immediate discovery area will be diverted until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find.

CUL-2: In the event that human remains are found, the county coroner shall be notified, and all construction activities within 60 feet of the discovery shall stop. Pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the NAHC, which will then notify the most likely descendent. The person who discovered the remains will contact the District 8 Division of Environmental Planning (Andrew Walters, DEBC, [909] 383-2647, and Gary Jones, DNAC, [909] 383-7505). Further provisions of PRC 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

CUL-3: The portion of I-10 undergoing pavement removal between PM R142.8 to R143.6 shall be designated a Culturally Sensitive Area. As such, this area will also be designated an Archaeological Monitoring Area and subject to archaeological and tribal monitoring. The monitor's roles and responsibilities will be provided in the Responsible Parties table included as part of the finding of no adverse effect.

2.2 Physical Environment

2.2.1 Water Quality and Stormwater Runoff

REGULATORY SETTING

Federal Requirements

Clean Water Act

In 1972, Congress amended the federal Water Pollution Control Act, making the addition of pollutants to the waters of the United States (U.S.) from any point source[2] unlawful, unless the discharge is in compliance with an National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. This act and its amendments are known today as the Clean Water Act (CWA). Congress has amended the act several times. In the 1987 amendments, Congress directed dischargers of storm water from municipal and industrial/construction point sources to comply with the NPDES permit scheme. The following are important CWA sections:

- Sections 303 and 304 require states to issue water quality standards, criteria, and guidelines.
- Section 401 requires an applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct any activity that may result in a discharge to waters of the U.S. to obtain certification from the state, certifying that the discharge will comply with other provisions of the act. This is most frequently required in tandem with a Section 404 permit request (see below).
- Section 402 establishes NPDES, a permitting system for the discharge of any pollutant, except for dredged or fill material, into waters of the U.S. Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB) administer the permitting in California. Section 402(p) requires permits for discharges of stormwater from industrial/construction sources and municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s).
- Section 404 establishes a permit program for the discharge of dredge or fill material into waters of the United States. This permit program is administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

The goal of the CWA is “to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation’s waters.”

The USACE issues two types of 404 permits: General and Individual. There are two types of General permits: Regional and Nationwide. Regional permits are issued for a general category of activities when they are similar in nature and cause minimal environmental effect. Nationwide permits are issued to allow a variety of minor project activities with no more than minimal effects.

Ordinarily, projects that do not meet the criteria for a Regional or Nationwide permit may be permitted under one of the USACE’s Individual permits. There are two types of Individual permits: Standard permits and Letters of Permission. For Individual permits, the USACE decision to approve is based on compliance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s

[2] A point source is any discrete conveyance, such as a pipe or a man-made ditch.

Section 404 (b)(1) Guidelines (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 230), and whether the permit approval is in the public interest. The Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines developed by the U.S. EPA in conjunction with the USACE, allow the discharge of dredged or fill material into the aquatic system (e.g., waters of the U.S.) only if there is no practicable alternative which would have less adverse effects. The Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines state that the USACE may not issue a permit if there is a "least environmentally damaging practicable alternative" to the proposed discharge that would have lesser effects on waters of the U.S. and no other significant adverse environmental consequences. According to the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines, documentation is needed to verify that a sequence of avoidance, minimization, and compensation measures has been followed, in that order. The Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines also restrict permitting activities that violate water quality or toxic effluent[3] standards, jeopardize the continued existence of listed species, violate marine sanctuary protections, or cause "significant degradation" of waters of the U.S. In addition, every permit from the USACE, even if not subject to the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines, must meet general requirements (see 33 CFR 320.4). A discussion of the "least environmentally damaging practicable alternative" determination, if any, for the document is included in the Wetlands and Other Waters section.

State Requirements

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne Act), enacted in 1969, provides the legal basis for water quality regulation within California. This act requires a "report of waste discharge" for any discharge of waste (liquid, solid, or gaseous) to land or surface waters that may impair the beneficial uses of the surface water and/or groundwater of the state. It predates the CWA and regulates discharges to waters of the state. Waters of the state include more than just waters of the U.S., such as groundwater and surface waters that are not considered waters of the U.S. In addition, it prohibits discharges of "waste," as defined; this definition is broader than the CWA definition of "pollutant." Discharges under the Porter-Cologne Act are permitted by waste discharge requirements (WDRs), which may be required even when the discharge is already permitted or exempt under the CWA.

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and RWQCBs are responsible for establishing the water quality standards (objectives and beneficial uses) required by the CWA and regulating discharges to ensure compliance with water quality standards. Details about water quality standards in a project area are included in the applicable RWQCB basin plan. In California, RWQCBs designate beneficial uses for all water body segments in their jurisdictions and then set the criteria necessary to protect those uses. As a result, water quality standards developed for particular water segments are based on designated use and vary according to that use. In addition, the SWRCB identifies waters that fail to meet the standards for specific pollutants. These waters are then state listed in accordance with CWA Section 303(d). If a state determines that waters are impaired for one or more constituents and the standards cannot be met through point-source or non-point-source controls (e.g., NPDES permits or WDRs), the CWA requires the establishment of total maximum daily loads (TMDLs). TMDLs specify allowable pollutant loads from all sources (point, non-point, and natural) for a given watershed.

[3] The U.S. EPA defines "effluent" as "wastewater, treated or untreated, that flows out of a treatment plant, sewer, or industrial outfall."

State Water Resources Control Board and Regional Water Quality Control Boards

The SWRCB administers water rights, sets water pollution control policy, issues orders on matters of statewide application, and oversees water quality functions throughout the state by approving basin plans, TMDLs, and NPDES permits. RWQCBs are responsible for protecting the beneficial uses of water resources within their jurisdiction, using their planning, permitting, and enforcement authorities to meet this responsibility.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Program

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems

Section 402(p) of the CWA requires the issuance of NPDES permits for five categories of storm water discharges, including Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s). An MS4 is defined as "any conveyance or system of conveyances (e.g., roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, human-made channels, storm drains) owned or operated by a state, city, town, county, or other public body having jurisdiction over stormwater that is designed or used for collecting or conveying stormwater." The SWRCB has identified the Department as an owner/operator of an MS4 under federal regulations. The Department's MS4 permit covers all Department rights-of-way, properties, facilities, and activities in the state. The SWRCB or the RWQCB issues NPDES permits for five years; permit requirements remain active until a new permit has been adopted.

The Department's MS4 permit, Order No. 2012-0011-DWQ (adopted on September 19, 2012, and effective on July 1, 2013), as amended by Order No. 2014-0006-EXEC (effective January 17, 2014), Order No. 2014-0077-DWQ (effective May 20, 2014), and Order No. 2015-0036-EXEC (effective April 7, 2015), has three basic requirements:

- The Department must comply with the requirements of the Construction General Permit (see below);
- The Department must implement a year-round program in all parts of the state to effectively control stormwater and non-stormwater discharges; and
- Department stormwater discharges must meet water quality standards through implementation of permanent or temporary (construction) Best Management Practices (BMPs), to the maximum extent practicable, and other measures the SWRCB determines to be necessary to meet water quality standards.

To comply with the permit, the Department developed the Statewide Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) to establish stormwater pollution controls related to highway planning, design, construction, and maintenance throughout California. The SWMP assigns responsibilities within the Department for stormwater management procedures and practices as well as training, public education and participation, monitoring and research, program evaluation, and reporting. The SWMP describes the procedures and practices the Department uses to reduce pollutants in stormwater and non-stormwater discharges, including the selection and implementation of BMPs.

The proposed project would be programmed to follow the guidelines and procedures outlined in the latest SWMP to control stormwater runoff.

Construction General Permit

Construction General Permit, Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ (adopted on September 2, 2009 and effective on July 1, 2010), as amended by Order No. 2010-0014-DWQ (effective February 14, 2011) and Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ (effective on July 17, 2012). The permit regulates storm water discharges from construction sites that create a disturbed soil area (DSA) of one acre or more as well as smaller sites that are part of a larger common plan of development. By law, all stormwater discharges associated with construction activity involving clearing, grading, or excavation that would result in soil disturbance of at least one acre must comply with the provisions of the General Construction Permit. Construction activities that would result in soil disturbances of less than one acre would be subject to the Construction General Permit if there is the potential for significant water quality impairment from the activity, as determined by the RWQCB. Operators of regulated construction sites are required to develop Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs; implement sediment, erosion, and pollution prevention control measures; and obtain coverage under the Construction General Permit.

The Construction General Permit separates projects into Risk Levels 1, 2, or 3. Risk levels are determined during the planning and design phases and based on the potential for erosion and sediment transport to receiving waters. Permit requirements are based on the risk level. For example, Risk Level 3 (highest risk) would require compulsory monitoring of stormwater runoff to determine pH and turbidity, both before construction and after, and aquatic biological assessments during specified seasonal windows. For all projects that are subject to the permit, applicants are required to develop and implement an effective SWPPP. In accordance with the Department's SWMP and Standard Specifications, a Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP) is necessary for projects with DSA less than one acre.

Section 401 Permitting

Under Section 401 of the CWA, any project that requires a federal license or permit and may result in a discharge to a water of the U.S. must obtain Section 401 certification, which certifies that the project will be in compliance with state water quality standards. The most common federal permits that trigger Section 401 certification are CWA Section 404 permits, which are issued by the USACE. Section 401 permit certifications are obtained from the appropriate RWQCB, depending on the project location, and required before the USACE issues a Section 404 permit.

In some cases, the RWQCB may have specific concerns about discharges associated with a project. As a result, the RWQCB may issue a set of requirements known as WDRs, as established under the State Water Code (Porter-Cologne Act). WDRs include specific features, effluent limitations, monitoring requirements, and plan submittals to protect or benefit water quality. WDRs can be issued to address both the permanent and temporary discharges of a project.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The primary sources used in preparation of this section were the approved Water Quality Assessment Report (Caltrans 2018d) and Natural Environment Study (NES) (Sapphos Environmental 2019) prepared for this project.

The Project Impact Area (PIA) is the area within the actual construction footprint; it is mostly unpopulated, except for the stretch in the city of Blythe. The PIA receives approximately three inches of precipitation annually. The majority of drainages convey runoff from surrounding

mountain ranges to the Colorado River. Some drainages flow west and terminate at dry lakes. The proposed project is in undefined hydrologic sub-areas (HSAs) 717.10 and 715.40, within the Chuckwalla Hydrologic Unit and Colorado Hydraulic Unit, respectively, of the Colorado River Hydrologic Region. The receiving water bodies for potential discharges from the project area include the Colorado River and associated lakes and reservoirs, Palo Verde Outfall Drain and Lagoon, and Ford Dry Lake. Ford Dry Lake, within the Chuckwalla Hydrologic Unit, is not listed as impaired on the 2012 CWA Section 303(d) list. As such, no TMDLs have been proposed for water bodies within the Chuckwalla Hydrologic Unit. Within the Colorado Hydrologic Unit, surface water bodies are listed as impaired on the 2012 CWA Section 303(d) list (i.e., the Colorado River and associated lakes and reservoirs are listed for toxicity impairment). The Palo Verde Outfall Drain and Lagoon are listed for chloride, dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, bacteria, and toxaphene impairment. However, TMDLs have not yet been developed for the pollutants.

Groundwater in the area is recharged by subsurface inflow from the Colorado River, as well as the Cadiz Valley and Pinto Valley basins; percolation from runoff, which originates in the surrounding mountains; and precipitation on the valley floors.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

Temporary

Pollutants of concern during construction include sediments, trash, petroleum products, concrete waste (dry and wet), sanitary waste, and chemicals. During construction activities, excavated soil would be exposed, increasing the potential for soil erosion compared with existing conditions. In addition, chemicals; liquid products; petroleum products, such as paints, solvents, and fuels; and concrete-related waste may be spilled or leaked, with the potential to be transported by storm runoff to receiving waters.

Project-related construction activities would disturb soil, thereby increasing the potential for soil erosion as well as suspended particles generated by vehicles operating on roadways. DSAs are defined by Caltrans as areas of exposed erodible soil within the construction limits resulting from construction activity. The total DSA for the project would be approximately 489 acres. According to the risk level determination, soils in the project area are characterized by low erodibility; the risk of sediment discharge to receiving waters is low. However, temporary construction site BMPs would be implemented and maintained during construction. Therefore, the Build Alternative's potential to affect downstream receiving waters adversely is low.

Dewatering activities are anticipated to occur during construction at bridges that cross on-site drainages. The volume of water used for construction, dust control, and other uses would be minimal; therefore, construction activities would not deplete groundwater supplies, nor would they interfere with groundwater recharge. With implementation of measure **BIO-3**, if construction activities require dewatering, a dewatering/water control plan would be prepared in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specification 13-4.03G for water control. In addition, with implementation of **BIO-1** and **BIO-2**, the storage of construction materials, as well as the stockpiling of earthwork, will not occur near creeks, channels, or any other waterways.

The proposed project would affect 35 on-site drainages. Although wetlands are not present in the project area, a formal jurisdictional delineation survey determined that other jurisdictional features are present. Therefore, the project would require permits from regulatory agencies. These include Section 401 water quality certification, a Section 404 permit, and a Section 1602

Streambed Alteration Agreement. The proposed project would permanently affect 0.19 acre of waters of the state and waters of the U.S. and 0.40 acre of CDFW jurisdictional waters. To offset impacts on these jurisdictional areas, a compensatory mitigation program may need to be developed in coordination with USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW during the permitting process.

Permanent

The Build Alternative would result in approximately 302 acres of new impervious surface area, comprising 89 acres of net new impervious surface area and 213 acres of replaced impervious surface area. However, compared with the size of the two HSAs, the new impervious surface area would account for only 0.04 percent of the combined acreage of the two HSAs. The project will not significantly increase the velocity and volume of runoff or affect the ability of receiving waters to accommodate the added flow. With implementation of measure **WQ-2**, post-construction erosion controls would be required to ensure that the project site would not pose more of a sediment discharge risk than it did prior to construction. Furthermore, roadway drainage features would be designed to discharge to a permanent treatment BMP, with stormwater either treated before discharge to a receiving water or infiltrated into the ground, to the maximum extent practicable. The proposed project would not alter the alignment of a stream or other water body.

No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, improvements would not be made within the project limits. There would be no risk associated with project-related construction pollutants. This alternative would not result in an increase in long-term pollutant loading. Treatment BMPs would not be implemented, and stormwater would remain untreated.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

Appropriate measures to avoid or minimize effects related to water quality, including compliance with the Construction General Permit and Caltrans MS4 permit, are included as part of the project, as discussed in Section 1.4.2. Caltrans would coordinate and work with regulatory agencies to protect both on-site and off-site water bodies through the issuance of regulatory permits. In addition, **BIO-1** through **BIO-3,** as described in Section 2.3.1, Natural Communities, and Section 2.3.2, Wetlands and Other Waters, would also be implemented to further avoid and minimize impacts on water quality.

2.2.2 Geology/Soils/Seismicity/Topography

REGULATORY SETTING

For geologic and topographic features, the key federal law is the Historic Sites Act of 1935, which establishes a national registry of natural landmarks and protects “outstanding examples of major geological features.” Topographic and geologic features are also protected under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

This section also discusses geology, soils, and seismic concerns related to public safety and project design. Earthquakes are the prime consideration in the design and retrofit of structures. The Department’s Office of Earthquake Engineering is responsible for assessing the seismic hazard for Department projects. Structures are designed under the Department’s Seismic Design Criteria (SDC), which provide minimum seismic requirements for highway bridges in California. A bridge’s category and classification determine its seismic performance level and

the methods used for estimating seismic demands and structural capabilities. For more information, please see the Department's Division of Engineering Services, Office of Earthquake Engineering, Seismic Design Criteria.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The primary sources used in preparation of this section were the NES (Sapphos Environmental 2019a) prepared for this project and *County of Riverside General Plan Update, Project Environmental Impact Report No. 521* (County of Riverside 2014).

Topography

The proposed project is in the U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute series Hopkins Well, Roosevelt Mine, Ripley, and Blythe California topographic quadrangles in Township 6S. The terrain within the project area is mostly flat, with elevations ranging from 231 to 486 feet above mean sea level. In general, the project area descends from west to east as I-10 extends from the eastern Sonoran Desert to the Colorado River Valley and surrounding areas in the National Wilderness Preservation System, including the Big Maria Mountains (7.71 miles north), Little Chuckwalla Mountains (13.35 miles southwest), Palo Verde Mountains (11.45 miles south), and Palen/McCoy Mountains (2.92 miles northwest). The area, which receives less than five inches of rainfall annually, is adjacent to primarily undeveloped land and desert wilderness.

Soil Conditions

The project area crosses four different soil types, including:

- **Rositas-Dune Land-Carsitas Association:** The Rositas series consists of very deep, excessively drained soils that formed in sandy eolian material. The Rositas series is found in dunes and sand sheets with slopes of 0 to 30 percent and hummocky or dune micro-relief made of fine sand. The Carsitas series is composed of very deep, excessively drained soils, which formed from alluvium that originated in granitoid and/or gneissic rocks. This soil occurs in fans, fan aprons, valley fills, dissected remnants of alluvial fans, and drainageways. Slopes range from 0 to 30 percent. The soil, which consists of gravelly sand, is found within the westernmost portion of the survey area at PM R134.0 to PM R136.0.
- **Vaiva-Quilotosa-Hyder-Cipriano-Cherioni Association:** The Vaiva series consist of very shallow, well-drained soils in slope alluvium that originated in granite and gneiss. It occurs on hills and mountains with slopes of 1 to 65 percent and is composed of very gravelly loam. The Quilotosa series is made up of very shallow, excessively drained soils that formed from granitic and metamorphic rock. It is found in hills and mountains with slopes of 3 to 65 percent and consists of gravely, coarse sandy loam. The Hyder series is made up of shallow, excessively drained soils that formed from alluvium, rhyolite, and related volcanic rock. Hyder is found in hills and mountains with slopes of 1 to 70 percent and is an extremely gravelly, sandy loam. The Cipriano series consists of very shallow to hardpan, excessively drained soils in fan alluvium that originated in volcanic rock. It occurs on fan terraces with slopes of 0 to 55 percent and is primarily a very gravelly loam. The Cherioni series consists of very shallow to hardpan, excessively drained soils in slope alluvium on volcanic bedrock. Cherioni soils are found on terraces, hills, and slopes of 0 to 70 percent and is of a very gravelly, fine sandy loam. This soil type is found from the western portion of the survey area at PM R136.0 to PM R145.0.
- **Rositas-Orita-Carrizo-Aco Association**: The Rositas series consists of very deep, excessively drained soils that formed in sandy eolian material. The Rositas series is found in

dunes and sand sheets with slopes of 0 to 30 percent and hummocky or dune micro-relief made of fine sand. The Orita series is made up of very deep, well-drained soils that formed in alluvium from mixed sources. It occurs in fan remnants and terraces with slopes of 0 to 2 percent and consists of gravelly, fine sandy loam. The Carrizo series is made up of very deep, excessively drained soils that formed from mixed igneous alluvium. It is found in floodplains, fan piedmonts, and bolson floors. The soil is extremely gravelly sand and found on slopes of 0 to 15 percent. The Aco series consists of very deep, well to somewhat excessively drained soils in mixed alluvium. It is found on terraces that are slightly above the floodplain, with slopes of 0 to 8 percent, and consists of sandy loam. This soil type is found in the middle portion of the survey area from PM R145.0 to PM R148.0.

- **Rositas-Ripley-Indio-Giman Association**: The Rositas series consists of very deep, excessively drained soils that formed in sandy eolian material. The Rositas series is found in dunes and sand sheets with slopes of 0 to 30 percent and hummocky or dune micro-relief made of fine sand. The Ripley series is composed of very deep, well-drained soils that formed from mixed rock sources. It is found in floodplains and alluvial fans with slopes of 0 to 3 percent. The soil is primarily a silty clay loam over sand. The Indio series is composed of very deep, well-drained soils that formed in alluvium from mixed rock sources. It is found in alluvial fans, lacustrine basins, and floodplains, with slopes of 0 to 3 percent, and consists of very fine sandy loam. The Gilman series is of very deep, well-drained soils that formed from stratified stream alluvium found in floodplains and alluvial fans with slopes of 0 to 3 percent. The soil consists of loam to very fine sandy loam. This soil type is found within the survey area from PM R148.0 to PM R156.5.

The Carsitas series is classified as a hydric soil on the Natural Resources Conservation Service list of hydric soils.

Geologic Hazards

Landslides

There are predictable relationships between local geology and landslides. Seismically induced landslides and rockfall would be expected throughout Riverside County during a major earthquake. The factors that contribute to the susceptibility of slopes to landslides are the slope's height and steepness. The project area is not adjacent to any slopes that are greater than 15 percent. Therefore, it is considered to have low susceptibility with respect to landslides.

Seismicity and Fault Rupture

The project area is in a seismically active region of Southern California. According to the *County of Riverside General Plan Update EIR*, the nearest earthquake fault is more than 50 miles west of the project area.

Liquefaction

Liquefaction is a loss of soil strength or stiffness due to a buildup of pore water pressure during ground shaking. Liquefaction is associated primarily with loose (low-density) to medium-density, saturated, fine- to medium-grain cohesionless soils where the groundwater level is shallow (typically within 50 feet below the ground surface) and sustained ground shaking is anticipated. The effects of liquefaction can include sand boils, excessive displacement, bearing capacity failure, and lateral spreading. According to the Liquefaction Zone map from the County of Riverside General Plan Update EIR, the project limits west of Blythe are in an area with no groundwater data. The area is considered to have a moderate risk of liquefaction. The segment

within the city of Blythe up to the state line is in an area with shallow groundwater and is considered to have a very high risk of liquefaction.

Seiches and Tsunamis

Seiches are large waves generated in enclosed bodies of water in response to ground shaking. Tsunamis are waves generated in large bodies of water by fault displacement or major ground movement. According to Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Maps, the project area is designated as flood hazard Zone D, an area with an undetermined flood hazard. The Tsunami Inundation map from the California Geological Survey did not include Riverside County or the project area in a tsunami inundation area.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

Temporary

During construction of the Build Alternative, excavated soil would be exposed, increasing the potential for soil erosion. In addition, during a storm event, unprotected soils, including slopes, would be subject to erosion. Construction activities may temporarily disturb soil both within the project ROW, primarily in work areas and areas with heavy equipment, and outside the project footprint.

Temporary effects due to soil erosion are discussed in Section 2.2.1, *Water Quality and Stormwater Runoff*. Erosion would be addressed through implementation of standardized measures as part of the project (refer to Section 1.4.2). These include erosion control BMPs that would be part of the SWPPP. With implementation of these standardized measures, no short-term direct or indirect adverse impacts related to soil compaction or erosion would occur during construction of the Build Alternative.

Permanent

The Build Alternative would rehabilitate existing pavement within a segment of I-10. The Build Alternative is not anticipated to adversely affect geologic or topographic conditions or be affected by fault rupture within the project limits. The primary geologic and geotechnical constraint associated with design and construction of the Build Alternative is seismic shaking in the event of an earthquake.

Landslides and Rockfalls

The topography along the project alignment is relatively flat terrain. As previously mentioned, the project is not adjacent to any slopes greater than 15 percent. Therefore, it is considered to have low susceptibility with respect to landslides. In addition, with implementation of standard design measures, no direct or indirect adverse long-term impacts from landslides or rockfalls would occur as a result of the Build Alternative.

Seismic Shaking

The proposed project is in a seismically active region of Southern California. Design and construction of the proposed project would follow Caltrans' current seismic design standards for highways and structures, which would minimize potential impacts. Therefore, no direct or indirect adverse long-term impacts related to seismic shaking would occur as a result of the Build Alternative.

Liquefaction

Although the Build Alternative would occur in an area of high liquefaction potential and could be affected by liquefaction, the project would follow Caltrans' latest design requirements to minimize any potential effects related to liquefaction and seismically induced settlement. Therefore, no direct or indirect adverse long-term impacts would occur as a result of the proposed project.

No-Build Alternative

Hazards associated with seismic activity would exist under the No-Build Alternative. The No-Build Alternative however, would not result in any impacts related to geology, soils, seismicity, or topography because no construction would occur along I-10.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

With adherence to Caltrans' standard design and construction practices, as required on all State Highway System projects, impacts related to geology, soils, seismicity, and topography would be avoided or minimized. No additional measures would be required.

2.2.3 Hazardous Waste/Materials

REGULATORY SETTING

Hazardous materials, including hazardous substances and wastes, are regulated by many state and federal laws. Statutes govern the generation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, substances, and waste as well as investigation and mitigation of waste releases.

The primary federal laws that regulate hazardous wastes/materials are the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980 and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976 The purpose of CERCLA, often referred to as "Superfund," is to identify and clean up abandoned contaminated sites so that public health and welfare are not compromised. The RCRA provides for "cradle to grave" regulation of hazardous waste generated by operating entities. Other federal laws include:

- Community Environmental Response Facilitation Act (CERFA) of 1992
- Clean Water Act
- Clean Air Act
- Safe Drinking Water Act
- Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)
- Atomic Energy Act
- Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)
- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)

In addition to the acts listed above, Executive Order (EO) 12088, *Federal Compliance with Pollution Control Standards*, mandates that necessary actions be taken to prevent and control environmental pollution when federal activities or federal facilities are involved.

California regulates hazardous materials, waste, and substances under the authority of the CA Health and Safety Code and is also authorized by the federal government to implement the RCRA in the state. California law addresses specific handling, storage, transportation, disposal, treatment, reduction, and cleanup issues as well as emergency planning regarding hazardous waste. The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act restricts the disposal of wastes and requires cleanup of wastes that are below hazardous waste concentrations but still capable of affecting groundwater and surface water quality. California regulations pertaining to waste management and cleanup include Title 22, Division 4.5, Environmental Health Standards for the Management of Hazardous Waste; Title 23, Waters; and Title 27, Environmental Protection.

Worker and public health and safety are key issues when addressing issues regarding hazardous materials that may affect human health and the environment. Proper management and disposal of hazardous material is vital if such material is found, disturbed, or generated during project construction.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Records Review

The primary source used in preparation of this section was the Initial Site Assessment Checklist prepared by Caltrans (Caltrans 2019e).

The SWRCB tracks and identifies sites that may affect groundwater through its GeoTracker database. As shown in Table 2.2-1, the GeoTracker database identified 17 recognized environmental concerns (RECs) within the vicinity of the proposed project; however, the closest is 383 feet from the project area.

Aerially deposited lead (ADL) is an REC that has been linked to the proposed project. ADL is common along roadways that were constructed prior to 1996 because of the combustion of leaded gasoline. Concentrations of lead in near-surface soils could be above California human health screening levels and hazardous waste thresholds. This is considered an REC. In addition, although not considered an REC, asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) may be present in bridge structures that could be disturbed by the proposed project.

Table 2.2-1. GeoTracker Findings

#	Facility	Address	Type	Status	Approximate Distance from Project Area (feet)
1	Former One-Stop Fuel, Inc.	13207 Mesa Drive, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Inactive	383
2	Blythe Airport Water System, Class II Surface Impoundments	16720 West Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	Land Disposal Site	Open – Verification Monitoring	2,054
3	SCG – Blythe Compressor 00-115	13100 West 14th Street, Blythe, CA 92226	Land Disposal Site	Open – Operating	1,182
4	AAA Air-Conditioning	1134 West Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Inactive	976
5	USA Self-Service/Douglas Station	1147 West Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Inactive	1,140
6	Blocker Transportation	910 14th Ave W, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Inactive	1,440
7	Former Valley Laundry and Cleaners	435 West Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Remediation	1,068
8	RVSD Company Road Yard, Blythe	561 South Broadway, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Verification Monitoring	1,935
9	Callan Oil	107 West Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation	1,213
10	Joy Iverson Hartwick Trust	110 East Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation	1,050
11	Jerry Allen Insurance	101 East Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation	1,272
12	First Interstate Bank	149 East Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation	1,193
13	EZ Serve #100808	200 East Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation	952
14	Provident Federal Savings	201 East Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation	1,262
15	Bank of America	249 East Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation	1,206
16	Miller Property	9680 East Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Inactive	1,311
17	Former Flying Inn Motel	9232 East Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Inactive	1,415
Source: Caltrans 2019e LUST – leaking underground storage tank					

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

Temporary

The Build Alternative would disturb soil and structures; therefore, hazardous soil and structural materials may be encountered during project construction. However, implementation of the Build Alternative is not expected to create any new health hazards or expose people to potential new health hazards. The proposed project would rehabilitate existing pavement and construct temporary access roads within Caltrans ROW, except at four locations requiring additional ROW to accommodate ADA improvements. Soil disturbance and borrowing would not occur within 30 feet of any of the 17 RECs identified in the GeoTracker database. Implementation of standard provisions, as included in Section 1.4.2, would minimize any direct or indirect adverse temporary impacts.

ADL from historical use of leaded gasoline exists along roadways throughout California. If encountered, soil with elevated concentrations of ADL within the project limits would be managed under the July 1, 2016, ADL agreement between Caltrans and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. This ADL agreement allows such soils to be safely reused within the project limits as long as all requirements of the ADL agreement are met. Caltrans would ensure that soil sampling and ADL analysis would be conducted within the Caltrans ROW (i.e., the project disturbance limits) prior to project approval.

ACMs may be present in bridge structures that would be disturbed by the proposed project. Prior to project approval, samples of any suspect ACMs would be collected for laboratory analysis prior to disturbance. If ACM is identified, abatement would be conducted in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Although the project would be within two miles of Blythe Airport, the project would rehabilitate existing pavement and not be anticipated to result in a safety hazard related to airplanes. In addition, construction of the proposed project would not impair implementation of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan or expose people to a significant risk of death from wildland fires.

Permanent

Following construction, project operations would not be expected to create any new health hazards or expose people to potential new health risks. The proposed project would rehabilitate an existing roadway. Hazardous materials and chemicals would not be stored at the project site. As such, the proposed project would not result in adverse effects.

No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, no improvements would be implemented, and no effects involving hazardous materials would occur.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

The project includes appropriate measures to avoid or minimize effects related to hazardous wastes, as discussed in Section 1.4.2, if any are found. In addition, the avoidance and minimization measures below would ensure that potential construction-related impacts would be avoided:

HAZ-1: Caltrans is conducting soil sampling and analysis for ADL. If soil is determined to contain lead concentrations exceeding the regulated threshold level, it will be managed in accordance with the criteria in the Soil Management for Aerially Deposited Lead-Soils Agreement (California Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Toxic Substances Control, Docket No. ESPO-SMA 15/ 16-001, June 29, 2016) [ADL Agreement]).

HAZ-2: Caltrans is conducting Lead-Based Paint (LBP) and Asbestos-Containing Material (ACM) surveys for all bridge structures that will be disturbed in the proposed project. If asbestos minerals are identified in the materials sampled during this survey and should the materials be disturbed during demolition, renovation, and/or construction, any generated ACM wastes should be disposed as hazardous asbestos waste; and an ACM abatement is required by a licensed ACM abatement contractor prior to renovation, refurbishing, or demolition activities.

HAZ-3: A lead compliance plan shall be prepared under Section 7-1.02K(6)(j)(iii) of Caltrans' Standard Specifications. The Lead Compliance Plan shall include provisions regarding use of earth material.

HAZ-4: Due to the possible presence of elevated levels of lead concentrations within the yellow thermoplastic and yellow-painted traffic stripes along the existing highway, the Contractor shall be required to properly manage removed stripe and pavement markings as hazardous waste, in accordance with section 14-11.12 of Caltrans' Standard Specifications.

HAZ-5: The handling, storing, and transporting of treated wood waste shall be in accordance with Caltrans' Standard Specifications section14-11.14. Treated wood waste shall be managed under 22 CA Code of Regs Div 4.5 Ch 34.

HAZ-6: Earth material containing lead shall be handled according to all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. The contractor shall be required to properly manage earth material containing lead from paint and thermoplastic, in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specification section 36-4.

HAZ-7: During bridge rehabilitation activities, the Contractor shall follow Caltrans' Standard Specification sections 14-9.02 and 2-1.06B.

2.2.4 Air Quality

REGULATORY SETTING

The Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA), as amended, is the primary federal law that governs air quality while the California Clean Air Act (CCAA) is its companion state law. These laws, and related regulations by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the California Air Resources Board (ARB), set standards for the concentration of pollutants in the air. At the federal level, these standards are called National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). NAAQS and state ambient air quality standards have been established for six transportation-related criteria pollutants that have been linked to potential health concerns: carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), ozone (O_3), particulate matter (PM)—which is broken down for regulatory purposes into particles of 10 micrometers or smaller (PM_{10}) and particles of 2.5 micrometers and smaller ($PM_{2.5}$)—and sulfur dioxide (SO_2). In addition, national

and state standards exist for lead (Pb), and state standards exist for visibility reducing particles, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide (H_2S), and vinyl chloride. The NAAQS and state standards are set at levels that protect public health with a margin of safety, and are subject to periodic review and revision. Both state and federal regulatory schemes also cover toxic air contaminants (air toxics); some criteria pollutants are also air toxics or may include certain air toxics in their general definition.

Federal air quality standards and regulations provide the basic scheme for project-level air quality analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In addition to this environmental analysis, a parallel "Conformity" requirement under the FCAA also applies.

Conformity

The conformity requirement is based on FCAA Section 176(c), which prohibits the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and other federal agencies from funding, authorizing, or approving plans, programs, or projects that do not conform to State Implementation Plan (SIP) for attaining the NAAQS. "Transportation Conformity" applies to highway and transit projects and takes place on two levels: the regional (or planning and programming) level and the project level. The proposed project must conform at both levels to be approved.

Conformity requirements apply only in nonattainment and "maintenance" (former nonattainment) areas for the NAAQS, and only for the specific NAAQS that are or were violated. U.S. EPA regulations at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 93 govern the conformity process. Conformity requirements do not apply in unclassifiable/attainment areas for NAAQS and do not apply at all for state standards regardless of the status of the area.

Regional conformity is concerned with how well the regional transportation system supports plans for attaining the NAAQS for carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), ozone (O_3), particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$), and in some areas (although not in California), sulfur dioxide (SO_2). California has nonattainment or maintenance areas for all of these transportation-related "criteria pollutants" except SO_2, and also has a nonattainment area for lead (Pb); however, lead is not currently required by the FCAA to be covered in transportation conformity analysis. Regional conformity is based on emission analysis of Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) and Federal Transportation Improvement Programs (FTIPs) that include all transportation projects planned for a region over a period of at least 20 years (for the RTP) and 4 years (for the FTIP). RTP and FTIP conformity uses travel demand and emission models to determine whether or not the implementation of those projects would conform to emission budgets or other tests at various analysis years showing that requirements of the FCAA and the SIP are met. If the conformity analysis is successful, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) make the determinations that the RTP and FTIP are in conformity with the SIP for achieving the goals of the FCAA. Otherwise, the projects in the RTP and/or FTIP must be modified until conformity is attained. If the design concept and scope and the "open-to-traffic" schedule of a proposed transportation project are the same as described in the RTP and FTIP, then the proposed project meets regional conformity requirements for purposes of project-level analysis.

Project-level conformity is achieved by demonstrating that the project comes from a conforming RTP and TIP; the project has a design concept and scope[4] that has not changed significantly from those in the RTP and TIP; project analyses have used the latest planning assumptions and

[4] "Design concept" means the type of facility that is proposed, such as a freeway or arterial highway. "Design scope" refers to those aspects of the project that would clearly affect capacity and thus any regional emissions analysis, such as the number of lanes and the length of the project.

EPA-approved emissions models; and in PM areas, the project complies with any control measures in the SIP. Furthermore, additional analyses (known as hot-spot analyses) may be required for projects located in CO and PM nonattainment or maintenance areas to examine localized air quality impacts.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The project site is in eastern Riverside County, in the eastern portion of the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB or Basin). Most of the Basin is commonly referred to as the "high desert" because elevations range from approximately 2,000 to 5,000 feet above sea level. The Basin is characterized by extreme temperature fluctuations, strong seasonal winds, and clear skies. With respect to ozone, the greatest air pollution impacts throughout the Basin occur from June through September. This condition is generally attributed to the large amount of pollutant transport from within the South Coast Air Basin and San Joaquin Valley Air Basin to the MDAB.

The most representative climate monitoring station in the project vicinity with accurately recorded and complete monitoring data is located in Blythe. At the Blythe monitoring station, the average minimum and maximum January temperatures are 37.4 degrees and 67.6 degrees Fahrenheit, respectively, while the July average minimum and maximum temperatures increase to 67.4 degrees and 108.4 degrees Fahrenheit, respectively. The annual average precipitation is 3.81 inches (Western Regional Climate Center 2016).

Existing Air Quality

Existing air quality conditions in the project area can be characterized in terms of the ambient air quality standards that the State of California and the federal government have established for several different pollutants. For some pollutants, separate standards have been set for different measurement periods. Most standards have been set to protect public health. For some pollutants, standards have been based on other values (such as protection of crops, protection of materials, or avoidance of nuisance conditions). Table 2.2-2 shows the state and federal standards for a variety of pollutants. The Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) administers air quality regulations developed at the federal, state, and local levels in the Basin.

Table 2.2-2. State and Federal Criteria Air Pollutant Standards, Effects, and Sources

Pollutant	Averaging Time	State[9] Standard	Federal[9] Standard	Principal Health and Atmospheric Effects	Typical Sources	Attainment Status
Ozone (O_3)[2]	1 hour 8 hours	0.09 ppm 0.070 ppm	--- [4] 0.070 ppm (4th highest in 3 years)	High concentrations irritate lungs. Long-term exposure may cause lung tissue damage and cancer. Long-term exposure damages plant materials and reduces crop productivity. Precursor organic compounds include many known toxic air contaminants. Biogenic volatile organic compounds (VOCs) may also contribute.	Low-altitude ozone is almost entirely formed from reactive organic gases (ROG)/VOC and nitrogen oxides (NO_X) in the presence of sunlight and heat. Common precursor emitters include motor vehicles and other internal combustion engines, solvent evaporation, boilers, furnaces, and industrial processes.	Federal: Extreme Nonattainment (8-hour) State: Nonattainment (1-hour and 8-hour)
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1 hour 8 hours 8 hours (Lake Tahoe)	20 ppm 9.0 ppm [1] 6 ppm	35 ppm 9 ppm ---	CO interferes with the transfer of oxygen to the blood and deprives sensitive tissues of oxygen. CO also is a minor precursor for photochemical ozone. Colorless, odorless.	Combustion sources, especially gasoline-powered engines and motor vehicles. CO is the traditional signature pollutant for on-road mobile sources at the local and neighborhood scale.	Federal: Attainment/ Maintenance State: Attainment

Pollutant	Averaging Time	State[9] Standard	Federal[9] Standard	Principal Health and Atmospheric Effects	Typical Sources	Attainment Status
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM_{10}) [2]	24 hours Annual	50 µg/m^3 20 µg/m^3	150 µg/m^3 --- [2] (expected number of days above standard < or equal to 1)	Irritates eyes and respiratory tract. Decreases lung capacity. Associated with increased cancer and mortality. Contributes to haze and reduced visibility. Includes some toxic air contaminants. Many toxic and other aerosol and solid compounds are part of PM_{10}.	Dust- and fume-producing industrial and agricultural operations; combustion smoke and vehicle exhaust; atmospheric chemical reactions; construction and other dust-producing activities; unpaved road dust and re-entrained paved road dust; natural sources.	Federal: Attainment/ Maintenance State: Nonattainment
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$) [2]	24 hours Annual 24 hours (conformity process [5]) Secondary Standard (annual; also for conformity process [5])	--- 12 µg/m^3 --- ---	35 µg/m^3 12.0 µg/m^3 65 µg/m^3 15 µg/m^3 (98th percentile over 3 years)	Increases respiratory disease, lung damage, cancer, and premature death. Reduces visibility and produces surface soiling. Most diesel exhaust particulate matter—a toxic air contaminant—is in the $PM_{2.5}$ size range. Many toxic and other aerosol and solid compounds are part of $PM_{2.5}$.	Combustion, including motor vehicles, other mobile sources, and industrial activities; residential and agricultural burning; also formed through atmospheric chemical and photochemical reactions involving other pollutants, including NO_X, sulfur oxides (SO_X), ammonia, and ROG.	Federal: Nonattainment State: Nonattainment
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	1 hour Annual	0.18 ppm 0.030 ppm	0.100 ppm [6] (98th percentile over 3 years) 0.053 ppm	Irritating to eyes and respiratory tract. Colors atmosphere reddish-brown. Contributes to acid rain and nitrate contamination of storm water. Part of the "NO_X" group of ozone precursors.	Motor vehicles and other mobile or portable engines, especially diesel; refineries; industrial operations.	Federal: Attainment/ Maintenance State: Attainment

Pollutant	Averaging Time	State[9] Standard	Federal[9] Standard	Principal Health and Atmospheric Effects	Typical Sources	Attainment Status
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	1 hour 3 hours 24 hours Annual	0.25 ppm --- 0.04 ppm --	0.075 ppm [7] (99th percentile over 3 years) 0.5 ppm [9] 0.14 ppm 0.030 ppm (for certain areas)	Irritates respiratory tract; injures lung tissue. Can yellow plant leaves. Destructive to marble, iron, steel. Contributes to acid rain. Limits visibility.	Fuel combustion (especially coal and high-sulfur oil), chemical plants, sulfur recovery plants, metal processing; some natural sources like active volcanoes. Limited contribution possible from heavy-duty diesel vehicles if ultra-low sulfur fuel not used.	Federal: Attainment/ Unclassified State: Attainment/ Unclassified
Lead (Pb)[3]	Monthly Calendar Quarter Rolling 3-month average	1.5 µg/m^3 --- ---	--- 1.5 µg/m^3 (for certain areas) 0.15 µg/m^3 [11]	Disturbs gastrointestinal system. Causes anemia, kidney disease, and neuromuscular and neurological dysfunction. Also a toxic air contaminant and water pollutant.	Lead-based industrial processes like battery production and smelters. Lead paint, leaded gasoline. Aerially deposited lead from older gasoline use may exist in soils along major roads.	Federal: Unclassified/ Attainment State: Attainment
Sulfate	24 hours	25 µg/m^3	---	Premature mortality and respiratory effects. Contributes to acid rain. Some toxic air contaminants attach to sulfate aerosol particles.	Industrial processes, refineries and oil fields, mines, natural sources like volcanic areas, salt-covered dry lakes, and large sulfide rock areas.	State Only: Attainment/ Unclassified
Hydrogen Sulfide (H_2S)	1 hour	0.03 ppm	---	Colorless, flammable, poisonous. Respiratory irritant. Neurological damage and premature death. Headache, nausea. Strong odor.	Industrial processes such as refineries and oil fields, asphalt plants, livestock operations, sewage treatment plants, and mines. Some natural sources like volcanic areas and hot springs.	State Only: Attainment/ Unclassified

Pollutant	Averaging Time	State[9] Standard	Federal[9] Standard	Principal Health and Atmospheric Effects	Typical Sources	Attainment Status
Visibility Reducing Particles (VRP)	8 hours	Visibility of 10 miles or more (Tahoe: 30 miles) at relative humidity less than 70%	---	Reduces visibility. Produces haze. NOTE: not directly related to the Regional Haze program under the FCAA which is oriented primarily toward visibility issues in National Parks and other "Class I" areas. However, some issues and measurement methods are similar.	See particulate matter above. May be related more to aerosols than to solid particles.	State Only: Attainment/ Unclassified
Vinyl Chloride[3]	24 hours	0.01 ppm	---	Neurological effects, liver damage, cancer. Also considered a toxic air contaminant.	Industrial processes	State Only: Attainment/ Unclassified

Based on the ARB Air Quality Standards chart (ARB 2016).

[1] State standards are "not to exceed" or "not to be equaled or exceeded" unless stated otherwise.

[2] Federal standards are "not to exceed more than once a year" or as described above.

[3] ppm = parts per million

[4] Prior to 6/2005, the 1-hour ozone NAAQS was 0.12 ppm. Emission budgets for 1-hour ozone are still be in use in some areas where 8-hour ozone emission budgets have not been developed, such as the San Francisco Bay Area.

[5] Annual PM_{10} NAAQS revoked October 2006; was 50 µg/m^3. 24-hr. $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS tightened October 2006; was 65 µg/m^3. Annual $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS tightened from 15 µg/m^3 to 12 µg/m^3 December 2012 and secondary annual standard set at 15 µg/m^3.

[6] µg/m^3 = micrograms per cubic meter

[7] The 65 µg/m^3 $PM_{2.5}$ (24-hr) NAAQS was not revoked when the 35 µg/m^3 NAAQS was promulgated in 2006. The 15 µg/m^3 annual $PM_{2.5}$ standard was not revoked when the 12 µg/m^3 standard was promulgated in 2012. The 0.08 ppm 1997 ozone standard is revoked FOR CONFORMITY PURPOSES ONLY when area designations for the 2008 0.75 ppm standard become effective for conformity use (7/20/2013). Conformity requirements apply for all NAAQS, including revoked NAAQS, until emission budgets for newer NAAQS are found adequate, SIP amendments for the newer NAAQS are approved with a emission budget, U.S. EPA specifically revokes conformity requirements for an older standard, or the area becomes attainment/unclassified. SIP-approved emission budgets remain in force indefinitely unless explicitly replaced or eliminated by a subsequent approved SIP amendment. During the "Interim" period prior to availability of emission budgets, conformity tests may include some combination of build vs. no build, build vs. baseline, or compliance with prior emission budgets for the same pollutant.

[8] Final 1-hour NO_2 NAAQS published in the Federal Register on 2/9/2010, effective 3/9/2010. Initial area designation for California (2012) was attainment/unclassifiable throughout. Project-level hot spot analysis requirements do not currently exist. Near-road monitoring starting in 2013 may cause re-designation to nonattainment in some areas after 2016.

[9] U.S. EPA finalized a 1-hour SO_2 standard of 75 ppb (parts per billion [thousand million]) in June 2010. Nonattainment areas have not yet been designated as of 9/2012.

Pollutant	Averaging Time	State[9] Standard	Federal[9] Standard	Principal Health and Atmospheric Effects	Typical Sources	Attainment Status

[10] Secondary standard, set to protect public welfare rather than health. Conformity and environmental analysis address both primary and secondary NAAQS.

[11] ARB has identified vinyl chloride and the particulate matter fraction of diesel exhaust as toxic air contaminants. Diesel exhaust particulate matter is part of PM_{10} and, in larger proportion, $PM_{2.5}$. Both ARB and U.S. EPA have identified lead and various organic compounds that are precursors to ozone and $PM_{2.5}$ as toxic air contaminants. There are no exposure criteria for adverse health effect due to toxic air contaminants, and control requirements may apply at ambient concentrations below any criteria levels specified above for these pollutants or the general categories of pollutants to which they belong.

[12] Lead NAAQS are not considered in Transportation Conformity analysis.

The project site is in the eastern portion of the MDAB. The monitoring station closest to the project site is the Blythe-Murphy Street Station (ARB Station No. 33201), approximately 1,800 feet north of the project at 445 W Murphy Street in the City of Blythe. As shown in the Table 6, both the one-hour and eight-hour O_3 concentrations are under state and federal standards during the three-year reporting period.

PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations are not monitored at the Blythe-Murphy Street Station. As such, these concentrations were taken from the closest monitoring station in Palm Springs (ARB Station NO. 33137) about 92 miles west of the project site. As shown in Table 6, PM_{10} concentrations also exceeded federal standards in 2015 and 2016. $PM_{2.5}$ did not exceed federal standards in 2016 and 2017.

If a pollutant concentration is lower than the state or federal standard, the area is classified as being in attainment for that pollutant. If a pollutant violates the standard, the area is considered a nonattainment area. If data are insufficient to determine whether a pollutant is violating the standard, the area is designated as unclassified. The State of California has designated the eastern portion of the MDAB as being a nonattainment area for O_3, $PM_{2.5}$, and PM_{10}. U.S. EPA has designated this area as being a nonattainment area (moderate) for both O_3 (eight-hour standard) and PM_{10}.

Table 2.2-3. Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Data Measured at the Blythe and Palm Springs Stations

Pollutant Standards		2015	2016	2017
1-Hour Ozone *(Blythe-Murphy Street Station, ARB Station No. 33201)*				
	Maximum 1-hour concentration (ppm)	0.074	0.073	0.063
Number of days standard exceeded[a]				
	CAAQS 1-hour (> 0.09 ppm)	0	0	0
8-Hour Ozone *(Blythe-Murphy Street Station, ARB Station No. 33201)*				
	National maximum 8-hour concentration (ppm)	0.066	0.061	0.054
Number of days standard exceeded[a]				
	NAAQS and CAAQS 8-hour (> 0.070 ppm)	0	0	0

Pollutant Standards	2015	2016	2017
CAAQS 8-hour (> 0.070 ppm)	0	0	0
Particulate Matter (PM_{10})[d] – (*Palm Springs-Fire Station, ARB Station No. 33137)*			
National[b] maximum 24-hour concentration ($\mu g/m^3$)	199	447.2	105.6
State[c] maximum 24-hour concentration ($\mu g/m^3$)	183	113.1	60.5
National annual average concentration ($\mu g/m^3$)	20.9	23.1	22.1
State annual average concentration ($\mu g/m^3$)[e]	-	-	-
Number of days standard exceeded[a]			
NAAQS 24-hour (> 150 $\mu g/m^3$)[f]	1	1.1	0
CAAQS 24-hour (> 50 $\mu g/m^3$)[f]	-	-	-
Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$) – (*Palm Springs-Fire Station, ARB Station No. 33137)*			
National[b] maximum 24-hour concentration ($\mu g/m^3$)	22.7	14.7	14.5
State[c] maximum 24-hour concentration ($\mu g/m^3$)	22.7	14.7	14.5
National annual designation value ($\mu g/m^3$)	-	-	-
National annual average concentration ($\mu g/m^3$)	-	5.4	6.0
State annual designation value ($\mu g/m^3$)	7.0	-	6.0
State annual average concentration ($\mu g/m^3$)[e]	-	-	6.0
Number of days standard exceeded[a]			
NAAQS 24-hour (> 35 $\mu g/m^3$)	-	0	0

Source: ARB 2017
Notes:
$\mu g/m^3$ = micrograms per cubic meter; CAAQS = California Ambient Air Quality Standards; NAAQS = National Ambient Air Quality Standards; ppm = parts per million; – = insufficient data available to determine the value.
[a] An exceedance is not necessarily a violation.
[b] National statistics are based on standard conditions data. In addition, national statistics are based on samplers using federal reference or equivalent methods.
[c] State statistics are based on local conditions data, except in the South Coast Air Basin, for which statistics are based on standard conditions data. In addition, state statistics are based on California-approved samplers.
[d] Measurements usually are collected every 6 days.
[e] State criteria for ensuring that data are sufficiently complete for calculating valid annual averages are more stringent than the national criteria.
[f] Mathematical estimate of how many days concentrations would have been measured as higher than the level of the standard had each day been monitored.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

During construction, short-term degradation of air quality may occur due to the release of particulate emissions (airborne dust) generated by excavation, grading, hauling, and other construction-related activities. Emissions from construction equipment also are expected and would include CO, nitrogen oxides (NO_X), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), directly emitted

particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$), and toxic air contaminants such as diesel exhaust particulate matter. Ozone is a regional pollutant that is derived from NO_X and VOCs in the presence of sunlight and heat.

Site preparation and roadway construction typically involves clearing, grading, improving existing roadways, and paving roadway surfaces. Construction-related effects on air quality from most highway projects would be greatest during the site preparation phase because most engine emissions are associated with the excavation, handling, and transport of soils to and from the site. These activities could temporarily generate enough PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, and small amounts of CO, SO_2, NO_X, and VOCs to be of concern. Sources of fugitive dust would include disturbed soils at the construction site and trucks carrying uncovered loads of soils. Unless properly controlled, vehicles leaving the site could deposit mud on local streets, which could be an added source of airborne dust after it dries. PM_{10} emissions would vary from day to day, depending on the nature and magnitude of construction activity and local weather conditions. PM_{10} emissions would depend on soil moisture, silt content of soil, wind speed, and the amount of equipment operating. Larger dust particles would settle near the source, while fine particles would be dispersed over greater distances from the construction site.

In addition to dust-related PM_{10} emissions, heavy-duty trucks and construction equipment powered by gasoline and diesel engines would generate CO, SO_2, NO_x, VOCs, and some soot particulate (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) in exhaust emissions. If construction activities were to increase traffic congestion in the area, CO and other emissions from traffic would increase slightly while those vehicles are delayed. These emissions would be temporary and limited to the immediate area surrounding the construction site.

SO_2 is generated by oxidation during combustion of organic sulfur compounds contained in diesel fuel. Under California law and ARB regulations, off-road diesel fuel used in California must meet the same sulfur and other standards as on-road diesel fuel (not more than 15 ppm sulfur), so SO_2-related issues due to diesel exhaust will be minimal.

Some phases of construction, particularly asphalt paving, may result in short-term odors in the immediate area of each paving site(s). Such odors would quickly disperse to below detectable levels as distance from the site(s) increases.

Most of the construction impacts on air quality are short-term in duration and, therefore, will not result in long-term adverse conditions. Implementation of the following standardized measures, some of which may also be required for other purposes such as storm water pollution control, will reduce any air quality impacts resulting from construction activities.

The construction contractor must comply with Caltrans' Standard Specifications in Section 14.

- Section 14 specifically requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality, including air pollution control district and air quality management district regulations and local ordinances.
- Section 14 is directed at controlling dust. If dust palliative materials other than water are to be used, material specifications are described in Section 18.

The construction contractor must comply with MDAQMD Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust). Compliance measures shall include the following:

- Water or dust palliative will be applied to the site and equipment as often as necessary to control fugitive dust emissions. Fugitive emissions generally must meet a “no visible dust” criterion either at the point of emissions or at the right of way line, depending on local regulations.
- Soil binder will be spread on any unpaved roads used for construction purposes, and on all project construction parking areas.
- Trucks will be washed as they leave the right of way as necessary to control fugitive dust emissions.
- Track-out reduction measures—such as gravel pads at project access points to minimize dust and mud deposits on roads affected by construction traffic—will be used.
- All transported loads of soils and wet materials will be covered before transport, or adequate freeboard (space from the top of the material to the top of the truck) will be provided to minimize emission of dust (particulate matter) during transportation.
- Dust and mud that are deposited on paved, public roads due to construction activity and traffic will be promptly and regularly removed to decrease particulate matter.
- Mulch will be installed or vegetation planted as soon as practical after grading to reduce windblown particulate in the area.
- A dust control plan will be developed documenting sprinkling, temporary paving, speed limits, and timely revegetation of disturbed slopes as needed to minimize construction impacts on existing communities.

Equipment and materials storage sites will be located as far away from residential and park uses as practicable. Construction areas will be kept clean and orderly.

Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA)-like areas or their equivalent will be established near sensitive air receptors. Within these areas, construction activities involving the extended idling of diesel equipment or vehicles will be prohibited, to the extent feasible.

Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained. All construction equipment will use low sulfur fuel, as required by California Code of Regulations Title 17, Section 93114.

To the extent feasible, construction traffic will be scheduled and routed to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along local roads during peak travel times.

Construction Conformity

Construction activities will not last for more than five years at one general location, so construction-related emissions do not need to be included in regional and project-level conformity analysis [40 CFR 93.123(c)(5)].

Conformity

Per 40 CFR 93.126, certain types of highway projects, such as pavement resurfacing and/or rehabilitation as shown in Table 2 of 40 CFR 93.126, are exempt from the requirement to determine conformity, as documented in the Transportation Air Quality Conformity Findings

Checklist prepared for this project (Caltrans 2018g). Accordingly, no coordination with SCAG's Transportation Conformity Working Group is required for this project.

Mobile-Source Air Toxics

According to FHWA's October 2016 Updated Interim Guidance on mobile-source air toxics (MSAT), FHWA has identified three levels of analysis:

1. No analysis for exempt projects or projects with no potential for meaningful MSAT effects.
2. Qualitative analysis for projects with low potential MSAT effects.
3. Quantitative analysis to differentiate alternatives for projects with higher potential MSAT effects.

Because the project falls under the exempt project category, no analysis is required or has been undertaken related to the emission of MSAT. This project has been determined to generate minimal air quality impacts for Clean Air Act Amendments criteria pollutants and has not been linked with any special MSAT concerns.

The primary purpose of this project is to restore and extend service life of existing pavement while also improving safety and mobility of the traveling public. This project has been determined to generate minimal air quality impacts for Clean Air Act criteria pollutants and has not been linked with any special MSAT concerns. As such, this project will not result in changes in traffic volumes, vehicle mix, basic project location, or any other factor that would cause a meaningful increase in MSAT impacts of the project from that of the no-build alternative.

Moreover, EPA regulations for vehicle engines and fuels will cause overall MSAT emissions to decline significantly over the next several decades. Based on regulations now in effect, an analysis of national trends with EPA's MOVES2014 model forecasts a combined reduction of over 90 percent in the total annual emissions rate for the priority MSAT from 2010 to 2050 while vehicle-miles of travel are projected to increase by over 45 percent (FHWA 2016). This will both reduce the background level of MSAT as well as the possibility of even minor MSAT emissions from this project.

No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, there would be no changes to the project area. No air quality impacts would occur.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

AQ-1: During bridge construction, the contractor must comply with Caltrans Standard Specifications pertaining to dust control and dust palliative and implement any particulate matter mitigation or control measures related to project construction or operation.

2.3 Biological Environment

2.3.1 Natural Communities

This section of the document discusses natural communities of concern. The focus of this section is on biological communities, not individual plant or animal species. This section also includes information on wildlife corridors and habitat fragmentation. Wildlife corridors are areas of habitat used by wildlife for seasonal or daily migration. Habitat fragmentation involves dividing sensitive habitat and thereby lessening its biological value.

Habitat areas that have been designated as critical habitat under the federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) are discussed below in Section 2.3.5, Threatened and Endangered Species. Wetlands and other waters are discussed in Section 2.3.2.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Information used in this section is based on the project's approved NES (Sapphos Environmental 2019a).

The biological study area (BSA) consists of the Project Impact Area (PIA) and the natural environment within a 500-foot buffer surrounding the PIA with the potential to house special-status species and/or be affected by proposed project activities. The BSA, which is within the Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan Area, contains 1.8 acres of the Chuckwalla Valley Dune Thicket Area of Environmental Concern and 5.51 acres of the Chuckwalla Desert Wildlife Management Area. Field surveys for vegetation community mapping were conducted by qualified biologists between June 26 and 29, 2018.

One semi-natural community and five native plant communities were mapped within the project area, as shown in Figure 2.3-1. These communities include creosote bush scrub (*Larrea tridentate* Shrubland Alliance*)*, creosote bush – white bursage scrub (*Larrea tridentate – Ambrosia dumosa* Shrubland Alliance), blue palo verde woodland – ironwood woodland (*Parkinsonia florida – Olneya tesota* Woodland Alliance), arrow weed thickets (*Pluchea sericea* Alliance), qualibush scrub (*Atriplex lentiformis* Alliance), and pepper tree groves (*Schinus molle/terebinthifolius* Woodland Semi-natural Alliance). Other land cover types include bare/disturbed areas and roadways as well as other areas where more than 90 percent of the native vegetation has been cleared. Table 2.3-1 summarizes these communities as well as their locations within the BSA.

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Figure 2.3-1 Biological Study Area & Natural Communities (Sheet 1 of 8)

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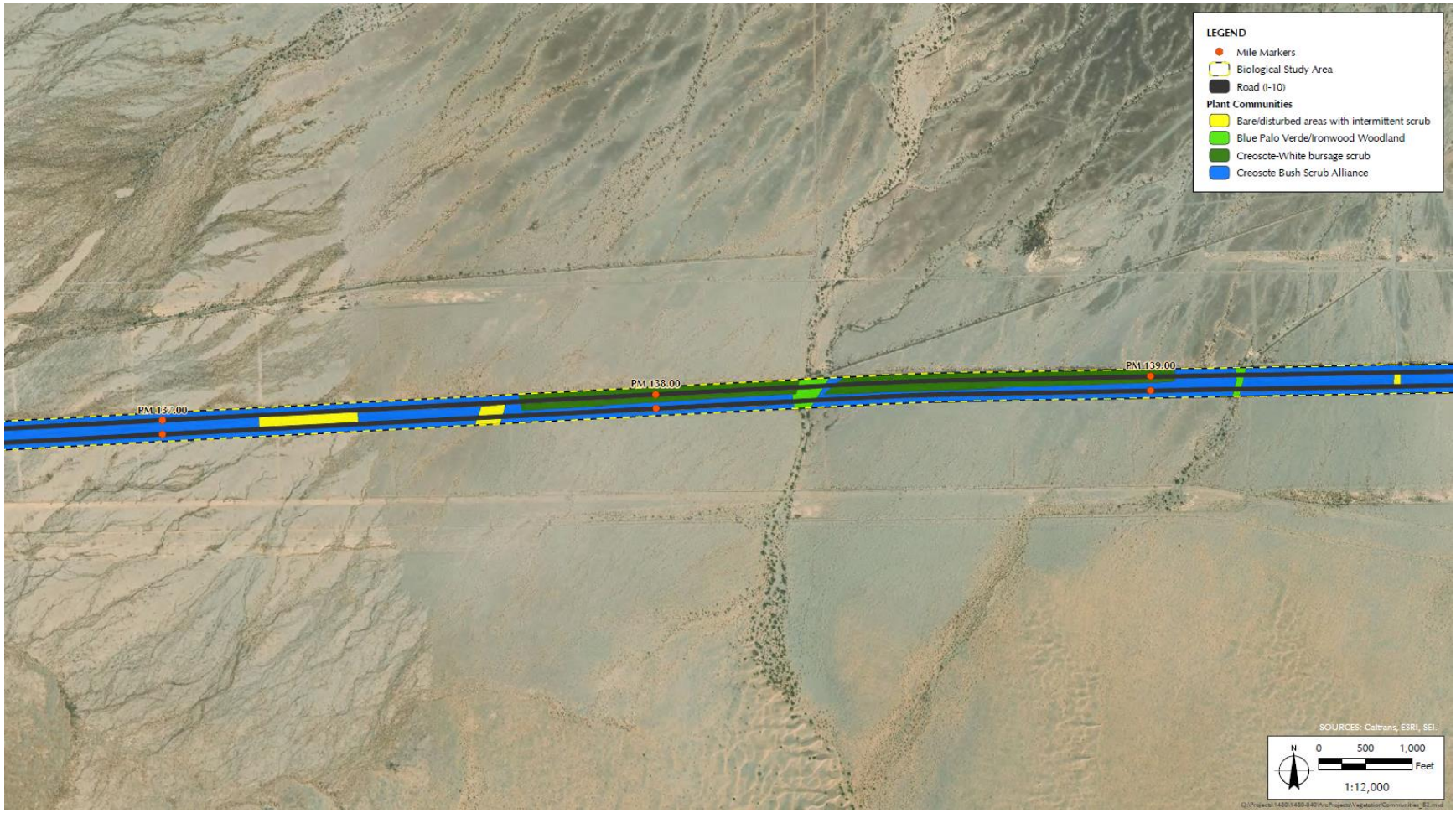

Figure 2.3-1 Biological Study Area & Natural Communities (Sheet 2 of 8)

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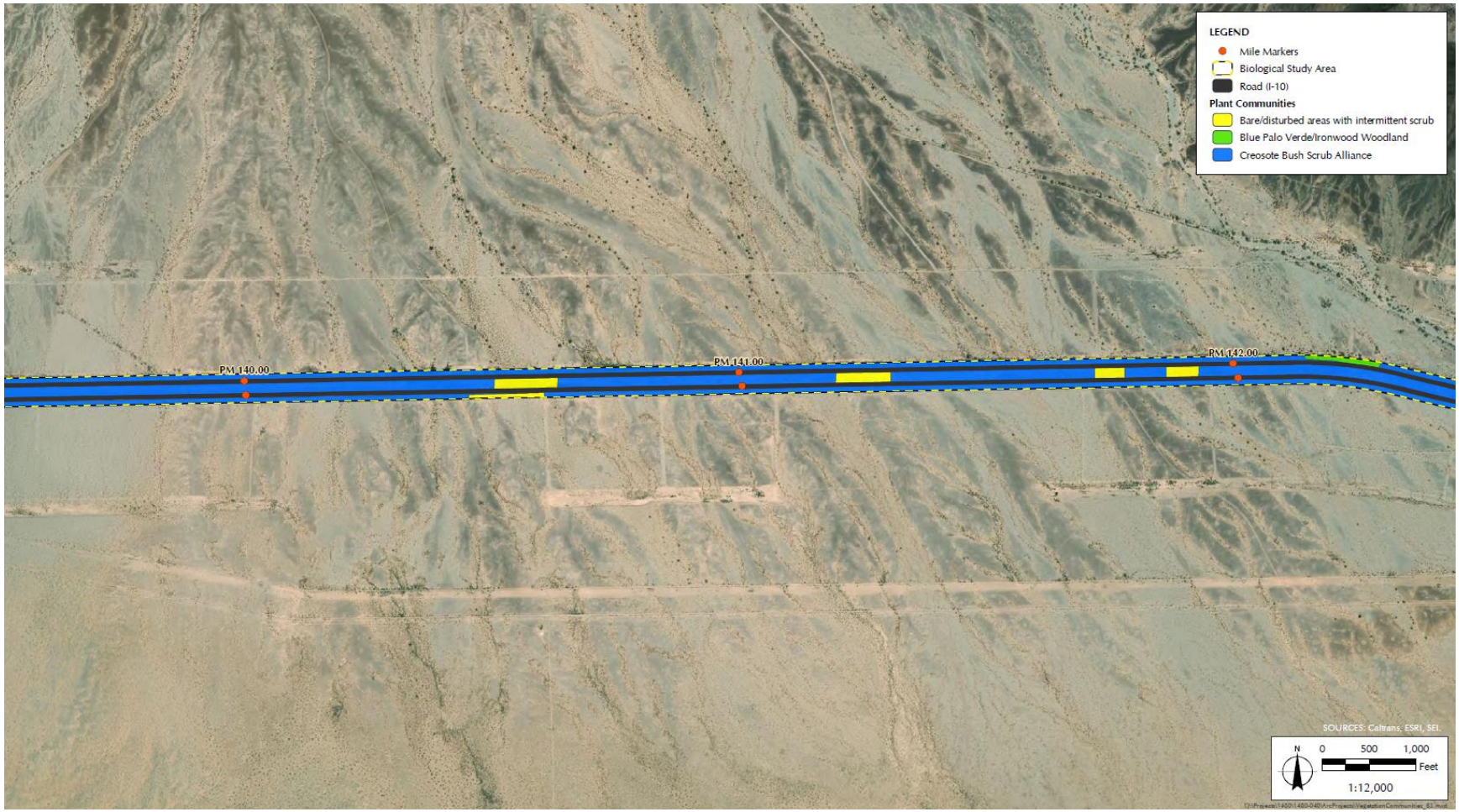

Figure 2.3-1 Biological Study Area & Natural Communities (Sheet 3 of 8)

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Figure 2.3-1 Biological Study Area & Natural Communities (Sheet 4 of 8)

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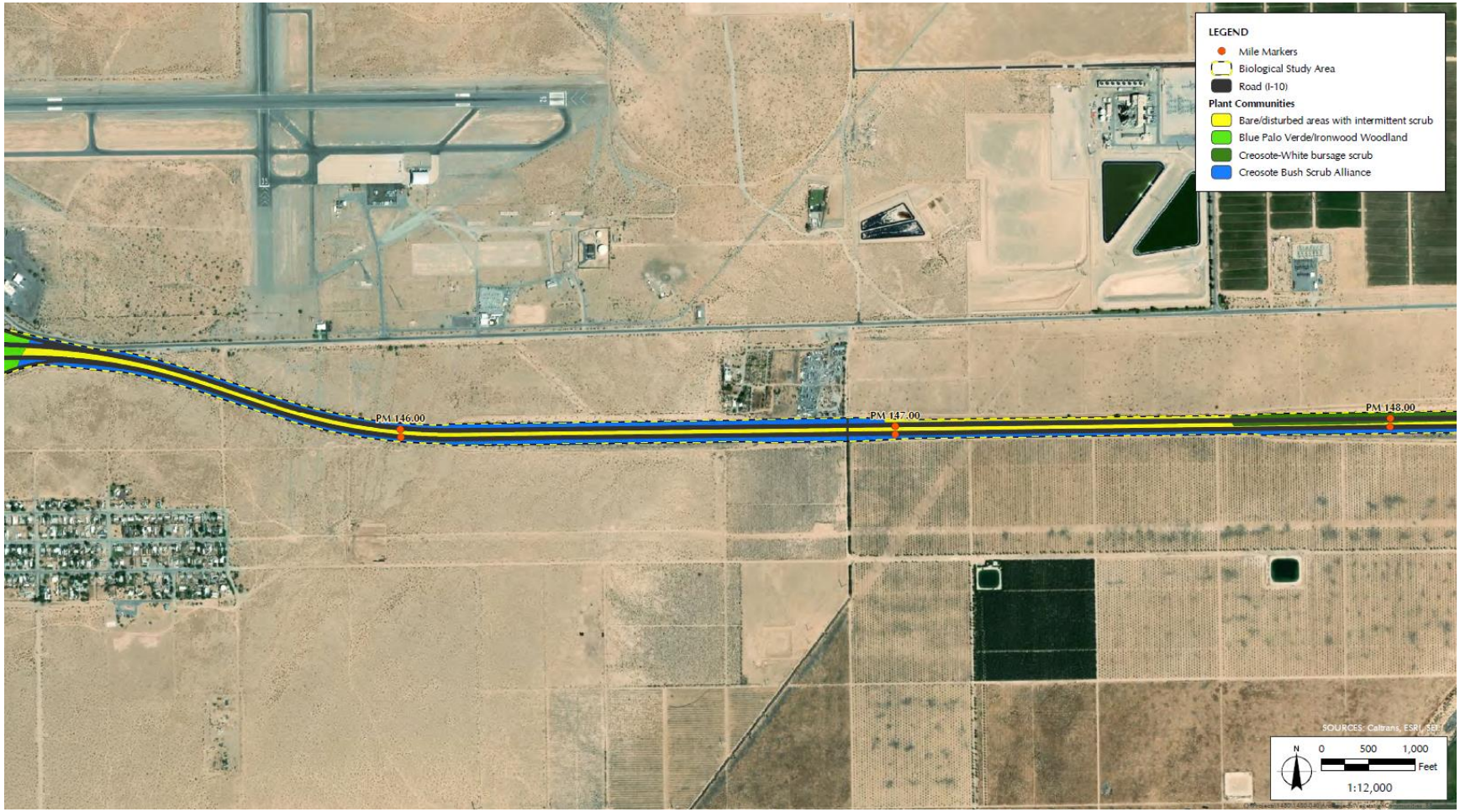

Figure 2.3-1 Biological Study Area & Natural Communities (Sheet 5 of 8)

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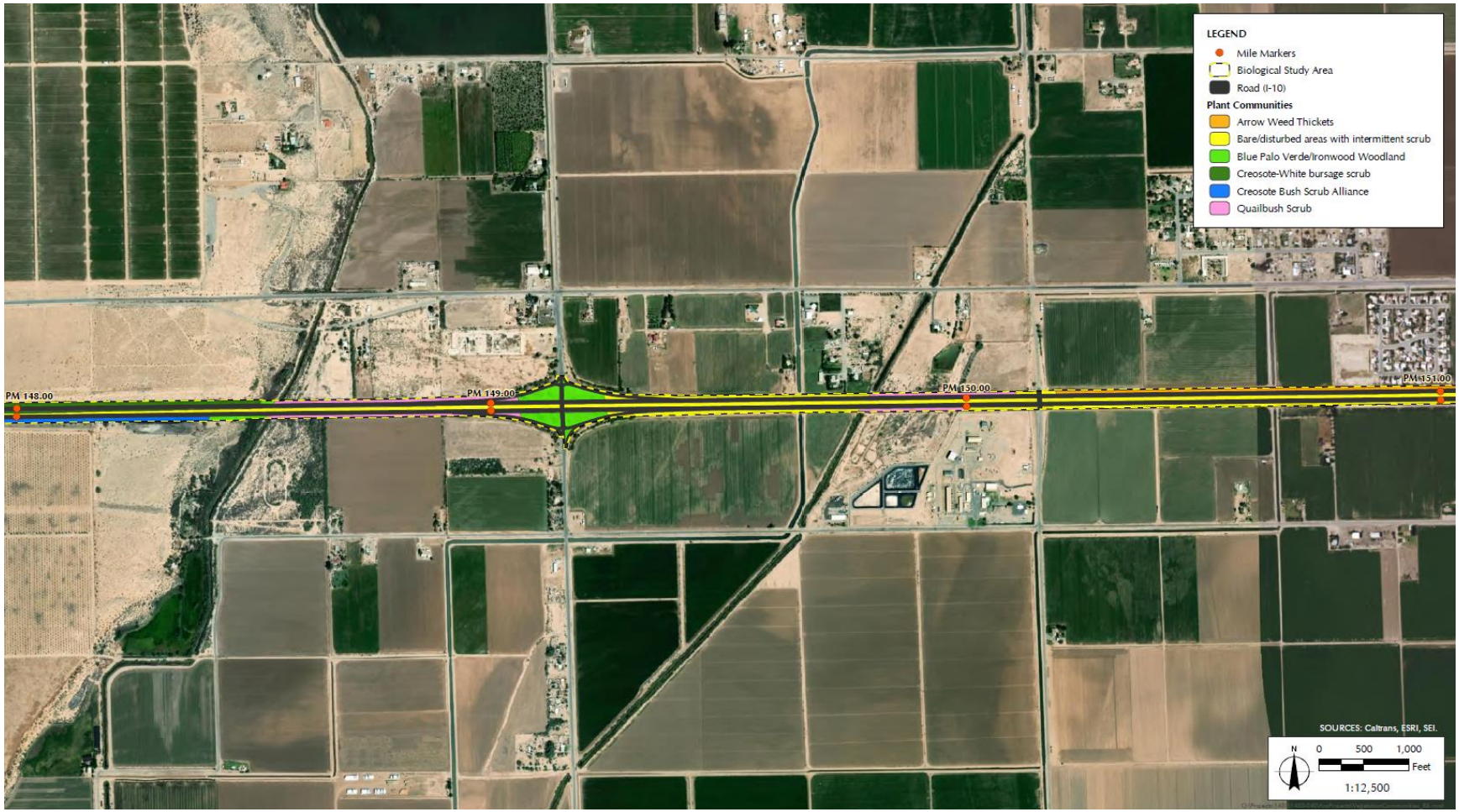

Figure 2.3-1 Biological Study Area & Natural Communities (Sheet 6 of 8)

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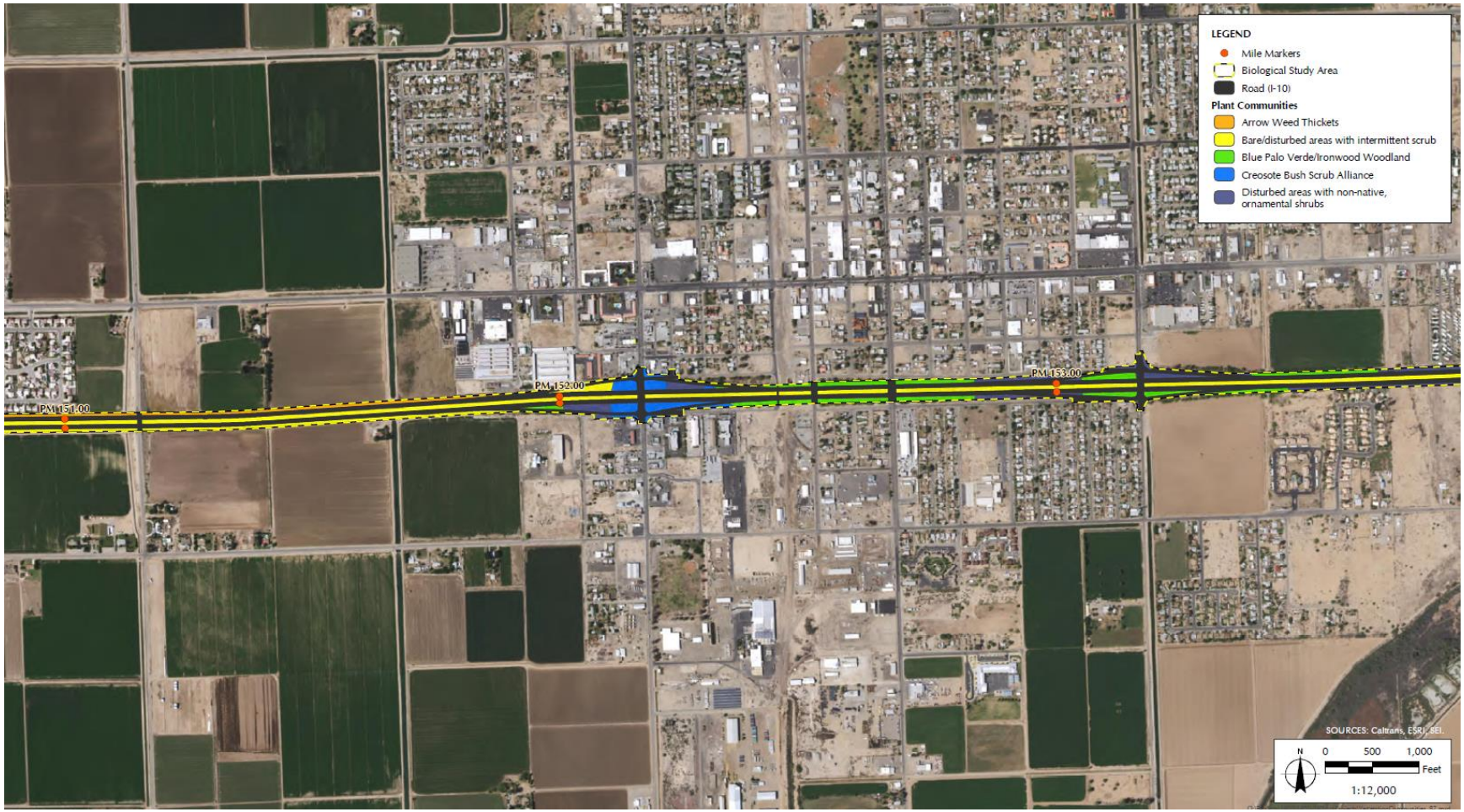

Figure 2.3-1 Biological Study Area & Natural Communities (Sheet 7 of 8)

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Figure 2.3-1 Biological Study Area & Natural Communities (Sheet 8 of 8)

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Table 2.3-1. Summary of Natural Communities

Vegetation Community/Land Cover Type	Rarity	Location within Survey Area
Creosote bush scrub (*Larrea tridentate* Shrubland Alliance*)*	S5	Found throughout the BSA. Makes up approximately 37 percent of the PIA.
Creosote bush – white bursage scrub (*Larrea tridentata – Ambrosia dumosa* Shrubland Alliance)	S5	Found in a large section of the BSA, near PM R148.0. Makes up approximately 3.4 percent of the PIA.
Blue palo verde woodland – ironwood woodland (*Parkinsonia florida – Olneya tesota* Woodland Alliance)	S4.2	Found intermittently throughout the BSA; most common in wash areas and near the city of Blythe. Makes up approximately 8 percent of the PIA.
Arrow weed thickets (*Pluchea sericea* Alliance), qualibush scrub (*Atriplex lentiformis* Alliance)	S3.3	Most common near agricultural fields as well as the Colorado River. Makes up approximately 2.4 percent of the PIA.
Qualbush scrub (*Atriplex lentiformis* Alliance)	S4	Most common in the eastern portion of the survey area, near rural and developed areas. Makes up less than 2 percent of the PIA.
Pepper tree groves (*Schinus molle/terebinthifolius* Woodland Semi-natural Alliance)	None	Found in the western portion of the survey area, near the Colorado River. Makes up less than 1 percent of the PIA.
Disturbed/developed	N/A	Throughout the BSA; most common near the city of Blythe.

The CDFW assigns a state rarity ranking of S1, S2, S3, S4, or S5 to natural communities, with S1 being the rarest and of most concern and S5 being common and of least concern. The CDFW considers natural communities ranked S1, S2, and S3 as being of special concern. Communities ranked as S4 or S5 are not included as habitats of special concern.

Blue palo verde – ironwood woodland and arrow weed thickets are identified within the survey area as designated state sensitive communities. In addition, another vegetation community, Fremont cottonwood forest (*Populus fremontii* Forest Alliance), was listed as state sensitive in the record search but was not observed in the survey area.

Habitat Connectivity

The project is in the Sonoran Desert California Essential Habitat Connectivity EcoRegion. The Sonoran Desert ecoregion has 37 natural landscape blocks, including 25 that are wholly within the region and 12 that are shared with other ecoregions. The natural landscape blocks are primarily in reserves (79 percent), with only 3 percent in private unprotected status; the rest are under multi-use management plans. The natural landscape blocks are connected by 13 essential connectivity areas, including five that are wholly contained within the region and eight that are shared with adjoining regions. Most essential connectivity areas are on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) holdings. These essential connectivity areas are second only to the Mojave in average size and have the highest ecological integrity index rating of any ecoregion.

The project is within the limits of the California Desert Connectivity Project, which is conducting a comprehensive connectivity assessment to identify wildland blocks of high ecological integrity and key habitat connectivity areas between them and adjacent ecoregions. Within the project limits, essential connectivity areas exist, and two targeted linkages have been established. These planned linkage areas cross I-10 and link the Chocolate Mountains to the Palen McCoy Mountains as well as the Little Picacho Mountains to the McCoy Palen Mountains. These specific targeted linkage areas serve as crucial habitat connectivity areas for desert kit fox

(DKF) (*Vulpes macrotis*), American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), and desert big-horn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*). These areas also serve as "move-through" habitats for mountain lions (*Puma concolor*), round-tailed ground squirrel (*Spermophilus tereticaudus*), and mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) and potential core habitats for little pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris*), desert pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus penicillatus),* southern grasshopper mouse (*Onychomys torridus*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), Le Conte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*), cactus wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*), black-tailed gnatcatcher (*Polioptila melanura*), desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), and several other species.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

Vegetation Communities

Caltrans activities associated with this project are exempt from requirements set forth by Division 23 of the California Food and Agriculture Code, Sections 80001 through 80201, California Desert Native Plants Act.

Habitat Connectivity

While the I-10 highway has existed as far back as 1957, the last section of the entire route, into Phoenix, opened in 1990. Within the project area, I-10 dates as far back as 1972 when it was built through the City of Blythe. As such, I-10 has been a prominent feature in the project area for an extended period of time. Moreover, several bridges and large culverts are found throughout the ROW, allowing various species to cross beneath the highway. The scope of work has the potential to increase direct and indirect effects on habitat connectivity by removing cover for species and creating a visual barrier. As stated above, many species are dependent on vegetation within the corridor and use the area for core habitat. These species would be affected by vegetation removal during grading and pavement rehabilitation. Although the scope of work has the potential to increase direct and indirect effects on habitat connectivity by removing cover for species and creating a visual barrier, the project would include revegetation, which would minimize this effect.

Overall, the area where the project is located serves as core habitat for several special-status species as well as a variety of desert species, including keystone species. In addition, within the project limits, several planned connectivity areas exist that would be affected by the scope of work for the proposed project. Although the Build Alternative has the potential to affect connectivity, the avoidance and minimization measures proposed for this project, as listed in subsequent sections, would keep impacts to a minimum. Moreover, by rehabilitating the pavement on this segment of I-10, failures at culverts and bridges, which are used by wildlife for connectivity, would be corrected. As such, the Build Alternative would be beneficial by helping species in this area cross I-10 safely.

No-Build Alternative

If the proposed project is not constructed, it will not result in any impacts on vegetation communities, including natural communities.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

As none of the natural communities discussed in this section are protected, avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures will not be required for natural communities.

2.3.2 Wetlands and Other Waters

REGULATORY SETTING

Wetlands and other waters are protected under a number of laws and regulations. At the federal level, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, more commonly referred to as the Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 United States Code [USC] 1344), is the primary law regulating wetlands and surface waters. One purpose of the CWA is to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands. Waters of the U.S. include navigable waters, interstate waters, territorial seas, and other waters that may be used in interstate or foreign commerce. The lateral limits of jurisdiction over non-tidal water bodies extend to the ordinary high water mark (OHWM), in the absence of adjacent wetlands. When adjacent wetlands are present, CWA jurisdiction extends beyond the OHWM to the limits of the adjacent wetlands. To classify wetlands for the purposes of the CWA, a three-parameter approach is used that includes the presence of hydrophytic (water-loving) vegetation, wetland hydrology, and hydric soils (soils formed during saturation/inundation). All three parameters must be present, under normal circumstances, for an area to be designated as a jurisdictional wetland under the CWA.

Section 404 of the CWA establishes a regulatory program that provides that discharge of dredged or fill material cannot be permitted if a practicable alternative exists that is less damaging to the aquatic environment or if the nation's waters would be significantly degraded. The Section 404 permit program is run by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) with oversight by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA).

The USACE issues two types of 404 permits: General and Individual. There are two types of General permits: Regional and Nationwide. Regional permits are issued for a general category of activities when they are similar in nature and cause minimal environmental effect. Nationwide permits are issued to allow a variety of minor project activities with no more than minimal effects.

Ordinarily, projects that do not meet the criteria for a Regional or Nationwide Permit may be permitted under one of USACE's Individual permits. There are two types of Individual permits: Standard permits and Letters of Permission. For Individual permits, the USACE decision to approve is based on compliance with U.S. EPA's Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 230), and whether permit approval is in the public interest. The Section 404 (b)(1) Guidelines (Guidelines) were developed by the U.S. EPA in conjunction with the USACE, and allow the discharge of dredged or fill material into the aquatic system (waters of the U.S.) only if there is no practicable alternative which would have less adverse effects. The Guidelines state that the USACE may not issue a permit if there is a "least environmentally damaging practicable alternative" (LEDPA) to the proposed discharge that would have lesser effects on waters of the U.S., and not have any other significant adverse environmental consequences.

The Executive Order for the Protection of Wetlands (EO 11990) also regulates the activities of federal agencies with regard to wetlands. Essentially, EO 11990 states that a federal agency, such as FHWA and/or the Department, as assigned, cannot undertake or provide assistance for new construction located in wetlands unless the head of the agency finds: (1) that there is no practicable alternative to the construction and (2) the proposed project includes all practicable measures to minimize harm. A Wetlands Only Practicable Alternative Finding must be made.

At the state level, wetlands and waters are regulated primarily by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) and the CDFW. In certain circumstances, the Coastal Commission (or Bay Conservation and Development Commission or the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency) may also be involved. Sections 1600-1607 of the California Fish and Game Code require any agency that proposes a project that will substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of or substantially change the bed or bank of a river, stream, or lake to notify CDFW before beginning construction. If CDFW determines that the project may substantially and adversely affect fish or wildlife resources, a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will be required. CDFW jurisdictional limits are usually defined by the tops of the stream or lake banks, or the outer edge of riparian vegetation, whichever is wider. Wetlands under jurisdiction of the USACE may or may not be included in the area covered by a Streambed Alteration Agreement obtained from the CDFW.

The RWQCBs were established under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act to oversee water quality. Discharges under the Porter-Cologne Act are permitted by Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) and may be required even when the discharge is already permitted or exempt under the CWA. Through the Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the RWQCB asserts jurisdiction over Waters of the State of California (WSC), which is generally the same as WUS, but may also include isolated waterbodies. The Porter Cologne Act defines WSC as "surface water or ground water, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state." In compliance with Section 401 of the CWA, the RWQCBs also issue water quality certifications for activities which may result in a discharge to waters of the U.S. This is most frequently required in tandem with a Section 404 permit request.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Information used in this section is based on the approved NES (Sapphos Environmental 2019a) and Jurisdictional Delineation Report (Sapphos Environmental 2019b).

The project area lies within two watersheds: Sothern Mojave and Imperial Reservoir. The project area, approximately from PM R134.0 to PM R139.7 is located in the Southern Mojave Watershed. Southern Mojave watershed is composed of drainages that flow west, end at Ford Dry Lake, and have no connection to the Colorado River. PM R134.0 is 4.5 miles east of Ford Dry Lake. The project area from approximately PM R139.8 to PM R156.5 is within the Imperial Reservoir Watershed. The Imperial Reservoir watershed is made up of drainages that mostly lead east to the Colorado River. PM R139.8 is approximately 16.5 miles west from the Colorado River. PM R156.5 is above the Colorado River.

A jurisdictional delineation of water resources was performed for the proposed project between July 26 and 28, 2018, with additional site visits in September and December 2018. The study area contains 35 drainages identified as Drainages 1-35, 7 of which are identified as jurisdictional waters of the United States (WUS) and WSC, as summarized in Table 2.3-2. Furthermore, there are an additional 28 drainage features that are identified as CDFW streambed. The jurisdictional determination determined that no wetlands are present within the project area.

Table 2.3-2. Summary of Jurisdictional Waters of the United States

Drainage ID	Non-Wetland WUS, WSC Acre	Length (feet)	Latitude/ Longitude	Cowardin Class	Class of Aquatic Resource
1	0.32	496.01	33.606532,	R4SBJ	Non-section 10-non-wetland

Drainage ID	Non-Wetland WUS, WSC Acre	Length (feet)	Latitude/ Longitude	Cowardin Class	Class of Aquatic Resource
			-114.919698		
11	0.60	1,575.56	33.608477, -114.882477	R4SBJ	Non-section 10-non-wetland
22	0.19	835.15	33.609736, -114.845307	R4SBJ	Non-section 10-non-wetland
25	0.08	787.48	33.609888, -114.830040	R4SBJ	Non-section 10-non-wetland
32	0.06	1,785.23	33.608816, -114.770098	R4SBJ	Non-section 10-non-wetland
34	0.12	640.48	33.606728, -114.696526	R4SBJ	Non-section 10-non-wetland
35	0.10	395.2	33.606672, -114.668184	R2UBHx	Non-section 10-non-wetland

Source: Sapphos Environmental 2019a

R4SBJ – Riverine, intermittent, streambed, temporary flooded, R2UBHx – Riverine, Lower Perennial, Unconsolidated bottom, perennially flooded excavated, based on Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States (Cowardin et. al. 1979).

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

As summarized in Table 2.3-3 below and shown in Figure 2.3-2, the Build Alternative would permanently and temporarily affect 0.19 acre and 1.74 acres, respectively, of jurisdictional non-wetland WUS and WSC. Additionally, the Build Alternative would permanently and temporarily affect 0.40 acre and 71.7 acres of CDFW streambeds, respectively.

Table 2.3-3. Impacts on Waters within the Proposed Project Limits

Drainage ID	Non-wetland WUS and WSC		CDFW Streambed	
	Permanent Impact (acre)	Temporary Impact (acre)	Permanent Impact (acre)	Temporary Impact (acre)
1	0.04	0.16	0.21	2.56
2	N/A	N/A	0.00	1.23
3	N/A	N/A	0.00	1.26
4	N/A	N/A	0.00	4.63
5	N/A	N/A	0.00	1.83
6	N/A	N/A	0.00	0.69
7	N/A	N/A	0.00	0.38
8	N/A	N/A	0.00	1.37
9	N/A	N/A	0.00	0.47
10	N/A	N/A	0.00	2.39
11	0.03	0.57	0.04	0.67
12	N/A	N/A	0.00	1.54
13	N/A	N/A	0.00	0.48
14	N/A	N/A	0.00	1.09
15	N/A	N/A	0.00	2.18
16	N/A	N/A	0.00	2.58

Drainage ID	Non-wetland WUS and WSC		CDFW Streambed	
	Permanent Impact (acre)	Temporary Impact (acre)	Permanent Impact (acre)	Temporary Impact (acre)
17	N/A	N/A	0.00	1.84
18	N/A	N/A	0.00	1.18
19	N/A	N/A	0.00	0.53
20	N/A	N/A	0.00	0.50
21	N/A	N/A	0.00	1.45
22	0.02	0.17	0.02	0.29
23	N/A	N/A	0.00	1.44
24	N/A	N/A	0.00	2.30
25	0.01	0.07	0.03	0.28
26	N/A	N/A	0.00	1.87
27	N/A	N/A	0.00	0.06
28	N/A	N/A	0.00	4.08
29	N/A	N/A	0.00	0.06
30	N/A	N/A	0.00	0.05
31	N/A	N/A	0.00	13.16
32	0.04	0.60	0.04	0.69
33	N/A	N/A	0.00	16.05
34	0.04	0.08	0.02	0.08
35	0.01	0.09	0.04	0.44
Total	**0.19**	**1.74**	**0.40**	**71.70**
Source: Sapphos Environmental 2019a				

Potential direct effects on waters includes the direct removal of vegetation during site preparation activities such as vegetation clearing, grubbing, and site grading. However, the median will be hydroseeded. Other indirect effects on waters may include sediment entering drainage areas from vegetation clearing and/or invasive, nonnative plants transported into areas along the roadway.

The proposed project may require temporary and permanent impacts on jurisdictional drainages and, as such, authorizations from USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW may be required. The two most common types of permits issued by USACE under Section 404 of the CWA to authorize the discharge of dredged or fill material into WUS are a nationwide permit (NWP) or an individual permit (IP). NWPs are general permits for specific categories of activities that result in minimal impacts on aquatic resources. NWP 14 can be used for linear transportation projects. The discharge cannot cause the loss of greater than 0.5 acre of WUS. The permittee must submit a pre-construction notification to the district engineer prior to commencing the activity if the loss of WUS exceeds 0.1 acre, or there is a discharge in a special aquatic site including wetlands. The proposed project would likely qualify under NWP 14 and could likely avoid notification requirements to USACE.

Under Section 401 of the CWA, a Section 401 Water Quality Certification Permit Form must be submitted to the RWQCB to certify that the discharge of dredged or fill materials into WUS does not violate state water quality standards. The RWQCB also regulates impacts on WSC under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act through issuance of a Construction General Permit, State General Waste Discharge Order, or WDRs, depending upon the level of impact and the properties of the waterway. Caltrans would also need to obtain a Water Quality Certification. A CDFW 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement is also required for all activities that alter streams and lakes and their associated riparian habitat.

No-Build Alternative

If this project is not constructed, project-related impacts on federal and state jurisdictional waters and wetlands would not occur.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

WET-1: **Impacts to Jurisdictional Waters.** The proposed project's impacts on jurisdictional areas will be mitigated and coordinated with USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW during the permitting process. A minimum ratio of 1:1 is anticipated, but subject to change during agency coordination.

Furthermore, in addition to Caltrans BMPs and Caltrans Standard Specifications 13-4.03E(3) and 13-4.03E(4), the following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented to minimize impacts on jurisdictional waters during construction:

BIO-1: Materials and Spoils Control. Project materials will not be cast from the project site and project-related debris, spoils, and trash will be contained and removed to a proper disposal facility.

BIO-2: Equipment Staging. Equipment storage, fueling, and staging areas shall be located on previously disturbed areas with minimal risks of direct drainage into riparian areas or other sensitive habitats. These designated areas shall be located in such a manner as to prevent any runoff from entering sensitive habitat. Necessary precautions shall be

taken to prevent the release of cement or other toxic substances into surface waters. Project-related spills of hazardous materials shall be reported to the appropriate entities including but not limited to applicable jurisdictional cities, USFWS, CDFW, and RWQCB and shall be cleaned up immediately and contaminated soils removed to approved disposal areas.

BIO-3: De-Water Plan. For all bridges that cross blue lines and are susceptible to running water, a de-watering/water control plan must be created and implemented in accordance with Caltrans' Water Control Standard Specifications (Standard Specification 13-4.03G) if water is present or could be present during construction activities.

2.3.3 Plant Species

REGULATORY SETTING

The USFWS and CDFW have regulatory responsibility for the protection of special-status plant species. "Special-status" species are selected for protection because they are rare and/or subject to population and habitat declines. Special status is a general term for species that are provided varying levels of regulatory protection. The highest level of protection is given to threatened and endangered species; these are species that are formally listed or proposed for listing as endangered or threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and/or the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Please see Section 2.3.5, *Threatened and Endangered Species*, in this document for detailed information about these species.

This section of the document discusses all other special-status plant species, including CDFW species of special concern, USFWS candidate species, and California Native Plant Society (CNPS) rare and endangered plants.

The regulatory requirements for FESA can be found at 16 United States Code (USC) Section 1531, et seq. See also 50 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 402. The regulatory requirements for CESA can be found at California Fish and Game Code, Section 2050, et seq. Department projects are also subject to the Native Plant Protection Act, found at California Fish and Game Code, Section 1900-1913, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), found at California Public Resources Code, Sections 21000-21177.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Information used in this section is based on the project's approved NES (Sapphos Environmental 2019a).

Special-status Plant Species

Eleven special-status plant species have the potential of occurring within the BSA as listed in Table 2.3-4 below. During various field visits conducted, no special-status or rare plant species were observed. However, suitable habitat for several species was present throughout the BSA.

Table 2.3-4. Special-status Plant Species Occurring or Potentially Occurring in the BSA

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
Abrams' spurge	*Euphorbia abramsiana*	CNPS 2B.2	Annual herb. Bloom period: September – November. Sandy flats, mixed creosote bush scrub, banks of large wash; Elevation: -45–1,445 m	HP	Habitat is present. There are no occurrences reported within the project vicinity.
bitter hymenoxys	*Hymenoxys odorata*	CNPS 2B.1	Annual herb. Bloom period: February – November. Sonoran Desert. Roadsides, open flats, drainage areas, streambanks and bottoms; Elevation: 45–1,500 m	HP	Habitat is present in washes and other drainage areas throughout the project area.
desert beardtongue	*Penstemon pseudospectabilis* ssp. *pseudospectabilis*	CNPS 2B.2	Perennial herb. Bloom period: January – May. Mojave and Sonoran Desert. Often in sandy washes; sometimes on rocky slopes; Elevation: 80–1,740 m	HP	Habitat is present throughout the project west of Blythe.
dwarf germander	*Teucrium cubense* ssp. *depressum*	CNPS 2B.2	Annual herb. Bloom period: March – May (September – November) Sonoran Desert. Dunes, playa margins and scrub. < 400 m	HP	Suitable habitat is present in several areas within the PIA and BSA
gravel milk-vetch	*Astragalus sabulonum*	CNPS 2B.2	Annual herb. Bloom period: February – June. Mojave and Sonoran Desert. Sandy or gravelly flats, washes, and roadsides; Elevation: -50–900 m	HP	Suitable habitat is present throughout the entirety of the project limits. CNDDB reported occurrences are from 1938.
Harwood's eriastrum	*Eriastrum harwoodii*	CNPS 3.2	Annual herb. Bloom period: September – November. Mojave and Sonoran Desert. Sand dunes in creosote-bush scrub; Elevation: < 1,000 m	A	Habitat needs are not met as the PIA and BSA are lacking the sand dunes necessary to support the species.
Harwood's milk-vetch	*Astragalus insularis* var. *harwoodi*	CNPS 2B.2	Annual herb. Bloom period: January – May. Mojave Desert. Desert dunes, open sandy flats and sandy or stony desert washes, mostly in creosote bush scrub; Elevation: -50–700 m	HP	Several occurrences reported through CNDDB within the PIA and BSA. Suitable habitat is present throughout the project.
pink fairyduster	*Calliandra eriophylla*	CNPS 2B.3	Perennial shrub. Bloom period: January – March. Sonoran Desert. Sandy washes, slopes, mesas; Elevation: 120–1,500 m	HP	Habitat is present west of Blythe. CNDDB reported occurrences are within ROW, however they are from 1964.
roughstalk witch grass	*Panicum hirticaule* ssp. *hirticaule*	CNPS 2B.1	Annual herb. Bloom period: August – December. Mojave and Sonoran Desert.	HP	Habitat is present within several wetlands located near PM 138

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
			Sandy, silty depressions; Elevation: 60–1,465 m		
sand evening-primrose	*Chylismia arenaria*	CNPS 2B.2	Annual/perennial herb. Bloom period: March – April. Sonoran Desert. Sandy washes, rocky slopes, and desert scrub; Elevation: -70–915 m	HP	Suitable habitat is present within the washes throughout the PIA and BSA
winged cryptantha	*Johnstonella holoptera*	CNPS 4.3	Annual herb. Bloom period: March – April. Mojave and Sonoran Desert. Gravelly to rocky soils, washes, slopes, ridges; Elevation: 50–1,220 m	HP	Limited suitable habitat within the washed west of Blythe. Many of the washes are used by OHV resulting in absence of vegetation.

Source: Sapphos Environmental 2019a

Notes:

California Native Plant Society Classifications (CNPS):

1B.1 – Plant Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere seriously threatened in California;

1B.2 – Plant Rare, Threatened or Endangered in California and elsewhere, fairly threatened in California;

2B.1—Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in CA, but common elsewhere, seriously threatened in California;

2B.2 – Plant Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but common elsewhere, fairly threatened in California;

2B.3 – Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but more common elsewhere; very threatened in California.

Habitat Present/Absent: HP—Habitat Present: habitat is or may be present, and the species may be present.

A – Absent: no habitat present and no further work needed.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

Construction of the project would result in grading and addition of new pavement that would result in the removal of vegetation. While the areas closest to the roadway and shoulders are disturbed, suitable habitat for special-status plant species is present. As such, the project has the potential to directly affect several sensitive plant species. Additionally, indirect effects could occur due to the propagation of invasive species. Measures **BIO-1**, **BIO-2**, and **BIO-4** through **BIO-6** would be implemented to avoid and minimize impacts on special-status plant species.

No-Build Alternative

No construction activities would be undertaken, and no effects on plant species would occur.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

The following avoidance and minimization measures would be implemented to minimize effects during construction.

BIO-4: Dust Control: The contractor shall implement dust control measures during construction activities to avoid inundating surrounding vegetation and to ensure biological monitors on the project site have visibility for monitoring the covered species.

BIO-5: Pre-Construction Plant Survey. Within three days prior to construction, special-status plant species individuals will be flagged for clear identification to ensure they are visible to construction personnel for avoidance. Should multiple plants in a single location be found, the groupings will be fenced with environmental sensitive temporary fencing.

BIO-6: Flagging and Fencing. Within three days prior to the start of construction, special status plant species individuals will be flagged for clear identification to ensure they are visible to construction personnel for avoidance. Should multiple plants in a single location be found, the groupings will be fenced with environmental sensitive temporary fencing.

2.3.4 Animal Species

REGULATORY SETTING

Many state and federal laws regulate impacts to wildlife. The USFWS, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service), and the CDFW are responsible for implementing these laws. This section discusses potential impacts and permit requirements associated with animals not listed or proposed for listing under the federal or state Endangered Species Act. Species listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered are discussed in Section 2.3.5, below. All other special-status animal species are discussed here, including CDFW fully protected species and species of special concern, and USFWS or NOAA Fisheries Service candidate species.

Federal laws and regulations pertaining to wildlife include the following:

- National Environmental Policy Act
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act

- Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act

State laws and regulations pertaining to wildlife include the following:

- California Environmental Quality Act
- Sections 1600–1603 of the California Fish and Game Code
- Section 4150 and 4152 of the California Fish and Game Code

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Information used in this section is based on the project's approved NES (Sapphos Environmental 2019a).

Special-status Animal Species

Based on literature searches that were conducted in 2018, 45 special-status animal species have the potential of occurring within the BSA as listed in Table 2.3-5 below.

Habitat for the riparian birds listed in Table 2.3-5 was present in all of the wash areas due to the presence of vegetation necessary to support these species. Additionally, wetland environments were present in several areas of the project supporting a variety of wetland-related vegetation, which would provide suitable nesting and foraging for several of the avian species. During habitat assessments as well as other assessments related to this project, black-tailed gnatcatcher, a prairie falcon, several raptors including the migratory black vulture, and various other migratory birds (some of which are designated as special-status) were observed. In addition to these observations, a burrowing owl habitat assessment was conducted. During this survey, several burrows that could be used by burrowing owls were observed. Overall, suitable habitat is present within the PIA and BSA in areas west of Blythe and within the agricultural fields in the BSA within Blythe.

No sign of bats was observed during any of the site visits. A bat habitat assessment took place in November. During this time, most of the bridges within the project limits did not have the structures often utilized by bat colonies. With that said, some trees, such as palms, were observed, which could provide suitable habitat.

During several of the field visits, desert kit fox (DKF) tracks, burrows, and scat were observed in the western section of the project limits within the washes and within the ROW along the shoulders. Additionally, communication with local Caltrans maintenance workers revealed that several deceased badgers have been found within the roadway between PM R134 and R136.

In addition, the project is located within the Pacific Flyway. Due to its proximity to both the Salton Sea and the Colorado River, the presence of migratory birds is common. The agricultural fields within the Colorado River Valley bring several shore birds, whereas the riparian habitat along the river brings an array of additional types of migratory birds ranging from pelagic to song birds.

Table 2.3-5. Special-status Animal Species Occurring or Potentially Occurring in the BSA

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
Amphibian					
Couch's spadefoot	*Scaphiopus couchii*	SSC, BLM:S	Occurs in Imperial County and San Bernardino County. Inhabits desert and arid regions of grassland, prairie, mesquite, creosote bush, thorn forest, and sandy washes. Spends 8–10 months each year buried in the ground, emerging briefly during spring and summer rains. Reproduction is aquatic.	A	BSA is outside the range for this species.
Relict leopard frog	*Lithobates onca*	FEC, LCRMSCP	Adult frogs inhabit permanent streams, springs, and spring-fed wetlands below approximately 600 m. Breeding habitat includes pools or slow moving side areas of streams, with or without emergent vegetation	A	No suitable habitat is present within the PIA or BSA.
Aquatic					
Bonytail	*Gila elegans*	FE, LCRMSCP	Colorado River-refer backwaters with rocky or muddy bottoms and flowing pools, although they have been reported in swiftly moving water. They are mostly restricted to rocky canyons	A	Water sources necessary to support the species are outside of the PIA and BSA.
humpback chub	*Gila cypha*	FE, LCRMSCP	Colorado River-habitats ranging from pools with turbulent to little or no current; substrates of silt, sand, boulder, or bedrock; and depth ranging from 1 meter to as deep as 15 meters.	A	Water sources necessary to support the species are outside of the PIA and BSA.
razorback sucker	*Xyrauchen texanus*	FE, SE, FP	Inhabits the Colorado river in both swift currents and quiet waters. Spawn in areas of sand, gravel, and rocks in shallow water.	A	Water sources necessary to support the species are outside of the PIA and BSA.
Birds					
Arizona Bell's vireo	*Vireo bellii arizonae*	SE, BLM:S, BCC	Summer resident along the Colorado River. Inhabits willow thickets with undergrowth of *Baccharis glutinosa*. Nests	A	Willow thickets are outside of the BSA and PIA. No suitable habitat is present.

Table 2.3-5. Special-status Animal Species Occurring or Potentially Occurring in the BSA

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
			up to 2 meters off the ground in willow, mesquite, or other small trees and shrubs.		
black-tailed gnatcatcher	*Polioptila melanura*	WL	Inhabits desert washes and habitat along the Colorado River. Requires mesquite, palo verde, ironwood, or acacia for nesting; absent from areas where salt cedar introduced.	HP, P	Habitat present throughout the PIA and BSA. eBird occurrences near in several areas near the Colorado River as well as the Wiley Wells rest area.
burrowing owl	*Athene cuniculari*	SSC, BCC, BLM:S	Inhabits open, dry annual or perennial grasslands, deserts, and scrublands characterized by lowgrowing vegetation. Nests in rodent burrows or may create a burrow.	HP	Suitable habitat is present through the entirety of the project. Many CNDDB occurrences within the project vicinity as well as within the project's BSA.
California black rail	*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*	BLM:S, FT, FP, LCMSCP	Found in the lower Colorado River and Salton Sea areas within riparian marshes	A	Suitable habitat is outside of the BSA and PIA. No fresh water marshes present in the work areas that would support this species.
Crissal thrasher	*Toxostoma crissale*	SSC	Resident of southeastern deserts in desert riparian and desert wash habitats. Nests in dense vegetation along streams/washes with mesquite, screwbean mesquite, ironwood, catclaw, acacia, arrow weed, or willow.	HP	Habitat is present throughout the washes east of Blythe within the PIA and BSA.
elf owl	*Micrathene whitneyi*	SE, BLM:S, BCC	In California, nesting area limited to cottonwood-willow and mesquite riparian zone along the Colorado River. Nests in deserted woodpecker holes, often in larger trees which offer insulation from high daytime temperatures.	A	Limited to mesquite zones along the Colorado River. These areas are outside of the PIA and BSA.
Gila woodpecker	*Melanerpes uropygialis*	SE, BLM:S, BCC	In California, inhabits cottonwoods and other desert riparian trees, shade trees, and date palms. Cavity nester in riparian trees or saguaro cactus.	HP	Date farm is parallel to the project near Rannelle Drain Bridge (PM 148.53). Other riparian habitat suitable present in washes east of Blythe.
gilded flicker	*Colaptes chrysoides*	SE	Inhabits the Sonoran Desert and riparian woodlands along the Colorado River. Uses	A	Suitable habitat is outside of the BSA and PIA along the Colorado

Table 2.3-5. Special-status Animal Species Occurring or Potentially Occurring in the BSA

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
			willows, cottonwood, tree yucca, and saguaro for nesting.		River. There is no suitable habitat within the project limits.
great blue heron	*Ardea Herodias*	N/A	Rookery sites in close proximity to foraging areas: marshes, lake margins, tide-flats, rivers and streams, wet meadows.	HP, P	Migratory bird. Present along the Colorado River. Also documented in agricultural fields and canals along project limits
Le Conte's thrasher	*Toxostoma lecontei*	SSC, BCC	Inhabits open desert wash and desert scrub habitats. Nests in dense, spiny shrub or densely branched cactus in desert wash habitat, usually 1–2 m above ground.	HP	Habitat is present throughout the washes east of Blythe within the PIA and BSA.
loggerhead shrike	*Lanius ludovicianus*	SSC, BCC	Prefers open habitats, with scattered shrubs, trees, or fences for perching and foraging. Requires fairly dense shrubs and brush for nesting.	HP	Habitat is present in riparian wash vegetation in areas west of Blythe.
merlin	*Falco columbarius*	WL	Inhabits seacoast, tidal estuaries, open woodlands, savannahs, edges of grasslands & deserts, or farms & ranches for foraging. Does not breed in California.	HP	Habitat for foraging is present within Blythe via the agricultural fields as well as the Colorado River.
mountain plover	*Charadrius montanus*	SSC, BCC, BLM:S	Inhabits short grasslands, freshly plowed fields, newly sprouting grain fields, or sod farms on flat topography. Prefers grazed areas and areas with burrowing rodents. Does not breed in California.	HP	Habitat present in the adjacent agricultural fields in Blythe. CNDDB and ebird have reported occurrences.
prairie falcon	*Falco mexicanus*	WL, BCC	Inhabits dry, open terrain, either level or hilly. Breeding sites located on cliffs. Forages far afield, even to marshlands and ocean shores.	HP, P	Suitable foraging and stopover habitat exist within the survey area. During a field visit in in December 2018, an individual was observed within the limits of Blythe.
Sonoran yellow warbler	*Setophaga petechia sonorana*	SSC, BCC	Summer resident of the Colorado River Valley in riparian deciduous habitat. Inhabits cottonwoods and willows, particularly the crown foliage; nests in understory, usually 1–5 m above ground.	A	Suitable habitat is outside of the BSA and PIA. Basic needs are not meet within the project limits.

Table 2.3-5. Special-status Animal Species Occurring or Potentially Occurring in the BSA

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
southwestern willow flycatcher	*Empidonax trailli extimus*	FE, SE	Inhabits relatively dense riparian tree and shrub communities associated with rivers, swamps, and other wetlands.	HP	Species is present along the Colorado River. This habitat is outside of the PIA and BSA. Some areas in the project limits have riparian habitat, but these are limited.
summer tanager	*Piranga rubra*	SSC	Summer resident; inhabits desert riparian areas along lower Colorado River and local California deserts. Builds nests on large limbs of cottonwood, willow, or other riparian deciduous trees.	HP	Habitat is present throughout the project vicinity within the BSA as well as the PIA.
yellow-breasted chat	*Icteria virens*	SSC	Summer resident; inhabits riparian thickets of willow and other brushy tangles near watercourses. Nests in low, dense riparian, consisting of willow, blackberry, wild grape; forages and nests within 10 feet of the ground.	A	Suitable habitat is outside of the PIA and BSA (Colorado River). Necessary habitat for foraging and nesting is not resent within the PIA or BSA.
yellow-headed blackbird	*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*	SSC	Nests in freshwater emergent wetlands with dense vegetation and deep water. Nesting timed with maximum emergence of large aquatic insects. Forages in emergent vegetation and grasslands and croplands where the ground is moist.	A	Suitable habitat is outside of the BSA and PIA. No wetlands of this type exist within the project or study areas.
Yuma clapper rail	*Rallus longirostris yumanensis*	FE	Inhabits freshwater marshes containing dense stands of cattails and bulrushes; shallow water forager. Nests on dry hummocks or in small shrubs along the edges of freshwater marshes with stable water levels.	A	Suitable habitat is outside of the BSA and PIA. No fresh water marshes present in the work areas that would support this species.
Yuma Ridgway's rail	*Rallus obsoletus yumanensis*	FE, ST, FP	Nests in freshwater marshes along the Colorado River and along the south and east end of the Salton Sea. Prefers stands of cattails and tules dissected by narrow channels of flowing water; principle food is crayfish.	A	Suitable habitat is outside of the BSA and PIA. No fresh water marshes present in the work areas that would support this species.
vermilion flycatcher	*Pyrocephalus rubinus*	SSC	Requires desert riparian areas adjacent to irrigated fields, irrigation ditches, pastures,	HP	Suitable habitat near the Colorado River as well as in

Table 2.3-5. Special-status Animal Species Occurring or Potentially Occurring in the BSA

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
			and other open, mesic areas for nesting. Nests in cottonwood, willow, mesquite, and other large desert riparian trees.		several of the washes west of Blythe. eBird occurrences reported near Wiley Wells rest area.
western yellow-billed cuckoo	*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*	FT, SE, BLM:S	Inhabits riparian areas with willow mixed with cottonwoods and lower story of blackberry, nettles, or wild grape along the broad, lower flood-bottoms of larger river systems.	A, CH	Habitat is present along the Colorado River. These areas are outside of the PIA and BSA.
Reptile					
desert tortoise	*Gopherus agassizii*	FT, ST	Occurs in almost every desert habitat, more commonly in desert scrub, desert wash, and Joshua tree habitats. Creosote bush habitat with large annual wildflower blooms preferred. Requires friable soil for burrow and nest construction.	P, CH	Project is within critical habitat and historic range. Burrows found in the project area.
Flat-tailed horned lizard	*Phyrynosoma mcallii*	SSC, LCRMSCP	Typical habitat is sandy desert hardpan or gravel flats with scattered sparse vegetation of low species diversity. Most common in areas with a high density of harvester ants	A	Outside of species range. No suitable habitat present.
Mojave fringe-toed lizard	*Uma scoparia*	SSC, BLM:S	Inhabits fine, loose, wind-blown sand in sand dunes, dry lakebeds, riverbanks, desert washes, sparse alkali scrub, and desert scrub. Reproduction varies from year to year depending on the amount of rainfall; eggs are buried in the sand.	HP	Suitable habitat is present within the washes and scrub west of Blythe.
Mammals					
American badger	*Taxidea taxus*	SSC	Occurs in drier open stages of most shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats, with friable soils. Needs sufficient food, friable soils and open, uncultivated ground. Preys on burrowing rodents. Digs burrows.	P, HP	Habitat present through the PIA and BSA west of Blythe. Reports from maintenance workers, deceased badgers have been removed from the highway near PM 134.
Arizona Myotis	*Myotis occultus*	SSC	Occurs in lowlands of the Colorado River and adjacent desert mountain ranges.	HP	Limited habitat is present. Most likely location for roosting is the

Table 2.3-5. Special-status Animal Species Occurring or Potentially Occurring in the BSA

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
			Needs roosting areas in tree hollows, rock crevices, under bridges, or other similar habitat.		Colorado River Bridge which is outside of the PIA.
California leaf-nosed bat	*Macrotus californicus*	SSC, BLM:S	Inhabits desert riparian, desert wash, desert scrub, desert succulent scrub, alkali scrub and palm oasis habitats. Needs rocky, rugged terrain with mines or caves for roosting.	A	Rugged terrain, cave, and other things most suitable for roosting are not resent in the PIA or BSA.
cave myotis	*Myotis velifer*	SSC, BLM:S	Occurs in lowlands of the Colorado River and adjacent mountain ranges. Require caves or mines for roosting.	A	No caves or mines within the PIA or BSA. No suitable roosting habitat.
Colorado River cotton rat	*Sigmodon arizonae plenu)*	SSC	Occurs in the Colorado River floodplain. Distribution occurs in isolated sections of alluvial bottom along the Colorado River in areas supporting sedges, rushes, and other marsh plants.	A	BSA and PIA are outside of species range. Know occurrences are within marsh habitat in isolated alluvial bottoms along the Colorado River.
Colorado Valley woodrat	*Neotoma albigula venusta*	LCRMSCP	Low-lying desert areas in southeastern California. Closely associated with beaver-tail cactus & mesquite.	A	Plants most associated with diet and nesting are not present within the PIA or BSA.
Desert kit fox	*Vulpes macrotis*	BLM:S	Throughout desert systems in dunes, creosote scrub, desert grasslands, and rocky canyons.	HP, P	Sign in the form of prints, burrows, and scat were observed between PM 134-140. Habitat is present throughout the BSA and PIA of this project west of Blythe.
Hoary bat	*Lasiurus cinereus*	n/a	Roosts in dense foliage of medium to large trees. Feeds primarily on moths. Requires water.	A	Suitable habitat is outside of the BSA and PIA. Additionally, last CNDDB occurrence was reported in 1919.
pallid bat	*Antrozous pallidus*	SSC, BLM:S	Inhabits deserts, grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, and forests. Most common in open, dry habitats with rocky areas for roosting. Roosts must protect bats from high temperatures. Very sensitive to disturbance of roosting sites.	A	Suitable roosting habitat is not present within the BSA or PIA.
pocketed free-tailed bat	*Nyctinomops femorosaccus*	SSC	Occurs in a variety of arid areas in Southern California. Inhabits rocky areas	HP	Limited suitable habitat. CNDDB reported occurrences in the

Table 2.3-5. Special-status Animal Species Occurring or Potentially Occurring in the BSA

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/ Absent	Rationale
			with high cliffs. Variety of arid areas in Southern California; pine-juniper woodlands, desert scrub, palm oasis, desert wash, desert riparian, etc.		Colorado River Bridge (Ehrenberg Bridge)
Townsend's big-eared bat	*Corynorhinus townsendii*	SSC, BLM:S	Occurs throughout California in a wide variety of habitats. Most common in mesic sites. Roosts in the open, hanging from walls and ceilings. Extremely sensitive to human disturbance.	HP	No sign of this species was present within the BSA and PIA, however, several bridges could support this species.
Western red bat	*Lasiurus blossevillii*	LCRMSCP	Occur in riparian areas dominated by walnuts, oaks, willows, cottonwoods, and sycamores where they roost in these broadleafed trees. Roost only in tree foliage.	A	Habitats suited for roosts as well as foraging are outside of the BSA and PIA.
western yellow bat	*Lasiurus xanthinus*	SSC	Occurs in valley foothill riparian, desert riparian, desert wash, and palm oasis habitats. Roosts in trees, particularly palms. Forages over water and among trees.	HP	Palms are present near Rannells Drain Bridge (PM148.53).
Yuma myotis	*Myotis yumanensis*	BLM:S	Optimal habitats are open forests and woodlands; forages over water. Distribution is closely tied to bodies of water. Maternity colonies in caves, mines, buildings or crevices.	HP	No suitable habitat within the PIA, however CNDDB occurrences on the Colorado River Bridge (Ehrenberg Bridge) have been reported.

Source: Sapphos Environmental 2019a

Notes:

Federal Classification: FE—Federal Endangered, FT—Federal Threatened, BLM-S—BLM Sensitive

California Classification: SE—State Endangered, ST—State Threatened, FP—Fully Protected, SSC—Species of Special Concern, WL—Watch List.

Habitat Present/Absent: CH—Critical Habitat: project footprint is located within designated Critical Habitat, but does not necessarily mean that appropriate habitat is present. P—Present: species is present. HP— Habitat Present: habitat is or may be present, and the species may be present. A—Absent: no habitat present and no further work is needed.

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ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

Birds

The current proposed project's scope includes some grading and some vegetation removal. This includes the potential removal of trees and riparian vegetation. The majority of areas where grading would occur is near the shoulder where existing disturbance is high.

While the project would affect some riparian vegetation, the majority of the riparian habitat that would support species such as southwestern willow flycatcher is slightly outside of the actual impact zones and away from a sustained water source. The project would have minimal effects on wading and raptor migratory birds, as their foraging and migratory locations are predominantly outside of the BSA. Therefore, minimal direct effects are expected due to vegetation removal, and indirect effects in the form of temporary construction activities, noise, vibration, and dust are expected. Implementation of Measures **BIO-7** through **BIO-9** would avoid and/or minimize impacts on special-status riparian avian species and other migratory birds. As such, Caltrans has determined that the project would have "No Effect" on Yuma clapper rail, Yuma Ridgway's rail, southwestern willow flycatcher, elf owl, gilded flicker, and Gila woodpecker.

Due to the close proximity of known recorded occurrences and the presence of suitable habitat on site for burrowing owl, the potential for burrowing owls within the proposed project area in the future cannot be completely ruled out. During burrowing owl habitat assessment conducted for this project, several burrows that could be used by burrowing owls were observed, though no burrowing owl individuals were observed within the ROW, median, or roadways surveyed. Should burrows become occupied at a later date and be subsequently utilized by burrowing owls, the project would result in an impact on this species. Implementation of Measures **BIO-10** through **BIO-16** would avoid and minimize any impacts on burrowing owls.

Bats

The project is not anticipated to directly or indirectly affect bats. The palm trees near the project are outside of the actual work zone. However, there will be bridge work, therefore, avoidance and minimization measure **BIO-30** and **BIO-31** will be implemented to insure any location that could potentially house bats in not affected**.**

Fur-bearing Mammals

The project scope includes the clearing of vegetation, grading, new pavement, and the inclusion of RSP. Direct effects on fur-bearing mammals, including DKF and American badger, can occur in the form of direct harm (injury or death due to construction-related activities), removal of suitable habitat and burrows, and potential hindrance of habitat connectivity. Indirect effects include noise, degradation of habitat, vibration, and temporary displacement due to construction activities. Implementation of Measures **BIO-16**, and **BIO-32** through **BIO-38** would avoid and/or minimize impacts on fur-bearing mammals.

No-Build Alternative

No construction and operation activities would occur under the No-Build Alternative, and no effects would occur.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

In order to avoid and/or minimize impacts on special-status riparian avian species and other migratory birds, the following measures will be implemented:

BIO-7: Nesting Season Avoidance. Construction activities will not be scheduled to occur during nesting bird breeding season, recognized as the period from March 1 to September 15, within 300 feet of all suitable habitat unless one of the following exceptions applies:

1. Pre-construction surveys conducted by a qualified biologist during the year of implementation determined the site to be unoccupied; or
2. Noise levels resulting from the project implementation within the suitable habitat are not above ambient levels.

BIO-8: Pre-construction Surveys during Nesting Season. Pre-construction surveys for nesting and breeding special-status birds will be conducted no more than one week prior to construction activities scheduled during nesting season.

BIO-9: Non-nesting Migratory Bird Survey. Pre-construction surveys for non-nesting migratory birds will be conducted during the migration season if any migratory bird in areas where foraging habitat is present will be affected by project activities. Should migratory birds be present, a qualified contractor-supplied biologist will monitor to ensure the enforcement of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

In order to minimize and/or avoid impacts on burrowing owls, the following measures will be implemented:

BIO-10: Pre-Construction Burrowing Owl 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.

BIO-11: Burrowing Owl Detection: Should any burrowing owls or sign be detected during any future surveys or construction monitoring for this project, coordination with CDFW shall be conducted to determine the appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures required for the project.

BIO-12: Identifying Burrowing Owl Burrows. Use bright orange environmentally sensitive area fencing, and clearly mark areas supporting burrows and a buffer zone setback area (as shown in Table 2.3-6 below).

Table 2.3-6. Burrowing Owl Buffer Zone Setback

Time of Year	Level of Disturbance in Meters		
	Low	Medium	High
April 1–August 15	200	500	500
August 16–October 15	200	200	500
October 16–March 31	50	100	500

BIO-13: Burrowing Owl Nesting Season Avoidance. Occupied burrows and the established buffer zone setback area surrounding each of the occupied burrows, as specified in BIO-12, shall not be disturbed during the nesting season (February 1 to August 31) unless a biologist can verify through noninvasive methods that either the owls have not begun egg laying and incubation or that juveniles from the occupied burrows are foraging independently and are capable of independent flight.

BIO-14: Burrow Exclusion. For unavoidable impacts on occupied burrowing owl burrows, the burrows must be excluded and closed by a qualified biologist to permanently exclude burrowing owls. One-way doors would need to be temporarily installed in burrow openings during the non-breeding season (September 1 to January 31) and before breeding behavior has begun. Suitable habitat (including suitable burrows) must be available adjacent to or near the disturbance site or artificial burrows shall be provided nearby. Once the biologist has confirmed that the owls have left the burrow, burrows shall be excavated using hand tools and filled to prevent reoccupation. All burrowing owls associated with occupied burrows that shall be directly affected (temporarily or permanently) by the project shall be passively relocated.

BIO-15: Burrowing Owl Relocation. All burrowing owl relocation shall be approved by CDFW. The permitted biologist shall monitor the relocated owls a minimum of three days per week for a minimum of three weeks. A report summarizing the results of the relocation and monitoring shall be submitted to CDFW within 30 days following completion of the relocation and monitoring of the owls.

BIO-16: Worker Environmental Awareness Training. A qualified biologist will present to each employee (including temporary workers, contractors, and subcontractors) a worker environmental awareness training prior to the initiation of work. They will be advised of the special-status species in the BSA, the steps to avoid impacts on the species, and the potential penalties for taking such species. At a minimum, the program will include the following topics: occurrence of the listed and sensitive species in the area and their general ecology, sensitivity of the species to human activities, legal protection afforded these species, penalties for violations of federal and state laws, reporting requirements, and project features designed to reduce the impacts on these species and promote continued successful occupation of the project area environs. Included in this program will be color photos of the listed species, which will be shown to the employees. Following the education program, the photos 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 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.

While the project is not anticipated to directly or indirectly affect bats, there would be bridge work; therefore, the following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented to ensure that any location that could potentially house bats is not affected.

BIO-30: Pre-Construction Survey and Monitoring by a Qualified Bat Biologist. Prior to construction, a qualified bat biologist will conduct a survey to determine if bats are roosting on any of the bridges. If work on bridges that support bat roosting during the bat maternity season (April 1 – August 31) cannot be avoided, a qualified bat biologist will perform a humane eviction/exclusion of roosting bats from the bridges in the fall (September or October) before initiation of construction. The exclusionary material will be inspected regularly and maintained during construction activities, and will be removed at the completion of construction.

BIO-31: Avoidance of Tree Trimming During Bat Maternity Season. If trimming or removal of mature trees and snags is necessary for project construction, removal activities will be performed outside of the bat maternity season (April 1 – August 31). In addition, a qualified bat biologist will perform a humane eviction/exclusion of roosting bats from mature trees and snags in the fall (September or October) before initiation of construction.

In order to minimize and/or avoid impacts on fur-bearing mammals, **BIO-16** along with the following measures will be implemented:

BIO-32: Pre-Construction Survey. A qualified contractor supplied biologist will conduct pre-construction surveys for DKF and American badger within the project site and BSA boundaries no more than 30 days prior to the commencement of ground-breaking activities. Dens will be classified as inactive, potentially active, or definitely active. Should dens be deemed active, additional surveys will be required.

BIO-33: Den Complex Monitoring. All DKF/American badger den complexes in the project site identified as potentially active or definitely active will be monitored in accordance with CDFW guidelines. Once the monitoring is concluded, if no DKF/American badger tracks are found at the burrow entrance or no photos of the target species using the den are observed, the den can be excavated and backfilled by hand. If a den is identified as being active, it must further be classified as a non-natal or natal den. Potential natal den complexes are to be monitored for a minimum of three additional days using infrared wildlife cameras and/or tracking media to determine their status. If the den complex is determined to be natal during the denning period (February–June), a 200-foot non-disturbance buffer zone will be established surrounding natal dens, and monitoring by infrared cameras or weekly visits by a qualified contractor-supplied biologist will continue until it has been determined that the young have dispersed. The final buffer distance will be determined in consultation with BLM and CDFW. If the den complex within the project site is determined to be non-natal, passive hazing techniques will be used to discourage DKF/American badger from using the den complex.

BIO-34: Passive Relocation. DKF/American badgers must be excluded from all den complexes within the project site portion of the project disturbance area. Inactive dens that are within the project site will immediately be excavated by hand and backfilled to prevent reuse by DKF/American badger. If tracks or DKF/American badger are captured in camera photos, then various passive hazing techniques will be

implemented to deter DKF/American badger from using the den complex. If DKF/American badger are present and passive relocation techniques fail, CDFW will be contacted to explore other relocation options, such as trapping, in consultation with BLM.

BIO-35: Stop Work Restrictions. If during construction activities a DKF/American badger is within the project site, all construction activities shall stop and the contractor-supplied biologist shall be notified. Consultation with resource agencies may be required, as appropriate.

BIO-36: Entrapment Avoidance. To prevent inadvertent entrapment of DKF, American badgers, desert tortoise, or other animals during the construction phase of the project, all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches more than two feet deep shall be covered at the close of each working day by plywood or similar materials, or provided with one or more escape ramps constructed of earthen fill or wooden planks. Before such holes or trenches are filled, they shall be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals.

BIO-37 Sick or Injured Animals. If a DKF/American badger is found sick, injured, and/or incapacitated in any area associated with the project site, CDFW personnel will be contacted for immediate capture and transport of the animal to a CDFW-approved wildlife rehabilitation and/or veterinarian clinic. CDFW, in consultation with Caltrans and BLM, will determine the final disposition of the sick animal, if it recovers. If the animal dies, a necropsy will be performed by a CDFW-approved facility to determine the cause of death. Results will be provided to CDFW. Written notification of the incident will contain, at a minimum, the date, time, location, and circumstances of the incident.

BIO-38: Night Work Monitoring. Should night work be necessary, a contractor-supplied biologist will be present during all construction activities in areas determined to support DKF/American badger.

2.3.5 Threatened and Endangered Species

REGULATORY SETTING

The primary federal law protecting threatened and endangered species is the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA): 16 United States Code (USC) Section 1531, et seq. See also 50 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 402. This act and later amendments provide for the conservation of endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Under Section 7 of this act, federal agencies, such as the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), are required to consult with the USFWS and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service) to ensure that they are not undertaking, funding, permitting, or authorizing actions likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat. Critical habitat is defined as geographic locations critical to the existence of a threatened or endangered species. The outcome of consultation under Section 7 may include a Biological Opinion with an Incidental Take statement, a Letter of Concurrence and/or documentation of a No Effect finding. Section 3 of FESA defines take as "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect or any attempt at such conduct."

California has enacted a similar law at the state level, the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), California Fish and Game Code Section 2050, et seq. CESA emphasizes early consultation to avoid potential impacts to rare, endangered, and threatened species and to develop appropriate planning to offset project-caused losses of listed species populations and their essential habitats. The CDFW is the agency responsible for implementing CESA. Section 2081 of the Fish and Game Code prohibits "take" of any species determined to be an endangered species or a threatened species. Take is defined in Section 86 of the Fish and Game Code as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill." CESA allows for take incidental to otherwise lawful development projects; for these actions an incidental take permit is issued by the CDFW. For species listed under both the FESA and CESA requiring a Biological Opinion under Section 7 of the FESA, the CDFW may also authorize impacts to CESA species by issuing a Consistency Determination under Section 2080.1 of the California Fish and Game Code.

Another federal law, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976, was established to conserve and manage fishery resources found off the coast, as well as anadromous species and Continental Shelf fishery resources of the United States, by exercising (A) sovereign rights for the purposes of exploring, exploiting, conserving, and managing all fish within the exclusive economic zone established by Presidential Proclamation 5030, dated March 10, 1983, and (B) exclusive fishery management authority beyond the exclusive economic zone over such anadromous species, Continental Shelf fishery resources, and fishery resources in special areas.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Information used in this section is based on the project's approved NES (Sapphos Environmental 2019a).

An official USFWS Species List was obtained on December 5, 2018, for the proposed project. Caltrans will submit a biological assessment for desert tortoise and desert tortoise critical habitat to USFWS for review.

Pursuant to the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, as described in the NEPA Delegation Pilot Program MOU between FHWA and Caltrans, Caltrans has been designated the authority to conduct Section 7 consultation in accordance with the FESA. The species list provided by USFWS for the project area identified nine listed and proposed species and/or designated critical habitat, which were analyzed in the NES prepared for the proposed project. As discussed in Table 2.3-5, bonytail, humpback chub, Yuma clapper rail, Yuma Ridgway's rail, and California black rail are determined to be absent from the PIA and BSA due to lack of suitable habitat.

Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat

The desert tortoise ranges from southern Nevada and extreme southwestern Utah south through southeastern California and southwestern Arizona into northern Mexico. In California, desert tortoises occur in northeastern Los Angeles, eastern Kern, and southeastern Inyo counties, and over most of San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial counties. They inhabit a diverse array of desert habitats including river washes, rocky hillsides and mountains, and flat expanses of creosote bush scrub. The desert tortoise is listed by the State of California and by USFWS as a threatened species.

Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat (DTCH) is predominantly located on federal land, and to a lesser extent state, private, and tribal lands. DTCH was established in 1993. The Recovery Plan divided the range of the desert tortoise into six recovery units and recommended the establishment of 14 Desert Wildlife Management Areas within these recovery areas. DTCH requires certain physical and biological features that are essential to desert tortoise conservation. These features must support nesting, foraging, sheltering, dispersal, and gene flow. This equates to sufficient space with quality and adequate quantities of vegetation for foraging, suitable soils and sub straights for burrowing, and protection from human development.

A habitat assessment with a desert tortoise focus was conducted. Additionally, several other surveys and habitat assessments occurred within the BSA. Throughout the BSA west of Blythe, suitable habitat is present. During the field visits, several desert tortoise burrows were identified. No live, deceased, or desert tortoise sign (scouts, scat, track) were seen. DTCH is present within the project limits from PM R134 to R136.7, as shown on Figure 2.3-1. Due to the area being located within the desert tortoise's historic range, critical habitat being present on the far western section of the project, suitable habitat being present, and burrows being identified, it is presumed that desert tortoises are present.

Desert Tortoise

The desert tortoise is listed as threateneded under the FESA and CESA. The entire extent of the proposed Project lies in the historic range of the desert tortoise. The desert tortoise can be found primarily within desert scrub environments located in washes, rocky hillsides, and flat desert, as long as soils permit digging burrows.

During surveys conducted for desert tortoise, four burrows were observed within the survey area. Despite the lack of recent desert tortoise sign, native desert scrub communities were observed throughout the majority of the survey area. With the exception of disturbed areas, these communities are known to serve as potentially suitable habitat for desert tortoise. In the eastern extent of the survey area, these communities were typically eradicated and are characterized by other communities that are not known to be conducive to desert tortoise habitat. However, in total, approximately 53 percent of the survey area concentrated in the western extents contained desert scrub communities that were not considered disturbed.

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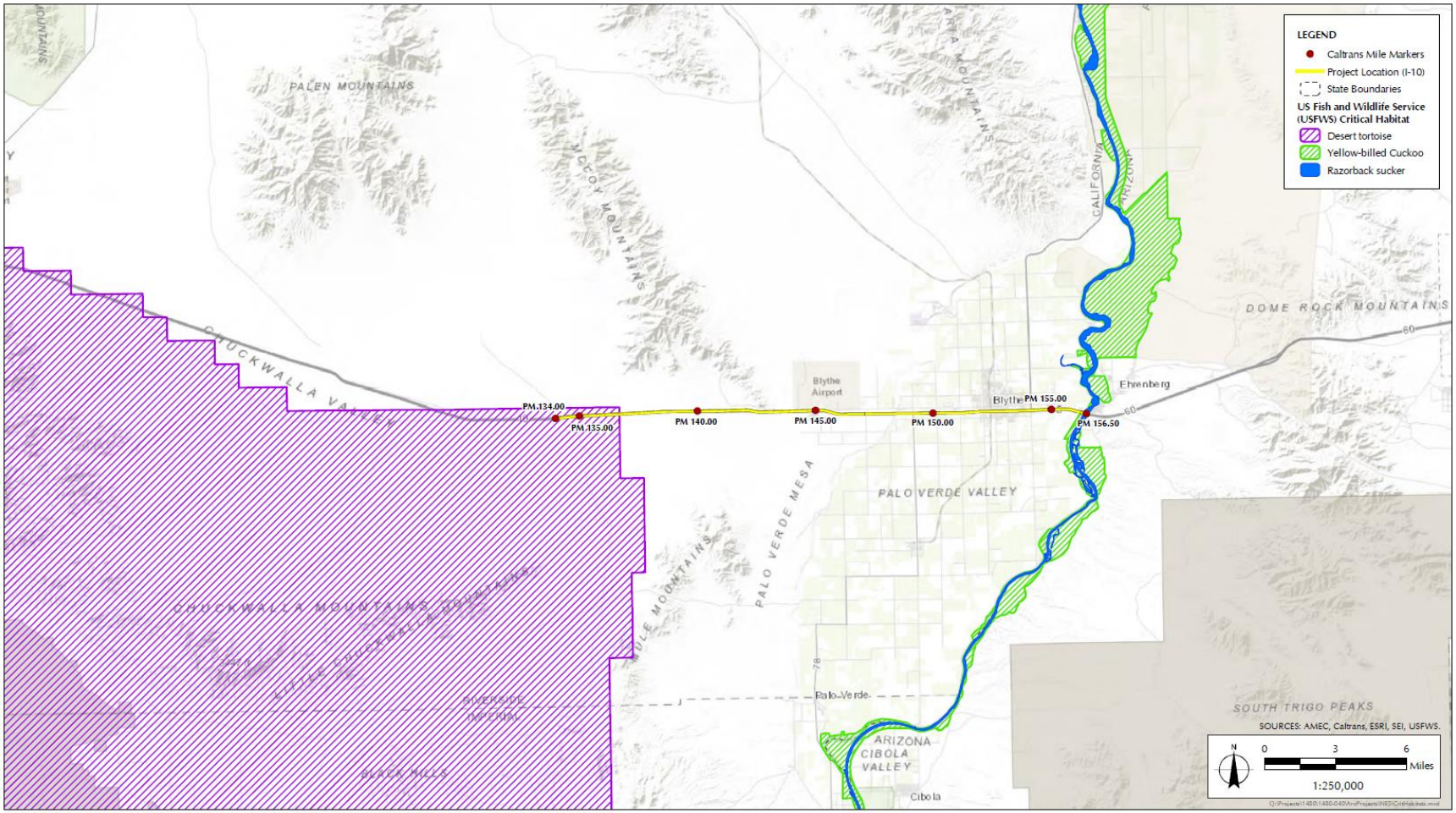

Figure 2.3-3. Critical Habitat

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Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo

The western yellow-billed cuckoo is listed by the State of California as an endangered species and by USFWS as a threatened species. Western yellow-billed cuckoo critical habitat, for the intent of this project, is located along the Colorado River, as shown on Figure 2.3-3. The riparian communities that provide western yellow-billed cuckoo habitat typically exist in lower elevation, broad floodplains, and where rivers and streams enter impoundments. Features necessary to supporting the western yellow-billed cuckoo consist of flowing rivers and streams, elevated subsurface groundwater tables, high humidity, rivers and streams of lower gradient, and more open valleys with a broad floodplain. Additionally, areas with riparian vegetation and presence of abundant, large insect fauna and tree frogs during nesting season are necessary.

Critical habitat is located on the far end of the eastern BSA. The majority of the habitat closest to the project is degraded. The suitable habitat as well as documented occurrences are outside of the BSA.

Razorback Sucker

The razorback sucker is listed by the State of California and by USFWS as an endangered species. The razorback sucker's habitat is within the Colorado River Basin, as shown on Figure 2.3-3. This natural environment was characterized by highly fluctuating seasonal and annual flows, distinctly different habitat types, and varying water quality. Razorback sucker move into flooded areas in early spring and begin spawning migrations to specific locations as they become reproductively active, and spawning occurs over rocky runs and gravel bars. In nonreproductive periods, adult razorback sucker occupy a variety of habitat types, including impounded and riverine areas, eddies, backwaters, gravel pits, flooded bottoms, flooded mouths of tributary streams, slow runs, sandy riffles, and others. Critical habitat is present within the easternmost sections of the BSA, within the Colorado River. The necessary elements are present, making this habitat suitable.

Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

Southwestern willow flycatcher is listed by the State of California and by USFWS as an endangered species. The species inhabits relatively dense riparian tree and shrub communities associated with rivers, swamps, and other wetlands. The majority of the riparian habitat that would support southwestern willow flycatcher is slightly outside of the impact zones and away from a sustained water source.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

Bonytail, humpback chub, Yuma clapper rail, Yuma Ridgway's rail, and California black rail are determined to be absent from the PIA and BSA due to lack of suitable habitat and Caltrans has made a determination of "No Effect" on these threatened or endangered species.

Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat

The Build Alternative would permanently affect DTCH through activities such as vegetation removal, grading, and new impervious surface area for the widened bridge structures, RSP, and center median. Temporary impacts consist of areas in the center median that would be graded, but hydroseeded. As summarized in Table 2.3-7, approximately 17.82 acres of critical habitat would be permanently affected, and 47.75 acres would be temporarily affected. Additionally,

58.00 acres of suitable habitat within Caltrans ROW would be permanently affected and 148.86 acres would be temporarily affected. Measures **BIO-1**, **BIO-2**, **BIO-4**, **BIO-6**, **BIO-7**, **BIO-8**, and **BIO-39** will be implemented to avoid and minimize impacts on desert tortoise critical habitat.

Table 2.3-7. Build Alternative Desert Tortoise Habitat Impacts

	Build Alternative	
	Temporary Impact	**Permanent Impact**
Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat	47.75	17.82
Desert Tortoise Suitable Habitat	148.86	58.00

Desert Tortoise

In addition, the proposed project would directly affect desert tortoises by removing suitable habitat, causing potential death to individual species via construction-related activities, as well as hindering tortoise movement across the highway (new RSP). Indirect impacts are possible via the spread or introduction of invasive species, construction-related irritants such as vibration, and the potential degradation of the remaining habitat due to soil compaction from equipment. As such, Caltrans has made a FESA determination that the project "May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect" desert tortoise and its critical habitat. Measures **BIO-16** through **BIO-29**, as well as **BIO-36** and **BIO-39**, would be implemented to avoid and minimize impacts on desert tortoise and its critical habitat.

Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo

The project would not have any direct or indirect effects on western yellow-billed cuckoo critical habitat. Caltrans has determined that the proposed project would have "No Effect" on western yellow-billed cuckoo and its critical habitat.

Razorback Sucker

The project would not involve work in or over the Colorado River. None of the scope activities risk affecting razorback sucker or its critical habitat. Caltrans has determined that the project would have "No Effect" on razorback sucker and its critical habitat.

Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

The majority of the riparian habitat that would support species such as southwestern willow flycatcher is slightly outside of the actual impact zones and away from a sustained water source. Therefore, minimal direct effects are expected due to vegetation removal, and indirect effects in the form of temporary construction activities, noise, vibration, and dust are expected. As such, Caltrans has determined that the project would have "No Effect" on southwestern willow flycatcher.

California Endangered Species Act

CDFW authorizes take of endangered, threatened, or candidate species through the provisions of Sections 2081 (Incidental Take Permit, issued independent of federal authorizations) or 2080.1 (consistency determination, issued in conjunction with federal authorizations) of the Fish and Game Code. The proposed project would "take" desert tortoise and would require authorization from CDFW as well as from USFWS. The proposed project would cause "No

Take" on the state-listed elf owl, western yellow-billed cuckoo, southwestern willow flycatcher, gilded flicker, gila woodpecker, Arizona Bell's vireo, and razorback sucker.

No-Build Alternative

No construction activities would occur under the No-Build Alternative, and no effects would occur.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

Implementation of measures below as well as Measures **BIO-16** and **BIO-36**, as described in previous sections, would be implemented to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts on the desert tortoise.

BIO-17: Compliance of Protective Measure. Caltrans will submit the names and qualifications of biologists that it believes meet the minimum requirements to serve as Authorized Biologists to USFWS for review and authorization under the biological opinion prior to beginning on-site activities (forms at http://www.fws.gov/ventura/speciesinfo/protocols_guidelines/). Once a biologist has been authorized by USFWS, that individual may work on subsequent projects pursuant to the biological opinion without additional approval, provided that his or her performance remains satisfactory. Caltrans will maintain a record of all authorized biologists who work on its projects.

BIO-18: Biological Monitor. A contractor-supplied biologist will be designated to oversee compliance of all protective measures and will monitor all construction-related activities. The biological monitor will notify the resident engineer of project activities that may not be in compliance. The resident engineer will stop work until the protective measures are fully implemented.

BIO-19: Pre-Construction Desert Tortoise Survey. Immediately prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities, and prior to the installation of any desert tortoise exclusion fencing, clearance surveys for the desert tortoise will be conducted by the biologist. The entire project area will be surveyed for desert tortoise and its burrows by the contractor-supplied biologist prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities.

BIO-20: Desert Tortoise Under Equipment. The contractor-supplied biologist and project personnel shall carefully check under parked vehicles and equipment for desert tortoises before any of the vehicles or equipment can be moved. Desert tortoises found within the staging and/or construction areas will be allowed to move away from such areas to a location away from danger, of their own accord. Workers will not be allowed to capture, handle, touch, or relocate tortoises. Project activities shall re-commence only once the desert tortoise is safely outside the project areas or required protected areas.

BIO-21: Desert Tortoise in Work Area. If at any time a desert tortoise is observed in the ROW, the contractor-supplied biologist will have the authority to halt any activities, through the resident engineer or any other identified authority in charge of implementation, that may pose a threat to desert tortoises and to direct movements of equipment and personnel to avoid injury or mortality to desert tortoises. The contractor-supplied biologist will remove the tortoise from the work site in accordance with the CDFW protocols and relocate the tortoise to the resource agency approved,

pre-determined translocation site.

BIO-22: **Exclusionary Desert Tortoise Fencing**. Temporary exclusion fencing will be installed outlining the perimeter of any construction staging, storage, or batch plant areas to prevent entry by desert tortoises into the work site. Exclusion fencing will be installed following USFWS guidelines (2005) or by more current protocol. The biologist must check the fencing daily and make any necessary repairs should it become damaged.

BIO-23: **Deceased or Injured Desert Tortoise within the Project Site.** The contractor-supplied biologist will inform USFWS and CDFW of any injured or dead desert tortoises (and other special-status species) found on site (verbal notification within 24 hours and written notification within five days).

BIO-24: **Desert Tortoise Monitoring Reports.** The contractor-supplied biologist will conduct daily on-site monitoring and submit a weekly monitoring report for desert tortoises (and additional special-status species) during construction.

BIO-25: **Transportation of Injured Tortoise.** Injured desert tortoises will be transported to a veterinarian for treatment at the expense of the contractor or Caltrans. Only the authorized biologist or an approved desert tortoise biological monitor will be allowed to handle an injured tortoise. If an injured animal recovers, the appropriate USFWS field office will be contacted for final disposition of the animal.

BIO-26: **Speed Limits in Desert Tortoise Habitat.** Except on maintained public roads designated for higher speeds or within desert tortoise-proof fenced areas, driving speeds will not exceed 20 miles per hour through potential desert tortoise habitat on unpaved roads.

BIO-27: **Firearms and Pets.** No firearms or pets, including dogs, will be allowed within the work area. Firearms carried by authorized security and law enforcement personnel and working dogs under the control of a handler will be exempt from this protective measure.

BIO-28: **Predation Prevention.** To preclude attracting predators, such as the common raven (*Corvus corax*) and coyotes *(Canis latrans*), food-related trash items will be removed daily from the work sites in their entirety and disposed of at an appropriate refuse disposal site. Workers are prohibited from feeding any and all wildlife.

BIO-29: **Desert Tortoise Fence Guidelines.** Desert tortoise exclusion fence construction will follow the guidelines in Chapter 8 of the Desert Tortoise Field Manual (USFWS 2010) which is available at the USFWS website (www.fws.gov/ventura).

BIO-39: **Desert Tortoise Mitigation.** It is anticipated that impacts to Desert Tortoise and its critical habitat will be mitigated at a minimum of 1:1 ratio. However, this is subject to change as mitigation for permanent impacts will be determined and finalized during the regulatory agency 2081 incidental take permit consultation period and/or permitting phase.

Measures **BIO-7** through **BIO-9** as discussed in Section 2.3.4 will avoid and/or minimize impacts on threatened and endangered avian species.

2.3.6 Invasive Species

REGULATORY SETTING

On February 3, 1999, President William J. Clinton signed Executive Order (EO) 13112 requiring federal agencies to combat the introduction or spread of invasive species in the United States. The order defines invasive species as "any species, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that is not native to that ecosystem whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health." Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidance issued August 10, 1999 directs the use of the State's invasive species list maintained by the California Invasive Species Council to define the invasive species that must be considered as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis for a proposed project.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Information used in this section is based on the project's approved NES (Sapphos Environmental 2019a).

Seeds of invasive species can be transported to natural open space areas through a variety of mechanisms, including vehicles. Recurring fires can encourage the establishment of invasive species and so can some forms of routine land maintenance (e.g., disking). The impact invasive species have on Southern California native vegetation communities, as well as the plants and animals that are found within these areas, is, in some circumstances, catastrophic. Therefore, a need exists to identify and recommend measures that reduce and/or avoid further transport of invasive species into natural open space areas. Because this project is federalized, EO 13112 is triggered, which states that federal agencies are required to combat the introduction or spread of invasive species in the United States.

Nine nonnative plant species, subspecies, and/or varieties occurring on the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) Inventory and/or Watch List were identified within the survey area. Of these nine species, two species with a limited ranking (olive tree and Peppertree), one species with a moderate ranking (Mexican fan palm), and one species with a high ranking (salt cedar) were observed within the survey area. The remaining five nonnative species are not ranked by Cal-IPC nor included in the Cal-IPC Inventory. Salt cedar has been ranked high because of its capability to cause severe ecological impacts on physical processes, plant and animal communities, and vegetation structure, and to have reproductive biology and other attributes that are conducive to moderate to high rates of dispersal and establishment. Fewer than 10 individuals were observed within the project area; however, an individual of salt cedar can produce 500,000 seeds in one year (Sapphos Environmental 2019a).

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Build Alternative

The proposed project has the potential to spread invasive species through contaminated equipment entering and exiting construction sites, the inclusion of invasive species in seed mixtures and mulch, and the improper removal and disposal of invasive species so that seed is spread along the highway. Measures **BIO-1** through **BIO-3** will be implemented to prevent the introduction of other invasive species into the BSA. As such, the project would not contribute to the propagation of invasive plant species

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative is not expected to add impacts from invasive species because it would not change existing conditions.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

To ensure that the Build Alternative does not promote the introduction or spread of invasive plant species to the open space areas within the study area, in addition to Caltrans Standard Specifications (13-4.03E[3] - Vehicle and Equipment Cleaning and 13-4.03E[4] – Vehicle and Equipment Fueling and Maintenance) and BMPs, Measures **BIO-1** through **BIO-3**, as listed previously, would be implemented.

2.4 Cumulative Impacts

2.4.1 Regulatory Setting

Cumulative impacts are those that result from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, combined with the potential impacts of this proposed project. A cumulative effect assessment looks at the collective impacts posed by individual land use plans and projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively substantial impacts taking place over a period of time.

Cumulative impacts on resources in the project area may result from residential, commercial, industrial, and highway development, as well as from agricultural development and the conversion to more intensive agricultural cultivation. These land use activities can degrade habitat and species diversity through consequences such as displacement and fragmentation of habitats and populations, alteration of hydrology, contamination, erosion, sedimentation, disruption of migration corridors, changes in water quality, and introduction or promotion of predators. They can also contribute to potential community impacts identified for the project, such as changes in community character, traffic patterns, housing availability, and employment.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15120 describes when a cumulative impact analysis is necessary and what elements are necessary for an adequate discussion of cumulative impacts. The definition of cumulative impacts under CEQA can be found in Section 15355 of the CEQA Guidelines. A definition of cumulative impacts under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) can be found in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 1508.7.

METHODOLOGY

Caltrans, in conjunction with Federal Highway Administration and the United States Environmental Protection Agency, developed a guidance document titled *Guidance for Preparers of Cumulative Impact Analysis* (2005). The following is based on the referenced guidance.

As specified in the guidance, if a proposed project will not cause direct or indirect impacts on a resource, it will not contribute to a cumulative impact on that resource and accordingly need not be included in the evaluation of potential cumulative impacts. As discussed at the beginning of Chapter 2 or in related sections of Chapter 2 of the document, the proposed project would not result in direct or indirect impacts on the following resources; therefore, no discussion is provided for these resources in the evaluation of potential cumulative impacts.

- Land Use
- Coastal Zone
- National Fisheries
- Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Farmland/Timberlands
- Growth
- Community Impacts

- Utilities/Emergency Services
- Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities
- Visual/Aesthetics
- Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography
- Hydrology/Floodplain
- Paleontological Resources
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Invasive Species

The resources listed below were evaluated in terms of whether the proposed project might contribute to cumulative impacts, and they are discussed in the following sections:

- Cultural Resources
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Water Quality
- Biological Resources

The following cumulative projects are located in and near the City of Blythe, in Riverside County. There were no other planned or reasonably foreseeable project improvements identified within the resource study area (RSA) for any of the environmental resources evaluated for potential cumulative impacts.

Interstate 10 Pavement Rehabilitation (EA 1C081 from PM R60.7 to R74.3)

This project is proposed in conjunction with the I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehabilitation Project analyzed in this IS/EA to restore and extend service life of existing pavement on a segment of I-10 from PM R60.7 to R74.3.

Interstate 10 Pavement Rehabilitation (EA 1C082 from PM R104.9 to R134.0)

This project is proposed in conjunction with the I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehabilitation Project analyzed in this IS/EA to restore and extend service life of existing pavement on a segment of I-10 from R104.9 to R134.0.

Blythe Green Complex

The Blythe Green Complex Project is located on a 34-acre property on Intake Boulevard, south of I-10 in the City of Blythe on the 300 block South Intake Boulevard. The project proposes multiple cultivation units, with each under individual ownership. The project will also include a manufacturing building, distribution building, a dispensary, a cafe for employees, an executive office suite, a maintenance building, an electrical building, security buildings, a loading dock, and an SCE substation. An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was completed in 2018.

Casablanca Farms Project

The proposed project is located on a 2.94-acre property, at 3450 West Hobsonway. The project includes multiple greenhouse cultivation units totaling approximately 34,560 square feet and four modular units with a footprint of 960 square-feet each for use as an administrative office/break room and ancillary facilities. Also included in the project is a parking lot, storm water detention basin, and a new water supply well and septic system. As of 2019, the project is filing for Notice of Exemption with the City of Blythe.

Modern Pacific Homes Project

The project proposes a 30-home development project east of Riviera Drive, south of I-10, and on the western bank of the Colorado River in the City of Blythe. The project includes 30 long lots with a minimum width of 55 feet, each with river frontage on the east and Riviera Drive on the west. An Initial Study/Negative Declaration has been prepared and approved, and the City approved a zoning variance in 2018.

Cornerstone Commercial Property Project

The project is located on a rectangular 36.98-acre property located in eastern Blythe, bound on the north by Hobsonway, on the south by I-10, and west of Intake Boulevard. A zoning change to "General Commercial" is proposed and the applicant's goal is to solicit commercial development for the property in the future with multiple small commercial enterprises.

Palo Verde Center Project

The proposed project would include a commercial complex specialized for indoor cultivation of cannabis, in the City of Blythe. The project would be developed on approximately 78.41 acres located in eastern Blythe, south of I-10, and east of South Intake Boulevard. The project includes a total of four 150,000 square-foot, single story buildings. The project will also accommodate cultivation spaces ranging from 10,000 square feet to 22,000 square feet. An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared in 2018.

Blythe Mesa Solar Project

The Blythe Mesa Solar Project proposes a 485 MW solar photovoltaic facility and 8.4 mile gen-tie line that would together occupy 3,660 acres on the western edge of the City of Blythe. The project began construction in 2015 and the first two 235 MW units were commissioned in 2016. The construction of additional units is pending identification of more buyers.

Palo Verde Mesa Solar Project

The project proposes the construction of a solar photovoltaic electrical generating facility up to 450 MW including a 14.5 miles gen-tie line that would occupy a total of 3,400 acres 5 miles northwest of Blythe. The project would be constructed in three phases and the project is going through environmental approvals.

McCoy Solar Energy Project

The project proposes a 750 MW photovoltaic solar power plant including a 230 kV gen-tie and switchyard that would connect to SCE's Colorado River Substation located 10 miles northwest

of Blythe. An EIS was approved in 2013 and the first phase of 250 MW was constructed in 2015. Completion of the remaining 500 MW is pending identification of a buyer.

Crimson Solar Project

The Crimson Solar Project is located in eastern Riverside County south of I-10, and approximately 12 miles west of Blythe. The project proposes a 350 MW photovoltaic facility along with necessary ancillary facilities, on 2,700 acres of BLM-managed land. In coordination with CDFW a joint EIR/EIS is being prepared.

Desert Quartzite Solar Project

The Desert Quartzite Solar Project would be located approximately 2.75 miles southwest of the City of Blyth, just south of the I-10 freeway. The project includes 3,560 acres for a 450 MW solar facility and 54 acres for a 2.79-mile long gen-tie line. A draft EIR/EIS was completed in 2018.

2.4.2 Cultural Resources

The cumulative RSA for the project is the Area of Potential Effects (APE). The width of the APE fluctuates between 30 to 50 feet from the edge of pavement and includes the entire median throughout the 21.6-mile length of the project. The APE extends a maximum 2.5 feet above grade for guardrail replacement and 4 inches above existing pavement for pavement replacement. Pavement replacement would take place atop one to 10 feet of existing aggregate fill, and new guardrail posts would be placed in the same post holes that were used for the original guardrail. The project would occur within an existing transportation corridor; as such, an extension of the APE to account for indirect effects is not warranted.

Two properties are assumed NRHP eligible within the APE: the PTNCL and the DTC/C-AMA. No long-term impacts on historical or archaeological cultural resources would occur as a part of the proposed project.

While a number of the other related projects are located within the RSA for cultural resources, including the Interstate 10 Pavement Rehabilitation (EA 1C082 from PM R104.9 to R134.0) project, when viewed in the context of those related projects, it is anticipated that those projects would incorporate measures to avoid adverse impacts; therefore, potential future cumulative adverse effects would be conditioned or mitigated. Given the size of the two eligible resources, the extent of the historic fabric, and the assumed implantation of applicable minimization measures, the proposed project in combination with the cumulative project would not result in cumulative impacts to cultural resources.

2.4.3 Hazardous Waste

The cumulative RSA for hazardous waste and materials includes the project area and all properties within and adjoining the project area. The RSA is located within an existing transportation corridor surrounded by urban development, and is adjacent to a variety of land uses. Record searches identified 17 recognized environmental concerns (RECs) within the vicinity of the proposed project; however, the closest is 383 feet from the project area. In addition, aerially deposited lead (ADL) is an REC that has been linked to automobile transportation corridors. However, implementation of the Build Alternative is not expected to create any new health hazards or expose people to new potential health hazards. The proposed project would rehabilitate existing pavement and construct temporary access roads. If soil disturbance and borrowing occur within 30 feet of any of the 17 RECs identified, shallow soil

would be assessed to determine the condition of borrow soil. In addition, **HAZ-1** and **HAZ-2** would be implemented to test for ADL and ACM prior to project approval. Following construction, project operations would not be expected to create any new health hazards or expose people to potential new health risks.

Other related projects would likely encounter contaminated soil or groundwater during project construction. Therefore, these relevant projects would result in impacts related to hazardous waste or materials in combination with the proposed project. However, this and other relevant projects would implement measures requiring the proper handling and disposal of hazardous materials during construction. As such, the proposed project, in combination with other current and reasonably foreseeable actions, would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts related to hazardous waste.

2.4.4 Water Quality

The cumulative RSA for water quality/stormwater runoff is Southern Mojave and Imperial Reservoir watersheds. Project activities can increase stormwater runoff from project sites in wet weather. Each project must comply with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting requirements and include best management practices (BMPs) to minimize impacts on water quality and local hydrology in compliance with local ordinances and plans adopted to comply with the area.

The proposed project would result in approximately 89 acres of net new impervious surface area for the widened bridge structures, RSP, and center median, which would result in increases in the amount of impervious surfaces within the project vicinity. Construction would not have any effects on flows and impacts on the existing drainage system would be low and nominal. In addition, the other segment of I-10 rehabilitation (EA 1C082) adjacent to the proposed project would result in 117.9 acres of net new impervious surface area, which would also contribute to the total amount of stormwater and non-stormwater runoff.

The proposed project, and all proposed projects in the RSA, would be required to comply with the regulations in effect at the time the project is approved or before construction permits are issued, thereby minimizing the water quality impacts of each project. Compliance with these regional programs constitutes compliance with programs that address cumulative water quality impacts. Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to cumulative water quality and stormwater runoff impacts would be minimal. The proposed project would not contribute to cumulative water quality or stormwater runoff impacts in combination with other planned and programmed projects in the RSA.

2.4.5 Biological Resources

The cumulative RSA for the biological resources impact analysis area is consistent with the BSA established for the project, which includes the existing lanes of I-10, the median, the shoulders, the area to the ROW line, and a 500 foot buffer. The buffer is included in the study area to accommodate changes to the project limits and/or project design that may occur during project development.

The desert tortoise is listed by the State of California and by USFWS as a threatened species. A habitat assessment conducted for the project identified Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat within the BSA from PM R134 to R136.7. During the field visits, several desert tortoise burrows were

identified. No live, deceased, or desert tortoise sign (scouts, scat, track) were seen. Because the area is within the desert tortoise's historic range, DTCH is present on the far western section of the project, suitable habitat is present, and burrows were identified, it is presumed that desert tortoises are present. Desert tortoise has the potential to enter the project area at any time; therefore, Caltrans is assuming the presence of the species and will implement measures **BIO-16, BIO-17** through **BIO-29, BIO-36,** and **BIO-39** to avoid and/or minimize impacts during construction.

Southwestern willow flycatcher is listed by the State of California and by USFWS as an endangered species. The majority of the riparian habitat that would support southwestern willow flycatcher is slightly outside of the impact zones and away from a sustained water source. The majority of the riparian habitat that would support species such as southwestern willow flycatcher is slightly outside of the actual impact zones and away from a sustained water source. Therefore, minimal direct effects are expected due to vegetation removal, and indirect effects in the form of temporary construction activities, noise, vibration, and dust are expected. Implementation of Measures **BIO-7** through **BIO-9** and **WET-1** would avoid and/or minimize impacts on Southwestern willow flycatcher and other migratory birds.

The project crosses several ephemeral drainages, and intermittent streams. A formal jurisdictional delineation survey determined that although wetlands are not present, other jurisdictional features are present within the project area subject to the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The proposed project would permanently affect 0.19 acres of waters of the State and waters of the United States and 0.40 acres of CDFW Jurisdictional Waters. To offset impacts on these jurisdictional areas, a compensatory mitigation program would be developed. The potential increase in potential operation effects, if any, on jurisdictional waters would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to the regional decline in jurisdictional waters.

Many of the related projects would also occur on sites considered suitable desert tortoise habitat. The Desert Quartzite Solar Project, Blythe Mesa Solar Project, Palo Verde Mesa Solar Project, McCoy Solar Energy Project, and Crimson Solar Project have the potential to affect desert tortoise and its habitat. In particular, this project is one of three consecutive I-10 pavement rehabilitation project, along with EA 1C081 and EA 1C082, with nearly the same scope of work spanning 90 miles. Cumulatively, approximately 655 acres of desert tortoise habitat will be permanently removed for these three projects. An additional 255 acres of desert tortoise habitat will be temporarily impacted. The permanent, cumulative removal of 655 acres of desert tortoise habitat could affect connectivity for this species, which is already constrained due to the presence of I-10. A study conducted by the Western Ecological Research Center, found that tortoise populations are depressed in a zone extending up to 1,300 feet from an existing roadway (Boarman and Sazaki, 2005). Since the proposed activities of these pavement rehabilitation projects would occur within 1,300 feet of an existing transportation corridor and median, the likelihood that desert tortoise populations are directly affected, particularly within the median, are minimized since populations are depressed within this zone in the first place as demonstrated by the study.

In addition, related projects with potential to directly or indirectly impact desert tortoise or its critical habitat are required to implement desert tortoise conservation measures prescribed by USFWS, much like this proposed project. However, although each of the cumulative projects discussed has undergone, or would undergo, environmental permitting and analysis under NEPA, CEQA, and/or other Federal and state laws to evaluate project-level environmental impacts to biological resources, even after mitigation of project-level impacts, these projects

would likely collectively contribute cumulative impacts to sensitive desert resources, including Desert Tortoise and its habitat. As such, the proposed project would contribute to cumulative impacts to biological resources in combination with other planned and programmed projects in the RSA.

2.4.6 Avoidance, Minimization and/or Mitigation Measures

No measures are required.

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Chapter 3 CEQA Evaluation

3.1 Determining Significant under CEQA

The proposed project is a joint project by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and is subject to state and federal environmental review requirements. Project documentation, therefore, has been prepared in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). FHWA's responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 United States Code (USC) Section 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated December 23, 2016 and executed by FHWA and Caltrans. Caltrans is the lead agency under CEQA and NEPA.

One of the primary differences between NEPA and CEQA is the way significance is determined. Under NEPA, significance is used to determine whether an environmental impact statement (EIS), or a lower level of documentation, will be required. NEPA requires that an EIS be prepared when the proposed federal action (project) as a whole has the potential to "significantly affect the quality of the human environment." The determination of significance is based on context and intensity. Some impacts determined to be significant under CEQA may not be of sufficient magnitude to be determined significant under NEPA. Under NEPA, once a decision is made regarding the need for an EIS, it is the magnitude of the impact that is evaluated and no judgment of its individual significance is deemed important for the text. NEPA does not require that a determination of significant impacts be stated in the environmental documents.

CEQA, on the other hand, does require 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 (EIR) must be prepared. Each and every significant effect on the environment must be disclosed in the EIR and mitigated if feasible. In addition, the CEQA Guidelines list a number of "mandatory findings of significance," which also require the preparation of an EIR. There are no types of actions under NEPA that parallel the findings of mandatory significance of CEQA. This chapter discusses the effects of this project and CEQA significance.

3.2 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 will indicate that there are no impacts to 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 Chapters 1 and 2 for a detailed discussion of these features. The annotations to this checklist are summaries of information contained in Chapter 2 in order to provide the reader with the rationale for significance determinations; for a more detailed discussion of the nature and extent of impacts, please see Chapter 2. This checklist incorporates by reference the information contained in Chapters 1 and 2.

3.2.1 Aesthetics

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS: Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR AESTHETICS

a) through d) No Impact. Interstate 10 within the project limits is not listed as an Eligible State Scenic Highway. As the proposed project would rehabilitate the I-10 pavement within the project area while improving safety and mobility for the traveling public, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect that would degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings, nor would it create a new source of substantial light or glare in the area. The visual character of the proposed project would be compatible with the existing visual character of the corridor. The rehabilitation of the AC pavement would be in the same location of the existing pavement. The necessary widening for the detour lanes would occur within the median, and not increase the overall width of the corridor. Proposed materials for the rehabilitation and bridge widening will match the existing in like-kind, therefore providing a compatible visual character with the existing visual character of the project corridor.

3.2.2 Agriculture and Forest Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST 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 the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources

a) through e) No Impact. While there is farmland or vacant land mapped as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Farmland of Local Importance within the vicinity, all project activities would take place within previously disturbed Caltrans ROW. No part of the proposed project would occur in areas designated as farmland or that are under a Williamson Act contract.

3.2.3 Air Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR AIR QUALITY

a) No Impact. The proposed project is located in the Mojave Desert Air Basin and is within the jurisdiction of the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB). MDAQMD is the primary agency responsible for writing the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) in cooperation with the Southern California Association of Governments, local governments, and the private sector. The AQMP provides the blueprint for meeting state and federal ambient air quality standards. This project is not a capacity-increasing transportation project. It would have no impact on traffic volumes and would generate a less-than-significant amount of pollutants during construction. In addition, the project is exempt from air quality conformity per 40 CFR 93.126 because the project would rehabilitate existing pavement. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the AQMP, violate any air quality standard, or result in a net increase of any criteria pollutant.

b), c), d) Less than Significant Impact. During soil disturbance, the contractor must comply with Caltrans' Standard Specifications pertaining to dust control and dust palliative, and implement any particulate matter mitigation or control measures that relates to the project's construction or operation. As such, impacts related to increases of criteria pollutatns or exposing sensitive receptors to pollutant concentrations or odors would be less than significant.

3.2.4 Biological Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No 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, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or NOAA Fisheries?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

a), b) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Direct effects on waters include the loss of vegetation from direct removal due to site preparation activities such as vegetation clearing, grubbing, and grading. However, the loss is deemed minimal as vegetation would be restored. Preliminary project design indicates that Build Alternative would permanently and temporarily affect 0.19 acre and 1.74 acres, respectively, of jurisdictional non-wetland WUS and WSC containing riparian vegetation. Additionally, the Build Alternative would permanently and temporarily affect 0.40 acre and 71.7 acres of CDFW streambeds and riparian/riverine areas, respectively. To the extent riparian areas are permanently affected by the project, compensatory mitigation for this habitat will likely be required where it is associated with jurisdictional waters

that are subject to USACE regulatory authority under the Section 404 permitting requirements and CDFW under the Section 1600 permitting requirements. Mitigation ratios for permanent impacts on these resources will be determined during the regulatory agency permits processing period.

Caltrans has determined that the project would have "No Effect" on Yuma clapper rail, Yuma Ridgway's rail, southwestern willow flycatcher, elf owl, gilded flicker, and Gila woodpecker. CDFW authorizes "take" of endangered, threatened, and candidate species through the provision of Section 2081 and 2080.1 of the California Fish and Game code. The proposed project would cause "No Take" of the state-listed elf owl, western yellow-billed cuckoo, southwestern willow flycatcher, gilded flicker, Gila woodpecker, Arizona Bell's vireo, and razorback sucker.

The project would permanently remove 17.82 acres of DTCH and approximately 58.00 acres of suitable habitat for the desert tortoise. Additionally, the removal of vegetation and installation of RSP would limit desert tortoise ability to cross the highway safely, which in turn creates a connectivity barrier. Therefore, the project would directly affect desert tortoises by removing suitable habitat, causing potential death to individuals, as well as hindering tortoise movement across the highway. Indirect effects are possible via the spread or introduction of invasive species, construction-related irritants such as vibration, and the potential degradation of the remaining habitat due to soil compaction from equipment. As such, the proposed project will seek a determination of "May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect" federally listed desert tortoise and DRCH and result in a "Take."

While the project would affect some riparian vegetation, the majority of the riparian habitat that would support species such as southwestern willow flycatcher is slightly outside of the actual impact zones and away from a sustained water source. Therefore, minimal direct effects are expected due to vegetation removal, and indirect effects in the form of temporary construction activities, noise, vibration, and dust are expected. Implementation of Measures **BIO-7** through **BIO-9** and **WET-1** would avoid and/or minimize impacts on special-status riparian avian species and other migratory birds. As such, Caltrans has determined that the project "No Effect" on special-status riparian avian species.

Compensatory mitigation for permanent impacts on desert tortoise will be determined during the regulatory agency consultation period and/or permitting phase. In addition, with implementation of Measures **BIO-16** through **BIO-29** as well as **BIO-36** and **BIO-39**, impacts on desert tortoise and habitat connectivity would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

d) Less Than Significant Impact. The I-10 roadway is an existing feature that has been present in the landscape for decades. Moreover, several bridges and large culverts span its length throughout this area, allowing various species to cross beneath. The scope of work has the potential to increase the direct and indirect effects on habitat connectivity by removing cover for species and creating a visual barrier. As stated above, many species dependent upon the vegetation within the corridor that utilize the area as core habitat would be affected by vegetation removal, addition of pavement, and grading. While the scope of work has the potential to increase the direct and indirect effects on habitat connectivity by removing cover for species and creating a visual barrier, project features include revegetation, which would minimize this effect.

Overall, project area serves as a core habitat for several special-status species, as well as a variety of desert species including keystone species. Additionally, several planned connectivity

areas exist within the project limits and would be affected by the scope of work for the proposed project. With that said, while the Build Alternative has the potential to minimally affect connectivity, the avoidance and minimization measures proposed for this project, as listed in previous sections, would minimize impacts. Moreover, through rehabilitation of the pavement on this segment of I-10, failures of culverts and bridges—common features utilized by wildlife for connectivity—would be corrected. As such, the Build Alternative would be beneficial to species in this area by providing safe crossing of the I-10 roadway.

c), e), f) No Impact. The proposed project would have no impact on federally or state protected wetlands, conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, or conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

3.2.5 Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☐	☒	☐

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR CULTURAL RESOURCES

a), b), c) Less Than Significant Impact. There are two assumed eligible NRHP properties within the APE: PTNCL and DTC/C-AMA. Because the Section 106 process has the most guidance, Caltrans policy is to generally apply the methodologies used for Section 106 effects analysis for CEQA impact analysis, as well.

Lithic scatters SRI-1013, 1028, and 1032, considered to be elements of the PTNCL, are located within the APE between PM R142.8 and R143.6, within the median, within outside shoulders, or both. The project would result in further disturbance and physical destruction to SRI-1013, SRI-1028, and SRI-1032; however due to their lack of integrity and context as likely transferred fill deposits from unknown locations, any further disturbance or destruction of these contributing elements would not diminish the larger surrounding eligible property. As previously noted, the surrounding large procurement area had been previously disturbed throughout the APE by highway construction. The APE has been bisected by roads and other disturbances. SRI-1013, SRI-1028, and SRI-1032 are not *in situ.* Additionally, removal or further destruction of the existing fill containing cultural material from unknown sources within the APE does not constitute an adverse effect on the procurement area specifically, let alone the PTNCL as a whole. Physical destruction of SRI-1013, SRI-1028, and SRI-1032 would not adversely affect the integrity or CRHR eligibility of the PTNCL; therefore, the undertaking poses no adverse effect on the PTNCL, under 36 CFR 800.5(a)(2)(i). With implementation of Measure **CUL-3**, the area of the APE between PM R142.8 and R143.6 will be designated as an Archaeological Monitoring Area.

Contributing elements (tank tracks) associated with the DTC/C-AMA are located within the APE, in the outside eastbound shoulder between PM R142.0 and R143.0. These features are a relatively common occurrence throughout the DTC-C/AMA and should be considered lesser ranked contributing elements in comparison to primary contributing features such as airfields, medical facilities, or depots. Although the project would result in further disturbance and physical destruction of the identified tank tracks within the APE, the tracks have already experienced a loss of integrity due to previous roadway construction. However, the undertaking would not result in the physical destruction of intact subsurface cultural deposits because these

tank tracks exist as surface manifestations atop desert pavement; therefore, these features have no subsurface extensions. These factors provide support that the effects of implementing the project within this minute portion of the DTC/C-AMA, and the destruction of the tank tracks within the APE, would not rise to the level of an adverse effect on the DTC/C-AMA as a whole, particularly given its 18,000-square-mile extent. As such, the physical destruction of these tank tracks within this sliver portion of CHL-985: DTC/C-AMA would not adversely affect the overall integrity or CRHR eligibility of the cultural landscape as a whole; therefore, there would be No adverse effect on CHL-985: DTC/C-AMA as a whole, under 36 CFR 800.5(a)(2)(i).

With implementation of Measure **CUL-1**, impacts on cultural materials discovered during construction would be avoided and/or minimized.

With implementation of Measure **CUL-2**, if human remains are discovered, Caltrans District 8 Environmental Branch and NAHC will work with the most likely descendant on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains.

3.2.6 Energy

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR ENERGY

a) Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would use a minimal amount of energy during proposed construction activities such as excavation, road cut and fill, demolition, and other construction-related activities. Construction-related effects on energy would likely be greatest during the site preparation phase because of energy use associated with the excavation, handling, and transport of soils to and from the site. However, these construction activities would be short-term in duration and, therefore, would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction.

During project operation, the proposed project would accommodate existing traffic demand, but it would not create new demand, directly or indirectly. The project would also not reduce congestion and/or improve the level of service of traffic. As such, operation of the proposed project would not result in a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

The State of California's Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan identifies 2,147,000 acres within Riverside County that are potentially suitable for renewable energy development. The area surrounding the project area is included in the plan and is identified as BLM Solar Study Areas, Renewable Energy Study Areas, and Conservation Opportunity (California Energy Commission 2016). The proposed project would be rehabilitating the existing I-10 roadway almost exclusively within Caltrans ROW. As such, the project would not contribute a significant impact towards obstructing a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

3.2.7 Geology and Soils

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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:	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR GEOLOGY AND SOILS

a i) through a iv), b), c), d) Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project site is located in the seismically active Southern California region. In addition, the eastern segment of the project occurs within a designated liquefaction zone, where lateral spreading could occur.

Based on available data, on-site soil deposits are not considered expansive soils, and the project would not substantially result in soil erosion or loss of topsoil. As the proposed project would rehabilitate the I-10 pavement within the project area while improving safety and mobility for the traveling public, impacts on geology and soils would be minimal. In addition, any design and construction of the proposed project would follow Caltrans' current highway and structure seismic design standards. With implementation of these standard measures, impacts relating to exposing people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects related to geology and soils would be less than significant.

e), f) No Impact. The proposed project would not implement the use of septic tanks. Impacts are not anticipated in this regard.

The proposed project is within a previously disturbed area and has no potential to affect paleontological resources. Pavement replacement would take place atop one to 10 feet of existing aggregate fill. New guardrail posts would be placed in the same post holes that were used for the original guardrail. Temporary detour lanes would be constructed by widening the median. All work and staging would take place within previously disturbed soil. As such, no impacts on paleontological resources are expected.

3.2.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	Caltrans has used the best available information based to the extent possible on scientific and factual information, to describe, calculate, or estimate the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that may occur related to this project. The analysis included in the climate change section of this document provides the public and decision-makers as much information about the project as possible. It is Caltrans' determination that in the absence of statewide-adopted thresholds or GHG emissions limits, it is too speculative to make a significance determination regarding an individual project's direct and indirect impacts with respect to global climate change. Caltrans remains committed to implementing measures to reduce the potential effects of the project. These measures are outlined in the climate change section that follows the CEQA checklist and related discussions.			
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				

3.2.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials

a), b) Less Than Significant Impact. Implementation of the proposed project is not expected to create a significant hazard to the public or environment and is not located on a list of hazardous materials sites. The proposed project involves the rehabilitation of pavement on an existing roadway. If encountered, soil with elevated concentrations of lead as a result of ADL on the State Highway System ROW within the limits of the project would be managed under the July 1, 2016, ADL Agreement between Caltrans and the Department of Toxic Substances Control. This ADL Agreement allows such soils to be safely reused within the project limits as long as all requirements of the ADL Agreement are met. With implementation of Measures **HAZ-1** and

HAZ-2, Caltrans will conduct testing for ADL and ACM within Caltrans ROW in the project area prior to project approval.

c) through g) No Impact. There are no sites on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 near the proposed project. No schools are located within a quarter-mile of the project site. The Blythe Airport, a general aviation facility, or an air facility that is not considered to be commercial service or military, is approximately 0.3 mile north of the project area. However, the proposed project is a transportation project that would rehabilitate pavement on an existing highway corridor. As such, project activities would not expose people residing or working in the area to safety hazards. The proposed project would improve the safety performance along this segment of I-10. In addition, the proposed project would not interfere with any emergency response or evacuation plan, or expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

3.2.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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:	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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;	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality

a), c (i) through (iii) Less than Significant Impact. The potential temporary effects of the proposed project on the quality of the water in the area would come from runoff during construction, including erosion. All major construction within Caltrans' ROW would conform to Caltrans' Statewide NPDES Permit No. CAS000003 and to the General NPDES Permit for Construction Activities No. CAS000002, which regulate stormwater and non-stormwater discharges. The construction contractor would also be required to develop, implement, and maintain a SWPPP that (1) meets the requirements of the Construction General Permit and

identifies potential pollutant sources associated with construction activities; (2) identifies non-stormwater discharges; and (3) identifies, implements, and maintains BMPs to reduce or eliminate pollutants associated with the construction site. Deployment of BMPs would reduce long-term water quality impacts due to implementation of the proposed project.

The project would result in 89 acres of net new impervious surface area throughout the project area, which would increase the volume of runoff during a rain event. However, compared to the size of the two HSAs, the new impervious surface area would account for only 0.04 percent of the combined acreage of the two HSAs. The project would not significantly increase velocity and volume of runoff or affect the ability of receiving waters to accommodate the added flow. With implementation of Measure **WQ-2**, post-construction erosion control will be required to ensure that the project site does not pose any additional sediment discharge risk than it did prior to the beginning of construction. Furthermore, roadway drainage would be designed to discharge to a permanent treatment BMP so that the stormwater can either be treated before being discharged into a receiving water or infiltrated into the ground to the maximum extent practicable. As such, the project would result in a less-than-significant impact related to increased runoff, altered drainage patterns, or water quality degradation.

b), c (iv), d), e) No Impact. The volume of water used for construction, dust control, and other uses would be minimal; therefore, construction activities would not deplete groundwater supplies, nor would they interfere with groundwater recharge. The project would not result in a significant floodplain encroachment, as defined in 23 CFR 650.105. Additionally, the project would not involve the development of housing. The proposed roadway improvements do not have the potential to expose people or property to substantial risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding; therefore, no impacts in this regard are expected.

3.2.11 Land Use and Planning

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING: Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR LAND USE AND PLANNING

a), b) No Impact. Implementation of the proposed project would rehabilitate the I-10 pavement within the project area while improving safety and mobility for the traveling public. The proposed project would not divide an established community, as I-10 already exists within this area, and the project would only result in minor additional ROW to construct ADA-mandated wheelchair ramps at three intersections. The proposed project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation.

3.2.12 Mineral Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR MINERAL RESOURCES

a), b) No Impact. According to Section 4.14, Mineral Resources, of the *County of Riverside General Plan Update, Project Environmental Impact Report No. 21* (County of Riverside 2014), the project area is designated as Mineral Resource Zone 4, where the presence and significance of mineral deposits is undetermined. Per the study, no impacts on known mineral resources would occur in Mineral Resource Zone 4 areas.

3.2.13 Noise

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA Significance Determinations for Noise

a), b), c) No Impact. No noise impacts are anticipated because construction would be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications 14-8.02 and Standard Special Provision 14-8.02. Construction-related noise would be short term and intermittent during the construction period; therefore, noise impacts would last only the duration of construction and would not affect potential noise-sensitive receptors in the vicinity. The project would also not expose people to or generate noise levels in excess of standards established in a general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies. The proposed project would not permanently increase ambient noise levels in the project vicinity.

The Blythe Airport, a general aviation facility, is approximately 0.3 mile north of the project area. However, the proposed project is a transportation project that would rehabilitate pavement on an existing highway corridor. Project activities would not expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels.

3.2.14 Population and Housing

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR POPULATION AND HOUSING

a), b) No Impact. The proposed project would rehabilitate the I-10 pavement within Caltrans ROW within the project area while improving safety and mobility for the traveling public. The proposed project would not necessitate the relocation of any existing developments and/or people or induce unplanned growth. No impacts on population and housing would occur as a result of the proposed project.

3.2.15 Public Services

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. PUBLIC SERVICES:				
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR PUBLIC SERVICES

a) Fire Protection, Police Protection, Schools, Parks, Other Public Facilities. No Impact.

The Riverside County Fire Department, in cooperation with the Blythe Fire Department, provides fire and emergency services to the project area. The Blythe Police Department provides police services in the project area. In addition, a California Highway Patrol station and United States Border Patrol station are located within the project area. The proposed project involves pavement rehabilitation to an existing highway and would not result in an increase in population or in the need for additional facilities, nor would response times of emergency personnel be increased. Construction activities have the potential to result in temporary disruptions during the construction period. This could lead to an increase in delay times for emergency response vehicles during construction; however, the proposed project would include the preparation and implementation of a TMP, as required as part of Measure **T-1**.

In addition, there are three parks (Miller Park, Appleby Park, and Queshan Park), one school (Ruth Brown Elementary School), and one other public facility (Blythe Recreation Center) within the project area. Construction impacts would be short term, lasting only the length of construction, and would cease upon completion of construction. In addition, Measures **AQ-1** and **NOI-1** would be implemented to minimize temporary air quality and noise impacts that may be experienced during project construction.

The rehabilitation of the existing pavement would increase efficiency and safety for fire and police personnel traveling along I-10 and would be a beneficial impact following project construction. As such, the project would result in no impact associated with the provision of new

or physically altered governmental facilities, or need for new or physically altered governmental facilities.

3.2.16 Recreation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. RECREATION:				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR RECREATION

a), b) No Impact. The proposed project does not have the capacity to generate a substantial increase in use of any existing neighborhood parks, regional parks, or other recreational facilities such that physical deterioration would occur, nor would it require the construction or expansion of existing recreational facilities.

3.2.17 Transportation/Traffic

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

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

a), b), c) No Impact. The project would rehabilitate the I-10 pavement within the project area while improving safety and mobility for the traveling public. The project would not increase traffic because no new land uses are proposed. The project would accommodate existing traffic demand, but it would not create new demand, directly or indirectly. The project would also not reduce congestion and/or result in a change to vehicle miles traveled. All lanes would remain open during construction. Traffic management during construction would include a temporary two-lane detour with crossovers, which would be constructed by widening within the median. Once the project is completed, both detour lanes (which would be striped, signaling to the public they are not available for use) would be left in place after completion of the project and I-10 would operate as normal.

Within the project study area, there are pedestrian facilities at the Lovekin Boulevard interchange and 7th Street interchange that would be improved to meet ADA standards as part of the project.

The proposed project would not conflict with an applicable congestion management program or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways. No impacts are anticipated.

d) Less Than Significant Impact. Construction activities have the potential to result in temporary, localized, site-specific disruptions during the construction period. This could lead to an increase in delay times for emergency response vehicles during construction. However, the proposed project would include the preparation and implementation of a TMP as part of Measure **T-1**. Impacts would be less than significant during the construction period.

3.2.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII. 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:				
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	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

a), b) Less Than Significant Impact. During Native American consultation, it was agreed between Caltrans and consulted tribes that the likelihood of encountering historical resources *in situ* is zero; however, the possibility of encountering buried human remains and/or grave goods cannot be ruled out. As such, the area where known cultural materials (SRI-1013, 1028, and 1032) had been identified, as discussed in Section 3.2.5, would be delineated as a culturally sensitive area, even though it is not warranted for this project due to the lack of sites or elements maintaining sufficient integrity. As such, any impacts related to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant.

3.2.19 Utilities and Service Systems

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems

a) through e) No Impact. Construction of the proposed project is not expected to generate the need for new or expanded water, wastewater treatment facilities or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities. The proposed project would extend existing drainage crossings to accommodate the detour lanes and on-site and off-site drainage structures would be improved and installed to facilitate the flow of floodwater within the project limits. However, these improvements would not have any effects on the existing flows. No new or expanded entitlements are needed with the proposed project. The proposed project would not require wastewater treatment. The proposed project would require the use of a local landfill, if applicable, to dispose of demolition materials during construction. The use of local landfills would be temporary, lasting the duration of construction. It is Caltrans' policy to recycle materials whenever possible. Furthermore, the proposed project would be in compliance with all federal, state, and local solid waste statutes and regulations.

3.2.20 Wildfire

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR WILDFIRE

a) Less than Significant Impact. Construction activities have the potential to result in temporary, localized, site-specific disruptions during the construction period. This could lead to an increase in delay times for emergency response vehicles during construction. However, the proposed project would include the preparation and implementation of a TMP as part of Measure **T-1**. Impacts would be less than significant during the construction period.

b), c), d) No Impact. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps, there are no areas in the vicinity of the proposed project area categorized as having high or very high fire hazard severity (CAL FIRE 2007). The project would rehabilitate the I-10 pavement within the project area while improving safety and mobility for the traveling public and would not install any infrastructure, such as new power lines or other utilities that could exacerbate existing wildfire risk and would not expose people or structures to significant wildfire risk.

3.2.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☐	☒

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS FOR MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

a) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project would not 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, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal species. Throughout the BSA west of Blythe, suitable habitat for desert tortoise is present. The project would permanently remove 17.82 acres of DTCH and approximately 58.00 acres of suitable habitat for the desert tortoise. In addition, the project would affect riparian habitat west of Blythe that would support species such as southwestern willow flycatcher. Section 7 consultation between Caltrans and USFWS will occur to address potential impacts on desert tortoise and associated critical habitat, as well as southwestern willow flycatcher. USFWS is likely to concur with a conclusion that the proposed project action *may affect, likely to adversely affect* desert tortoise and associated critical habitat and *may affect, not likely to adversely affect* southwestern willow flycatcher. Through the incorporation of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures (Measures **BIO-1** through **BIO-38**), the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact.

b), c) No Impact. The proposed project would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts when combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects and therefore

would have no cumulative impacts. The proposed project would not have environmental effects that would cause substantial effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly, as the purpose of the project is to restore and extend the life of the existing pavement along I-10 within the project area.

3.3 Climate Change

Climate change refers to long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other elements of the earth's climate system. An ever-increasing body of scientific research attributes these climatological changes to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, particularly those generated from the production and use of fossil fuels.

While climate change has been a concern for several decades, the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) by the United Nations and World Meteorological Organization in 1988 has led to increased efforts devoted to GHG emissions reduction and climate change research and policy. These efforts are primarily concerned with the emissions of GHGs generated by human activity, including carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), tetrafluoromethane, hexafluoroethane, sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6), fluoroform HFC-23), 1,1,1,2-tetrafluoroethane (HFC-134a), and difluoroethane (HFC-152a).

In the U.S., the main source of GHG emissions is electricity generation, followed by transportation.[5] In California, however, transportation sources (including passenger cars, light-duty trucks, other trucks, buses, and motorcycles) are the largest contributors of GHG emissions.[6] The dominant GHG emitted is CO_2, mostly from fossil fuel combustion.

Two terms are typically used when discussing how we address the impacts of climate change: "greenhouse gas mitigation" and "adaptation." Greenhouse gas mitigation covers the activities and policies aimed at reducing GHG emissions to limit or "mitigate" the impacts of climate change. Adaptation, on the other hand, is concerned with planning for and responding to impacts resulting from climate change (such as adjusting transportation design standards to withstand more intense storms and higher sea levels).

3.3.1 Regulatory Setting

This section outlines federal and state efforts to comprehensively reduce GHG emissions from transportation sources.

FEDERAL

To date, no national standards have been established for nationwide mobile-source GHG reduction targets, 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.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recognizes the threats that extreme weather, sea-level change, and other changes in environmental conditions pose to valuable transportation infrastructure and those who depend on it. FHWA therefore supports a sustainability approach that assesses vulnerability to climate risks and incorporates resilience into planning, asset

[5] https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/us-greenhouse-gas-inventory-report-1990-2014

[6] https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/data.htm

management, project development and design, and operations and maintenance practices.[7] This approach encourages planning for sustainable highways by addressing climate risks while balancing environmental, economic, and social values—"the triple bottom line of sustainability."[8] Program and project elements that foster sustainability and resilience also support economic vitality and global efficiency, increase safety and mobility, enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve the quality of life. Addressing these factors up front in the planning process will assist in decision-making and improve efficiency at the program level, and will inform the analysis and stewardship needs of project-level decision-making.

Various efforts have been promulgated at the federal level to improve fuel economy and energy efficiency to address climate change and its associated effects.

The Energy Policy Act of 1992 (EPACT92, 102nd Congress H.R.776.ENR): With this act, Congress set goals, created mandates, and amended utility laws to increase clean energy use and improve overall energy efficiency in the United States. EPACT92 consists of 27 titles detailing various measures designed to lessen the nation's dependence on imported energy, provide incentives for clean and renewable energy, and promote energy conservation in buildings. Title III of EPACT92 addresses alternative fuels. It gave the U.S. Department of Energy administrative power to regulate the minimum number of light-duty alternative fuel vehicles required in certain federal fleets beginning in fiscal year 1993. The primary goal of the Program is to cut petroleum use in the United States by 2.5 billion gallons per year by 2020.

Energy Policy Act of 2005 (109th Congress H.R.6 (2005–2006): This act sets forth an energy research and development program covering: (1) energy efficiency; (2) renewable energy; (3) oil and gas; (4) coal; (5) the establishment of the Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs within the Department of Energy; (6) nuclear matters and security; (7) vehicles and motor fuels, including ethanol; (8) hydrogen; (9) electricity; (10) energy tax incentives; (11) hydropower and geothermal energy; and (12) climate change technology.

Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (42 USC Section 6201) and Corporate Average Fuel Standards: This act establishes fuel economy standards for on-road motor vehicles sold in the United States. Compliance with federal fuel economy standards is determined through the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) program on the basis of each manufacturer's average fuel economy for the portion of its vehicles produced for sale in the United States.

U.S. EPA's authority to regulate GHG emissions stems from the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Massachusetts v. EPA (2007). The Supreme Court ruled that GHGs meet the definition of air pollutants under the existing Clean Air Act and must be regulated if these gases could be reasonably anticipated to endanger public health or welfare. Responding to the Court's ruling, U.S. EPA finalized an endangerment finding in December 2009. Based on scientific evidence it found that six GHGs constitute a threat to public health and welfare. Thus, it is the Supreme Court's interpretation of the existing Act and EPA's assessment of the scientific evidence that form the basis for EPA's regulatory actions.

U.S. EPA in conjunction with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued the first of a series of GHG emission standards for new cars and light-duty vehicles in

[7] https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sustainability/resilience/

[8] https://www.sustainablehighways.dot.gov/overview.aspx

April 2010[9] (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration no date) and significantly increased the fuel economy of all new passenger cars and light trucks sold in the United States. The standards required these vehicles to meet an average fuel economy of 34.1 miles per gallon by 2016. In August 2012, the federal government adopted the second rule that increases fuel economy for the fleet of passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium-duty passenger vehicles for model years 2017 and beyond to average fuel economy of 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025. Because NHTSA cannot set standards beyond model year 2021 due to statutory obligations and the rules' long timeframe, a mid-term evaluation is included in the rule. The Mid-Term Evaluation is the overarching process by which NHTSA, EPA, and CARB will decide on CAFE and GHG emissions standard stringency for model years 2022–2025. NHTSA has not formally adopted standards for model years 2022 through 2025. However, the EPA finalized its mid-term review in January 2017, affirming that the target fleet average of at least 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025 was appropriate. In March 2017, President Trump ordered EPA to reopen the review and reconsider the mileage target.[10]

NHTSA and EPA issued a Final Rule for "Phase 2" for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles to improve fuel efficiency and cut carbon pollution in October 2016. The agencies estimate that the standards will save up to 2 billion barrels of oil and reduce CO_2 emissions by up to 1.1 billion metric tons over the lifetimes of model year 2018–2027 vehicles.

STATE

With the passage of legislation including State Senate and Assembly bills and executive orders, California has been innovative and proactive in addressing GHG emissions and climate change.

Assembly Bill 1493, Pavley Vehicular Emissions: Greenhouse Gases, 2002: This bill requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop and implement regulations to reduce automobile and light truck GHG emissions. These stricter emissions standards were designed to apply to automobiles and light trucks beginning with the 2009-model year.

Executive Order S-3-05 (June 1, 2005): The goal of this executive order (EO) is to reduce California's GHG emissions to: (1) year 2000 levels by 2010, (2) year 1990 levels by 2020, and (3) 80 percent below year 1990 levels by 2050. This goal was further reinforced with the passage of Assembly Bill 32 in 2006 and SB 32 in 2016.

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), Chapter 488, 2006: Núñez and Pavley, The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006: AB 32 codified the 2020 GHG emissions reduction goals as outlined in EO S-3-05, while further mandating that CARB create a scoping plan and implement rules to achieve "real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases." The Legislature also intended that the statewide GHG emissions limit continue in existence and be used to maintain and continue reductions in emissions of GHGs beyond 2020 (Health and Safety Code Section 38551(b)). The law requires CARB to adopt rules and regulations in an open public process to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG reductions.

[9] https://one.nhtsa.gov/Laws-&-Regulations/CAFE-%E2%80%93-Fuel-Economy

[10] http://www.nbcnews.com/business/autos/trump-rolls-back-obama-era-fuel-economy-standards-n734256 and https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/03/22/2017-05316/notice-of-intention-to-reconsider-the-final-determination-of-the-mid-term-evaluation-of-greenhouse

Executive Order S-01-07 (January 18, 2007): This order sets forth the low carbon fuel standard (LCFS) for California. Under this EO, the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels is to be reduced by at least 10 percent by the year 2020. CARB re-adopted the LCFS regulation in September 2015, and the changes went into effect on January 1, 2016. The program establishes a strong framework to promote the low-carbon fuel adoption necessary to achieve the Governor's 2030 and 2050 GHG reduction goals.

Senate Bill 97 (SB 97), Chapter 185, 2007, Greenhouse Gas Emissions: This bill requires the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to develop recommended amendments to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for addressing GHG emissions. The amendments became effective on March 18, 2010.

Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), Chapter 728, 2008, Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection: This bill requires CARB to set regional emissions reduction targets for passenger vehicles. The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for each region must then develop a "Sustainable Communities Strategy" (SCS) that integrates transportation, land-use, and housing policies to plan how it will achieve the emissions target for its region.

Senate Bill 391 (SB 391), Chapter 585, 2009, California Transportation Plan: This bill requires the State's long-range transportation plan to meet California's climate change goals under AB 32.

Executive Order B-16-12 (March 2012) orders State entities under the direction of the Governor, including CARB, the California Energy Commission, and the Public Utilities Commission, to support the rapid commercialization of zero-emission vehicles. It directs these entities to achieve various benchmarks related to zero-emission vehicles.

Executive Order B-30-15 (April 2015) establishes an interim statewide GHG emission reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 in order to ensure California meets its target of reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. It further orders all state agencies with jurisdiction over sources of GHG emissions to implement measures, pursuant to statutory authority, to achieve reductions of GHG emissions to meet the 2030 and 2050 GHG emissions reductions targets. It also directs CARB to update the Climate Change Scoping Plan to express the 2030 target in terms of million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MMTCO_2e$). Finally, it requires the Natural Resources Agency to update the state's climate adaptation strategy, Safeguarding California, every 3 years, and to ensure that its provisions are fully implemented.

Senate Bill 32, (SB 32) Chapter 249, 2016, codifies the GHG reduction targets established in EO B-30-15 to achieve a mid-range goal of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.

3.3.2 Environmental Setting

In 2006, the Legislature passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32), which created a comprehensive, multi-year program to reduce GHG emissions in California. AB 32 required CARB 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. The Scoping Plan was first approved by CARB in 2008 and must be updated every 5 years. 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 AB 32 Scoping Plan and the subsequent updates contain the main strategies California will use to reduce GHG emissions. As part of its supporting documentation for the updated Scoping Plan, CARB released the GHG inventory for California.[11] CARB is responsible for maintaining and updating California's GHG Inventory per H&SC Section 39607.4. The associated forecast/projection is an estimate of the emissions anticipated to occur in the year 2020 if none of the foreseeable measures included in the Scoping Plan were implemented.

An emissions projection estimates future emissions based on current emissions, expected regulatory implementation, and other technological, social, economic, and behavioral patterns. The projected 2020 emissions provided in Figure 6-1 represent a business-as-usual (BAU) scenario assuming none of the Scoping Plan measures are implemented. The 2020 BAU emissions estimate assists CARB in demonstrating progress toward meeting the 2020 goal of 431 MMTCO2e.[12] The 2018 edition of the GHG emissions inventory found total California emissions of 429 MMTCO$_2$e for 2016.

The 2020 BAU emissions projection was revisited in support of the First Update to the Scoping Plan (2014). This projection accounts for updates to the economic forecasts of fuel and energy demand as well as other factors. It also accounts for the effects of the 2008 economic recession and the projected recovery. The total emissions expected in the 2020 BAU scenario include reductions anticipated from Pavley I and the Renewable Electricity Standard (30 MMTCO$_2$e total). With these reductions in the baseline, estimated 2020 statewide BAU emissions are 509 MMTCO$_2$e.

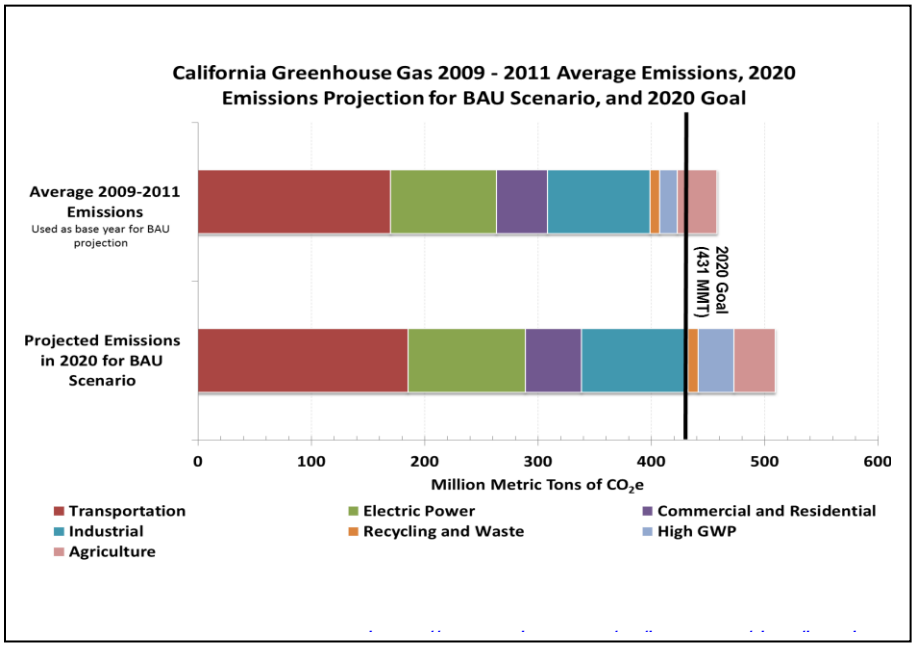

Figure 6-1. 2020 Business as Usual (BAU) Emissions Projection 2014 Edition

[11] 2018 Edition of the GHG Emission Inventory Released (July 2018):

https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/data.htm

[12] The revised target using Global Warming Potentials (GWP) from the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report (AR4)

3.3.3 Project Analysis

An individual project does not generate enough GHG emissions to significantly influence global climate change. Rather, global climate change is a cumulative impact. This means that a project may contribute to a potential impact through its *incremental* change in emissions when combined with the contributions of all other sources of GHG.[13] 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.

GHG emissions for transportation projects can be divided into those produced during operations and those produced during construction. The following represents a best faith effort to describe the potential GHG emissions related to the proposed project.

OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS

Projects that involve culvert/drainage/storm water work and do not increase the capacity of the roadway, such as this project, generally have minimal or no increase in operational GHG emissions. Because the project would not increase the number of travel lanes on I-10, no increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) would occur as result of project implementation, and traffic volumes would be the same under the Build Alternative and No-Build Alternative. While some GHG emissions during the construction period would be unavoidable, no increase in operational GHG emissions is expected.

CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS

Construction GHG emissions would result from material processing, on-site construction equipment, multiple truck loads hauling of asphalt paving materials to the project site, 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. In addition, with innovations such as longer pavement lives, improved traffic management plans, and changes in materials, the GHG emissions produced during construction can be offset to some degree by longer intervals between maintenance and rehabilitation activities.

Construction-period GHG emissions were modeled using the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District Road Construction Emissions Model, version 9.0.0. Short-term construction activities would result in GHG emissions from fuel combustion associated with off- and on-road construction equipment and vehicles, which would result in emissions of

[13] This approach is supported by the AEP: *Recommendations by the Association of Environmental Professionals on How to Analyze GHG Emissions and Global Climate Change in CEQA Documents* (March 5, 2007), as well as the South Coast Air Quality Management District (Chapter 6: The CEQA Guide, April 2011) and the US Forest Service (Climate Change Considerations in Project Level NEPA Analysis, July 13, 2009).

approximately 4,000 metric tons of CO_2-equivalent (CO_2e)[14] over the approximately 500-working day construction period.

Caltrans Standard Specification 14-9.02 requires that the contractor comply with air-pollution-control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes, including those of CARB and local air pollution control districts. Requirements such as idling time restrictions and keeping equipment engines properly tuned and maintained help reduce GHG emissions.

The project would comply with all requirements of the MDAQMD (which has jurisdiction over the Mojave Desert Air Basin in which the project site is located). In addition, Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-9, Air Quality, a part of all construction contracts, requires contractors to comply with all federal, state, regional, and local rules, regulations, and ordinances related to air quality. Measures that reduce vehicle emissions and energy use also reduce GHG emissions. In addition, a TMP would be implemented to minimize traffic delays during construction.

CEQA CONCLUSION

While the project would result in a slight increase in GHG emissions during construction, it is anticipated that the project would not result in any increase in operational GHG emissions. While it is Caltrans' determination that in the absence of further regulatory or scientific information related to GHG emissions and CEQA significance, it is too speculative to make a significance determination regarding the project's direct impact and its contribution on the cumulative scale to climate change, Caltrans is firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce GHG emissions. These measures are outlined in the following section.

GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION STRATEGIES

Statewide Efforts

In an effort to further the vision of California's GHG reduction targets outlined an AB 32 and SB 32, Governor Brown identified key climate change strategy pillars (concepts). These pillars highlight the idea that several major areas of the California economy will need to reduce emissions to meet the 2030 GHG emissions target. These pillars are (1) reducing today's petroleum use in cars and trucks by up to 50 percent; (2) increasing from one-third to 50 percent our electricity derived from renewable sources; (3) doubling the energy efficiency savings achieved at existing buildings and making heating fuels cleaner; (4) reducing the release of methane, black carbon, and other short-lived climate pollutants; (5) managing farm and rangelands, forests, and wetlands so they can store carbon; and (6) periodically updating the state's climate adaptation strategy, *Safeguarding California*.

[14] Because GHGs differ in how much heat each traps in the atmosphere, and CO_2 is the most important GHG, amounts of other gases are expressed relative to CO_2. Measurements are then summed to yield a total in metric tons of CO_2-equivalent over a given time period. The Road Construction Emissions model calculates only CO_2, methane, and nitrous oxide.

Figure 6-2. The Governor's Climate Change Pillars: 2030 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Goals

The transportation sector is integral to the people and economy of California. To achieve GHG emission reduction goals, it is vital that we build on our past successes in reducing criteria and toxic air pollutants from transportation and goods movement activities. GHG emission reductions will come from cleaner vehicle technologies, lower-carbon fuels, and reduction of vehicle miles traveled. One of Governor Brown's key pillars sets the ambitious goal of reducing today's petroleum use in cars and trucks by up to 50 percent by 2030.

Governor Brown called for support to manage natural and working lands, including forests, rangelands, farms, wetlands, and soils, so they can store carbon. These lands have the ability to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through biological processes, and to then sequester carbon in above- and below-ground matter.

California Department of Transportation Activities

Caltrans continues to be involved on the Governor's Climate Action Team as CARB 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 a new 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.

California Transportation Plan (CTP 2040)

The California Transportation Plan (CTP) is a statewide, long-range transportation plan to meet our future mobility needs and reduce GHG emissions. The CTP defines performance-based goals, policies, and strategies to achieve our collective vision for California's future statewide, integrated, multimodal transportation system. It serves as an umbrella document for all of the other statewide transportation planning documents.

SB 391 (Liu 2009) requires the CTP to meet California's climate change goals under AB 32. Accordingly, the CTP 2040 identifies the statewide transportation system needed to achieve maximum feasible GHG emission reductions while meeting the state's transportation needs. While MPOs have primary responsibility for identifying land use patterns to help reduce GHG emissions, CTP 2040 identifies additional strategies in Pricing, Transportation Alternatives, Mode Shift, and Operational Efficiency.

Caltrans Strategic Management Plan

The Strategic Management Plan, released in 2015, creates a performance-based framework to preserve the environment and reduce GHG emissions, among other goals. Specific performance targets in the plan that will help to reduce GHG emissions include:

- Increasing the percentage of non-auto mode share
- Reducing VMT per capita
- Reducing Caltrans' internal operational (buildings, facilities, and fuel) GHG emissions

Funding and Technical Assistance Programs

In addition to developing plans and performance targets to reduce GHG emissions, Caltrans also administers several funding and technical assistance programs that have GHG reduction benefits. These include the Bicycle Transportation Program, Safe Routes to School, Transportation Enhancement Funds, and Transit Planning Grants. A more extensive description of these programs can be found in *Caltrans Activities to Address Climate Change* (2013).

Caltrans Director's Policy 30 (DP-30) Climate Change (June 22, 2012) is intended to establish a department policy that will ensure coordinated efforts to incorporate climate change into departmental decisions and activities.

Caltrans Activities to Address Climate Change (April 2013) provides a comprehensive overview of activities undertaken by Caltrans statewide to reduce GHG emissions resulting from agency operations.

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.

Implementation of a TMP would involve strategies to maintain traffic safety through the construction zone, as well as minimize traffic delays. The reduction of traffic delays would also reduce short-term increases in GHG emissions from disruptions in traffic flow. Also, in the event that portable changeable message signs are required as part of the TMP, these signs would be solar-powered and would not involve GHG emissions during use.

Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-9, Air Quality, a part of all construction contracts, requires contractors to comply with all federal, state, regional, and local rules, regulations, and ordinances related to air quality. Requirements of the MDAQMD would apply to this project. Requirements that reduce vehicle emissions, such as limits on idling time, may help reduce GHG emissions.

Adaptation Strategies

"Adaptation strategies" refer to how Caltrans and others can plan for the effects of climate change on the state's transportation infrastructure and strengthen or protect the facilities from damage—or, put another way, planning and design for resilience. Climate change is expected to produce increased variability in precipitation, rising temperatures, rising sea levels, variability in storm surges and their intensity, and the frequency and intensity of wildfires. These changes may affect the transportation infrastructure in various ways, such as damage to roadbeds from longer periods of intense heat; increasing storm damage from flooding and erosion; and inundation from rising sea levels. These effects will vary by location and may, in the most extreme cases, require that a facility be relocated or redesigned. These types of impacts to the transportation infrastructure may also have economic and strategic ramifications.

Federal Efforts

At the federal level, the Climate Change Adaptation Task Force, co-chaired by the Council on Environmental Quality, the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), released its interagency task force progress report on October 28, 2011,[15] outlining the federal government's progress in expanding and strengthening the nation's capacity to better understand, prepare for, and respond to extreme events and other climate change impacts. The report provided an update on actions in key areas of federal adaptation, including: building resilience in local communities, safeguarding critical natural resources such as fresh water, and providing accessible climate information and tools to help decision-makers manage climate risks.

The federal Department of Transportation issued *U.S. DOT Policy Statement on Climate Adaptation* in June 2011, committing to "integrate consideration of climate change impacts and adaptation into the planning, operations, policies, and programs of DOT in order to ensure that taxpayer resources are invested wisely and that transportation infrastructure, services, and operations remain effective in current and future climate conditions."[16]

To further the DOT Policy Statement, on December 15, 2014, FHWA issued order 5520 (*Transportation System Preparedness and Resilience to Climate Change and Extreme Weather Events*).[17] This directive established FHWA policy to strive to identify the risks of climate change and extreme weather events to current and planned transportation systems. The FHWA will work to integrate consideration of these risks into its planning, operations, policies, and programs in order to promote preparedness and resilience; safeguard federal investments; and ensure the safety, reliability, and sustainability of the nation's transportation systems.

FHWA has developed guidance and tools for transportation planning that fosters resilience to climate effects and sustainability at the federal, state, and local levels.[18]

[15] https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/resilience

[16] https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sustainability/resilience/policy_and_guidance/usdot.cfm

[17] https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/directives/orders/5520.cfm

[18] https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sustainability/resilience/

State Efforts

On November 14, 2008, then-Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed EO S-13-08, which directed a number of state agencies to address California's vulnerability to sea-level rise caused by climate change. This EO set in motion several agencies and actions to address the concern of sea-level rise and directed all state agencies planning to construct projects in areas vulnerable to future sea-level rise to consider a range of sea-level rise scenarios for the years 2050 and 2100, assess project vulnerability and, to the extent feasible, reduce expected risks and increase resiliency to sea-level rise. Sea-level rise estimates should also be used in conjunction with information on local uplift and subsidence, coastal erosion rates, predicted higher high water levels, and storm surge and storm wave data.

Governor Schwarzenegger also requested the National Academy of Sciences to prepare an assessment report to recommend how California should plan for future sea-level rise. The final report, *Sea-Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington* (Sea-Level Rise Assessment Report)[19] was released in June 2012 and included relative sea-level rise projections for the three states, taking into account coastal erosion rates, tidal impacts, El Niño and La Niña events, storm surge, and land subsidence rates; and the range of uncertainty in selected sea-level rise projections. It provided a synthesis of existing information on projected sea-level rise impacts to state infrastructure (such as roads, public facilities, and beaches), natural areas, and coastal and marine ecosystems; and a discussion of future research needs regarding sea-level rise.

In response to EO S-13-08, the California Natural Resources Agency (Resources Agency), in coordination with local, regional, state, federal, and public and private entities, developed *The California Climate Adaptation Strategy* (Dec 2009),[20] which summarized the best available science on climate change impacts to California, assessed California's vulnerability to the identified impacts, and outlined solutions that can be implemented within and across state agencies to promote resiliency. The adaptation strategy was updated and rebranded in 2014 as *Safeguarding California: Reducing Climate Risk* (Safeguarding California Plan).

Governor Jerry Brown enhanced the overall adaptation planning effort by signing EO B-30-15 in April 2015, requiring state agencies to factor climate change into all planning and investment decisions. In March 2016, sector-specific Implementation Action Plans that demonstrate how state agencies are implementing EO B-30-15 were added to the Safeguarding California Plan. This effort represents a multi-agency, cross-sector approach to addressing adaptation to climate change-related events statewide.

EO S-13-08 also gave rise to the *State of California Sea-Level Rise Interim Guidance Document* (SLR Guidance), produced by the Coastal and Ocean Working Group of the California Climate Action Team (CO-CAT), of which Caltrans is a member. First published in 2010, the document provided "guidance for incorporating sea-level rise (SLR) projections into planning and decision

[19] *Sea Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington: Past, Present, and Future* (2012) is available at: http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13389.

[20] http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/adaptation/strategy/index.html

making for projects in California," specifically, "information and recommendations to enhance consistency across agencies in their development of approaches to SLR."[21]

Climate change adaptation for transportation infrastructure involves long-term planning and risk management to address vulnerabilities in the transportation system from increased precipitation, and flooding; the increased frequency and intensity of storms and wildfires; rising temperatures; and rising sea levels. Caltrans is actively engaged in in working toward identifying these risks throughout the state and will work to incorporate this information into all planning and investment decisions as directed in EO B-30-15.

The proposed project is outside the coastal zone and is not near any bodies of water subject to sea-level rise. Accordingly, direct impacts on transportation facilities due to projected sea-level rise are not expected.

[21] http://www.opc.ca.gov/2013/04/update-to-the-sea-level-rise-guidance-document/

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Chapter 4 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 (PDT) meetings. This chapter summarizes the results of Caltrans' efforts to fully identify, address, and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination.

Consultation with several agencies occurred in conjunction with preparation of the proposed project technical reports and this IS/EA. These agencies are identified in the various technical reports and include NAHC, USACE, USFWS, and CDFW.

4.1 Consultation and Coordination with Public Agencies and Native American Tribes

The following provides a summary of key meetings, correspondence, and/or coordination pertinent to the development of the project.

4.1.1 United States Army Corps of Engineers

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is a Cooperating Agency associated with the proposed project. Cooperating Agencies are federal agencies that have jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposed project. Cooperating Agencies are also Participating Agencies that have an interest in the project. The role and responsibility of USACE in this project is to assist in identifying any waters of the United States and wetland within the project area. The USACE action area for this project is defined as the area within 300 feet of a regulated activity within delineated waters. USACE will also provide feedback on the Section 404 process, provide comments on the purpose and needs, and the draft/final IS/EA.

4.1.2 Native American Tribes

On January 26, 2018, NAHC was contacted to request a search of the Sacred Lands File and a list of Native American contacts. A response was received from NAHC on February 21, 2018, stating that the Sacred Lands File did not contain information regarding the presence of Sacred Lands within the project area. NAHC provided a list of Native American individuals and organizations that should be contacted. Initial contact letters were sent out to four tribes on the list NAHC provided on March 19, 2018. A summary of Native American Consultation is provided in Appendix C.

4.1.3 State Historic Preservation Officer

Caltrans notified the California SHPO of its determination that one property within the APE is eligible for inclusion in the NRHP and has requested concurrence in its determination of the project's finding of no adverse effects and *de minimis* impact. On December 24, 2018, Caltrans' Cultural Studies Office submitted Caltrans Section 106 documentation to SHPO for review and concurrence. SHPO concurrence was received January 28, 2019. See Appendix B for consultation documentation regarding Caltrans' Cultural Studies Office's assumption of NRHP eligibility and SHPO concurrence.

4.1.4 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

USFWS was also contacted regarding federally listed threatened and endangered species potentially occurring in the vicinity of the project. An official USFWS species list was requested and received on July 18, 2018, as included in Appendix C. In addition, in September 2018 and December 2018, USFWS was contacted to discuss potential findings, the biological assessment, and potential permit strategies. The project would require a formal Section 7 Consultation with USFWS, which shall be initiated prior to ground-disturbing activities for desert tortoise, DTCH, and southwestern willow flycatcher. USFWS will prepare a biological opinion up to 45 days following the consultation.

4.2 Public Participation

This draft IS-MND/EA has been prepared for the project and circulated for public review and comment for 30 days between June 5, 2019 and July 8, 2019. A Notice to Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration has been published in the Palo Verde Valley Times on June 5, 2019 in English and the La Prensa Newspaper on June 7, 2019. The notice informed the public of the locations where the draft IS-MND/EA is available for public review, the start and end dates of the public review period, length of the public review period, and how the public could submit comments on the draft IS-MND/EA.

Chapter 5 List of Preparers

The following persons were principally responsible for review and preparation of this IS/EA.

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Gary Jones	Associate Environmental Planner, Archaeology
Shannon Clarendon	Environmental Planner, Archaeology
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Vincent Tong	Environmental Planner
Elizabeth Irvin	Senior Technical Editor
John Mathias	Senior Technical Editor
Saadia Byram	Senior Technical Editor
Keith Cooper	Senior Associate, Air Quality

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Chapter 6 Distribution List

The Notice of Availability for this Draft Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment (Draft IS/EA) was distributed to the federal, state, regional, local agencies and elected officials, as well as interested groups, organizations and individuals. In addition, all property owners and occupants within a 0.5-mile radius of the project limits were provided the Notice of Availability of the Draft IS/EA. The distribution list for the following parties is provided below:

- Federal Agencies
- State Agencies
- County Agencies
- Local Agencies
- Federal Legislators
- State Legislators
- Local Elected Officials

6.1 Federal Agencies

Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Federal Activities
Attn: Director
401 M Street, SW (Mail Code 2251-A)
Washington, DC 20460

Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance, Department of the Interior
Attn: Director
Main Interior Building, MS 2462
1849 "C" Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

United States Department of Agriculture,
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Mr. Sam Cobb, District Conservationist
P.O. Box 610
Blythe, CA 92225-9998

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Pacific Southwest, Region 9
Mr. Jeff Scott
75 Hawthorne St.
San Francisco,CA94105

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Secretary
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

United States Department of Agriculture,
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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
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915 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 980
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United States Department of Water Resources
Ms. Kimberly Gazzaniga, Chief of Environmental Site Assessment
3500 Industrial Blvd.
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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Palm Springs Fish & Wildlife Office
Ms. Karin Cleary-Rose, Chief, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties
777 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way, Suite 208
Palm Springs, CA 92262

U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Ms. Katrina Symons, Field Manager
Barstow Field Office
2601 Barstow Road
Barstow, CA 92311

U.S. Bureau of Land Management
El Centro Field Office
Mr. Tom Zale, Field Manager
1661 S. 4th Street
El Centro, CA 92243

California Desert District Bureau of Land Management
Mr. Joe Stout, Acting State Director
22835 Calle San Juan De Los Lagos
Moreno Valley, CA 92553

6.2 State Agencies

California Air Resources Board
Attn: Clerk of the Board
1001 “I” Street
P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, CA 95812

California Highway Patrol
Attn: Administrator
300 E Mountain View St
Barstow, CA 92311-2887

California Department of Conservation
Attn: Administrator
655 S. Hope St, #700
Los Angeles, CA 90017

California Natural Resources Agency
Mr. Wade Crawfoot, California Secretary
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Department of Conservation State Mining and Geology Board
Mr. Jeffrey Schmidt
801 K Street, MS 20-15
Sacramento, CA 95814

Native American Heritage Commission
Ms. Christina Snider
1550 Harbor Blvd, Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95691

State of California Public Utilities Commission
Mr. Kenneth Lewis
505 Van Ness Ave
San Francisco, CA 94102

State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Attn: Director
3602 Inland Empire Blvd, Suite C-220
Ontario, CA 91764

State of California Cal-EPA Department of Toxic Substances Control Headquarters
Attn: Sr. Environmental Planner
P.O. Box 806
Sacramento, CA 95812-0806

State of California Office of Historic Preservation
State Historic Preservation Officer
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1442
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 95814

State of California Department of Water Resources
Ms. Karla Nemeth, Director
P.O. Box 942836, Room 1115
Sacramento, CA 94236

Southern California Association of Governments
Mr. Rongsheng Lou, Program Manager
818 West 7th Street, 12th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017

State Water Resources Control Board
Ms. Eileen Sobeck, Executive Director
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

California State Lands Commission
Ms. Jennifer Lucchesi, Executive Officer
100 Howe Avenue, #100
Sacramento, CA 95825

6.3 Local Agencies and Elected Officials

County of Riverside
Mr. Ray Smith
Public information Officer
4080 Lemon Street,
Riverside, CA 92501

County of Riverside Transportation and Land Management Agency
Ms. Patty Romo
Director of Transportation
4080 Lemon Street
Riverside, CA 92501

County of Riverside Transportation and Land Management Agency
Mr. Juan C. Perez
Director
4080 Lemon Street
Riverside, CA 92501

Riverside County
Transportation Commission
Ms. Anne Mayer
Executive Director
4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor
Riverside, CA 92501

Riverside County – Planning Department
Attn: Director
P.O. Box 1409
Riverside, CA 92502-1409

Riverside County Sheriff's Department
Mr. David Teets, Captain
260 N. Spring St.
Blythe, CA 9225

Hon. Dianne Feinstein, U.S. Senator
11111 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 915
Los Angeles, CA 90025

Hon. Kamala Harris, U.S. Senator
11845 W Olympic Boulevard, Suite 1250W
Los Angeles, CA 90064

Hon. Eduardo Garcia, Assembly Member
California State Assembly, District 56
48220 Jackson Street, Suite A3
Coachella, CA 92236

Hon. Raul Ruiz, Congress Member
House of Representatives, California District 36
43875 Washington Street
Suite F
Palm Desert, CA 92211

Hon. Jeff Stone, Senator
California Senate, District 28
45-125 Smurr Street, Suite B
Indio, CA 92201

Riverside County Transportation Commission
Ms. Eliza Perez, Public Affairs Manager
4081 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor
Riverside, CA 92501

Hon. Paul Cook, Congress Member
House of Representatives, California District 8
14955 Dale Evans Pkwy., Apple Valley Town Hall
Apple Valley, CA 92307

Office of Supervisor V. Manuel Perez
Mr. Greg Rodriguez, Legislative Assistant
73-710 Fred Waring Dr. Suite 222
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Hon. V. Manuel Perez, Supervisor, Vice Chairman
County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, District 4
4080 Lemon St.
Riverside, CA 92501

California Desert Land Conservancy
60124 29 Palms Hwy
Joshua Tree, CA 92252

Riverside County Fire Department Desert Hot Springs Station 36
11535 Karen Avenue
Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240

Blythe Area Chamber of Commerce
Attn: Executive Director
207 E. Hobsonway
Blythe, CA 92225

City of Blythe
Mr. Armando Baldizzone, Public Works Director
440 S. Main St.
Blythe, CA 92225

City of Blythe Police Department
Mr. Jeffrey Wade, Police Chief
240 N. Spring St.
Blythe, CA 92225

City of Blythe
Hon. Dale Reynolds, Mayor
235 N. Broadway
Blythe, CA 9225

City of Blythe
Hon. Eric Egan, Vice Mayor
235 N. Broadway
Blythe, CA 9225

City of Blythe
Hon. Johnny Rodriguez, Councilmember
235 N. Broadway
Blythe, CA 9225

City of Blythe
Hon. Joseph Halby III, Councilmember
235 N. Broadway
Blythe, CA 9225

City of Blythe
Hon. Joseph De Coninck, Councilmember
235 N. Broadway
Blythe, CA 9225

Blythe Community Center - County of Riverside Office On Aging
Ms. Cindy Ruiz
445 N. Broadway
Blythe, CA 92225

Fire Department Blythe Station 43
Mr. Billy Kem, Fire Chief
201 N. Commercial
Blythe, CA 92225

Colorado River Senior Community Center
Ms. Bobbe Burgoyne, Chair
HCR 20 Box 3408
Blythe, CA 92225

Palo Verde Irrigation District
Mr. Ned Hyduke, Manager
180 W 14th Avenue
Blythe, CA 92225

Palo Verde Community College District
Dr. Donald G. Wallace, Superintendent/President
College Drive 1
Blythe, CA 92225

Palo Verde Unified School District
Dr. Charles Bush, Superintendent
295 N. First St
Blythe, CA 92225

Palo Verde Transit Agency
Mr. K. George Colangeli, Transit General Manager/Transit Safety Agent
415 N. Main St.
Blythe, CA 92225

VFW Post 2987
Mr. Larry Kelly, President
148 N 1st St.
Blythe, CA 92225

Palo Verde Valley District Library
Attn: Director
West Chanslor Way 125
Blythe, CA 92225

Riverside County EMS Agency
Mr. Bruce Barton, Director of EMS
4065 County Circle Dr #102
Riverside, CA 92503

South Coast Air Quality Management District
21865 Copley Dr
Diamond Bar, CA 91765

Palo Verde Valley Transit Agency
Attn: Board of Directors
415 North Main Street
Blythe, CA 92225

Rotary Club of Blythe
Mr. Charles Bush, President
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Blythe, CA 92226

News-Press & Gazette Co.
129 S. 2nd St.
Blythe, CA 92225

Suddenlink Communications
621 W. Hobsonway
Blythe, CA 92225

Southern California Gas Company
13100 W. 14th Ave.
Blythe, CA 92225

Cablevision-Blythe
129 S. 2nd St.
Blythe, CA 92225

Callan Oil Distributing Inc.
481 Coronado St.
Blythe, CA 92225

Edison International
505 W 14th Avenue
Blythe, CA 92225

Blythe Energy
16560 W. Hobsonway
Blythe, CA 92225

The Triple Aaa Water Co.
175 S. Spring St.
Blythe, CA 92225

Florida Power & Light Co
16560 W Hobsonway
Blythe, CA 92225

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Appendix A Section 4(f) Evaluation

A.1 Applicable Technical Reports

- City of Blyth General Plan (May, 2007)
- Historic Property Survey Report (January, 2019)

A.2 Introduction

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, codified in federal law at 49 United States Code (USC) 303, declares that "it is the policy of the United States Government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites."

Section 4(f) specifies that the Secretary [of Transportation] may approve a transportation program or project . . . requiring the use of publicly owned land of a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, state, or local significance, or land of an historic site of national, state, or local significance (as determined by the federal, state, or local officials having jurisdiction over the park, area, refuge, or site) only if both of the following apply.

- There is no prudent and feasible alternative to using that land.
- The program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site resulting from the use.

Section 4(f) further requires consultation with the Department of the Interior and, as appropriate, the involved offices of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Housing and Urban Development in developing transportation projects and programs that use lands protected by Section 4(f). If historic sites are involved, then coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) is also needed.

A.3 Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to rehabilitate the existing asphalt concrete (AC) pavement on Interstate 10 (I-10) from 1.05 west of Wiley Road Interchange (PM R134.0) to California/Arizona State line (PM R156.4) in the County of Riverside. Rehabilitation activities include removal and replacement of existing inside and outside shoulders, guardrails, rumble strips, drainage inlets, dikes, and oversized drains. The proposed project will also involve upgrades to ramp facilities for ADA compliance, grading as much as 5 feet outside the edge of shoulder, and installation of a two-lane temporary detour in the existing median.

This section describes the proposed action and the Build Alternative that was developed to meet the identified purpose and need while avoiding and minimizing environmental impacts. The proposed project consists of a Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative. For the full project description and additional details, see Chapter 1 of the IS/EA.

A.4 Purpose and Need

A.4.1 Purpose of the Project

The primary purpose of this project is to restore and extend the service life of existing pavement for a minimum of twenty (20) years; therefore, minimize expenditures of future maintenance. A secondary purpose is to improve safety and mobility for the traveling public by upgrading guardrail, bridge rails, and drainage facilities.

A.4.2 Need for the Project

Under heavy and continuous traffic over a long period of time, existing pavement has deteriorated at several locations within the project limits. As indicated in the Department's 2013 annual Pavement Condition Survey (PCS), there are areas of distress, cracking, rutting, bleeding, and poor ride quality on the pavement, within the project limits, that is beyond normal maintenance repairs and treatment.

A.5 Alternatives

A.5.1 Build Alternative

The Build Alternative, would include the following improvements to the identified portion of the I-10 Corridor:

- Rehabilitate 22.4 miles of existing pavement.
- Install 2 detour lanes (either adjacent to EB lanes or one in each direction, w/in the median).
- Grade 5-foot strip (outside edge of shoulder) to accommodate installation of standard shoulders.
- Replacement of existing inside and outside shoulders, guardrails, and rumble strips.
- Remove and replace existing drainage facilities.
- Upgrade existing ADA facilities at ramp termini.
- Provide Rock Slope Protection (RSP) at several bridge locations.

A.5.2 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative consists of leaving the existing pavement as is. Minor maintenance expenditures may be made to extend the life of the existing pavement, but timing and extent of other maintenance activities is uncertain. Existing and future pavement conditions would continue to deteriorate.

A.6 Section 4(f) De Minimis Evaluation

This section of the document discusses de minimis impact determinations under Section 4(f). Section 6009(a) of SAFETEA-LU amended Section 4(f) legislation at 23 United States Code (USC) 138 and 49 USC 303 to simplify the processing and approval of projects that have only de minimis impacts on lands protected by Section 4(f). This revision provides that once the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) determines that a transportation use of Section 4(f) property, after consideration of any impact avoidance, minimization, and mitigation or enhancement measures, results in a de minimis impact on that property, an analysis of avoidance alternatives is not required and the Section 4(f) evaluation process is complete. The Federal Highway Administration's final rule on Section 4(f) de minimis findings is codified in 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 774.3 and CFR 774.17.

Responsibility for compliance with Section 4(f) has been assigned to Caltrans pursuant to 23 USC 326 and 327, including determinations and approval of Section 4(f) evaluations as well as coordination with those agencies that have jurisdiction over a Section 4(f) resource that may be affected by a project action. In fulfilling its responsibility under 23 USC 326 and 327, Caltrans evaluated publicly-owned lands of a public park, recreation area or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, State, or local significance within the project area. Caltrans has also analyzed all archaeological and historic sites within the Section 106 Area of Potential Effects (APE), to determine whether any are protected Section 4(f) properties. Section 4(f) *de minimis* determination consideration was required for one cultural resource within the project APE. There are no designated Wild or Scenic Rivers within the study area.

A.7 Resources Evaluated Relative to the Requirements of Section 4(f)

This section of the document discusses parks, recreational facilities, and historic properties found within or next to the project area that do not trigger Section 4(f) protection because either: 1) they are not publicly owned, 2) they are not open to the public, 3) they are not eligible historic properties, 4) the project does not permanently use the property and does not hinder the preservation of the property, or 5) the proximity impacts do not result in constructive use.

Table A-1. Potential Section 4(f) Properties within the Project Study Area

Jurisdiction	Name	Location	Approximate Distance From the Project	Type	Amenities
City of Blythe	1. Miller Park	(No exact address – just an estimate) 599 S. Lovekin Blvd. Blythe, CA 92225	0.3 mile	Park	Approximately 16.2-acres; amenities include 1 lighted softball field, a large lighted multipurpose field, a playground, and a covered picnic area.
	2. Appleby Park	E Donlon St. and S Second St, Blythe	0.04 mile	Park	A 3.85-acre neighborhood park with playground equipment.
	3. Queshan Park	12200 Colorado River Road, Blythe, CA 92225	0.32 mile	Park	A 27.39-acre regional park comprising picnic areas and boat access to the Colorado River.
	4. Recreation Center	127 S. Main St. Blythe, CA 92225	0.16 mile	Recreation Facility	Recreation facility that provides classes and open rooms to the public.
	5. Ruth Brown Elementary School	241 N. 7th Street, Blythe, CA 92225	0.32 mile	School	K-8 Public School with enclosed fields and playgrounds.
CA State Historic Preservation Office	6. General Patton's Desert Training Center California/Arizona Maneuver Area (DTC/C-AMA)	(No exact address) From Indio, California eastward toward Prescott, Arizona and from Yuma, Arizona to Searchlight, Nevada covering approximately 18,000 square miles of the Mojave and Colorado deserts.	Encompasses the entire Project APE	Eligible Historic Property	The largest military training ground in the history of military maneuvers. Consisting of eleven divisional camps and associated sites and features including but not limited to: maneuver areas, divisional camps, small unit training areas, air facilities and crash sites, campsites, ranges, railroad sidings and deposits, hospitals and medical facilities depots, airfields, ranges, bivouacs, anti-tank ditches, camouflage areas, foxholes, minefields, observation positions, obstacles, refuse scatter and dumps, roads, rock features, rock insignias or cairns, rock walls, slit trenches, tank tracks, and tank traps, and other associated military and non-military artifacts
Sources: City of Blythe, 2007. HPSR, 2019.					

The properties are described below, with an explanation of why implementation of the proposed project would not constitute a "use" under Section 4(f) for recreation facilities and a *de minimis* use for the DTC/C-AMA.

A.7.1 Recreation Facilities

1. Miller Park

This park is on Lovekin Blvd. at W 14th Ave. in Blythe and is approximately 0.3 mile south of the I-10. Access to the park would not be affected by the proposed project. Considering that this park is almost one-half mile from the proposed construction area, construction-related noise and equipment emission impacts are anticipated to be minor and temporary due to the nature of the disturbance; therefore, the provisions of Section 4(f) are not triggered.

2. Appleby Park

This park is approximately 0.04 mile south of the I-10, between Broadway and 7th Street. Access to the park would not be affected by the proposed project. Construction activities would result in temporary increases in noise and equipment emissions. However, any construction-related noise and air quality impacts on parks and recreation areas are anticipated to be minor and temporary due to the nature of disturbance; therefore, the provisions of Section 4(f) are not triggered. To minimize potential short-term adverse impacts, measure **AQ-1**, referenced in Section 2.2.6 of the IS/EA, Air Quality, and measure(s) **NOI-1** and **NOI-2** in Section 2.2.7 of the IS/EA, Noise, would be implemented during the construction of the Build Alternative.

3. Queshan Park

This 23.39-acre regional park is approximately 0.32 mile northeast of the I-10, at the California/Arizona border. Access to the park would not be affected by the proposed project. Considering that this park is almost one-half mile from the proposed construction area, construction-related noise and equipment emission impacts are anticipated to be minor and temporary due to the nature of the disturbance; therefore, the provisions of Section 4(f) are not triggered.

4. Recreation Center

This recreation facility is in the city of Blythe, approximately 0.16 mile north of I-10 off S. Main Street. Access to the park would not be affected by the proposed project. Construction activities would result in temporary increases in noise and equipment emissions. However, any construction-related noise and air quality impacts on parks and recreation areas are anticipated to be minor and temporary due to the nature of disturbance; therefore, the provisions of Section 4(f) are not triggered. To minimize potential short-term adverse impacts, measure **AQ-1**, referenced in Section 2.2.6 of the IS/EA, Air Quality, and measure(s) **NOI-1** and **NOI-2** in Section 2.2.7 of the IS/EA, Noise, would be implemented during the construction of the Build Alternative.

5. Ruth Brown Elementary School

This public school is approximately 0.32 mile north of I-10 along N. 7th Street. Access to the school would not be affected by the proposed project and would be maintained at all times during proposed construction activities. Construction activities could result in temporary increases in noise and equipment emissions. However, due to the distance from the project and that the perimeter of the school is gated off, the provisions of Section 4(f) are not triggered.

A.7.2 Historic Sites

6. DTC/C-AMA

Consultation and identification efforts for the proposed Undertaking resulted in the identification of contributing elements to one Historic Property: General Patton's Desert Training Center California/Arizona Maneuver Area (DTC/C-AMA). These elements (tank

tracks) are permanently located within the existing transportation corridor. Essentially, a very small portion of the DTC/C-AMA is permanently incorporated into a transportation facility, facilitating "use" of a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligible property as defined in 23 CFR 774.17.

The DTC/C-AMA was assumed eligible for listing on the NRHP by the Caltrans Cultural Studies Office (CSO), and determined significant under Criteria A, B, C, and D; for the purposes of this project only. The property was determined significant at the state level and listed on the California Register of Historic Resources as CHL-985: DTC/C-AMA, in June 1989. Although, associated tank tracks were identified within the APE and determined to be contributing elements of the larger NRHP eligible property, the Undertaking and associated activities, will not pose adverse effects on the DTC/C-AMA, as a whole. The effect finding proposed that destruction, and or, further disturbances to these contributing elements, which constitute only a small minute portion of the overall DTC/C-AMA (<0.01%), would not rise to the level of being adverse, as such the Project results in a *Finding of No Adverse Effect* to the Historic Property.

No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures are required in conjunction with the completion of this analysis pursuant to Caltrans' Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA) and Section 4(f).

Caltrans has fulfilled its responsibilities regarding evaluation of properties protected by Section 4(f) for the proposed Project and has notified the California State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) of its determination that one property within the APE is eligible for inclusion in the NRHP and requested concurrence in its determination of the Project's ***Finding of No Adverse Effects*** and ***de minimis*** impact. On December 24, 2018 Caltrans Cultural Studies Office (CSO) submitted Caltrans Section 106 documentation to SHPO for review and concurrence. SHPO concurrence was received January 28, 2019. Pursuant to Caltrans' Section 106 PA, a non-response from SHPO, regarding the 4(f) determinations, would be treated as written concurrence for the de minimis finding. Please see Appendix B-1 for consultation documentation regarding CSO's assumption of NRHP eligibility and SHPO concurrence.

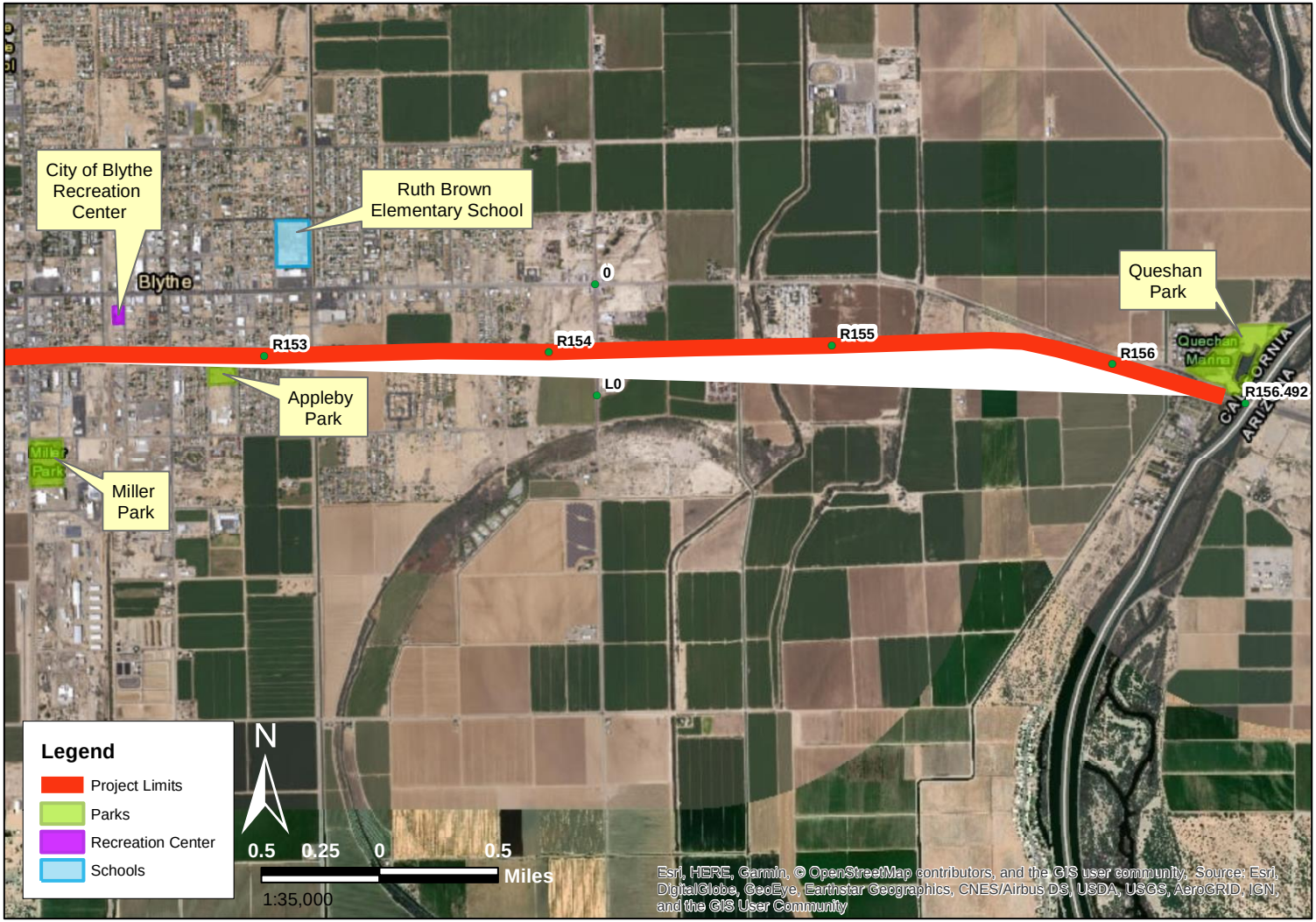

Figure 1
Location of Section 4(f) Properties

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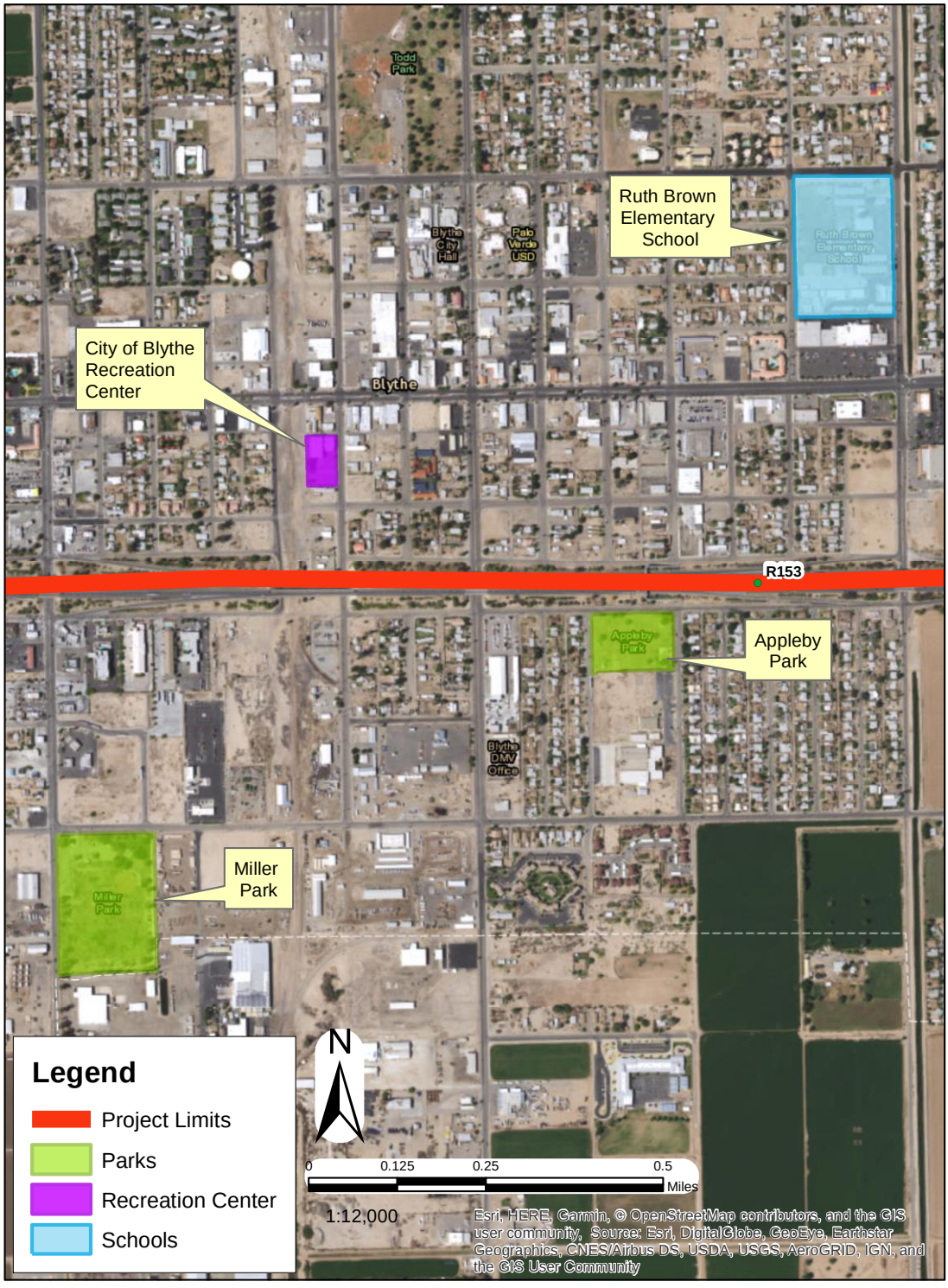
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City of Blythe Recreation Center
Appleby Park
Miller Park
R153
Blythe
Todd Park
Blythe City Hall
Palo Verde USD
Blythe DMV Office
Legend
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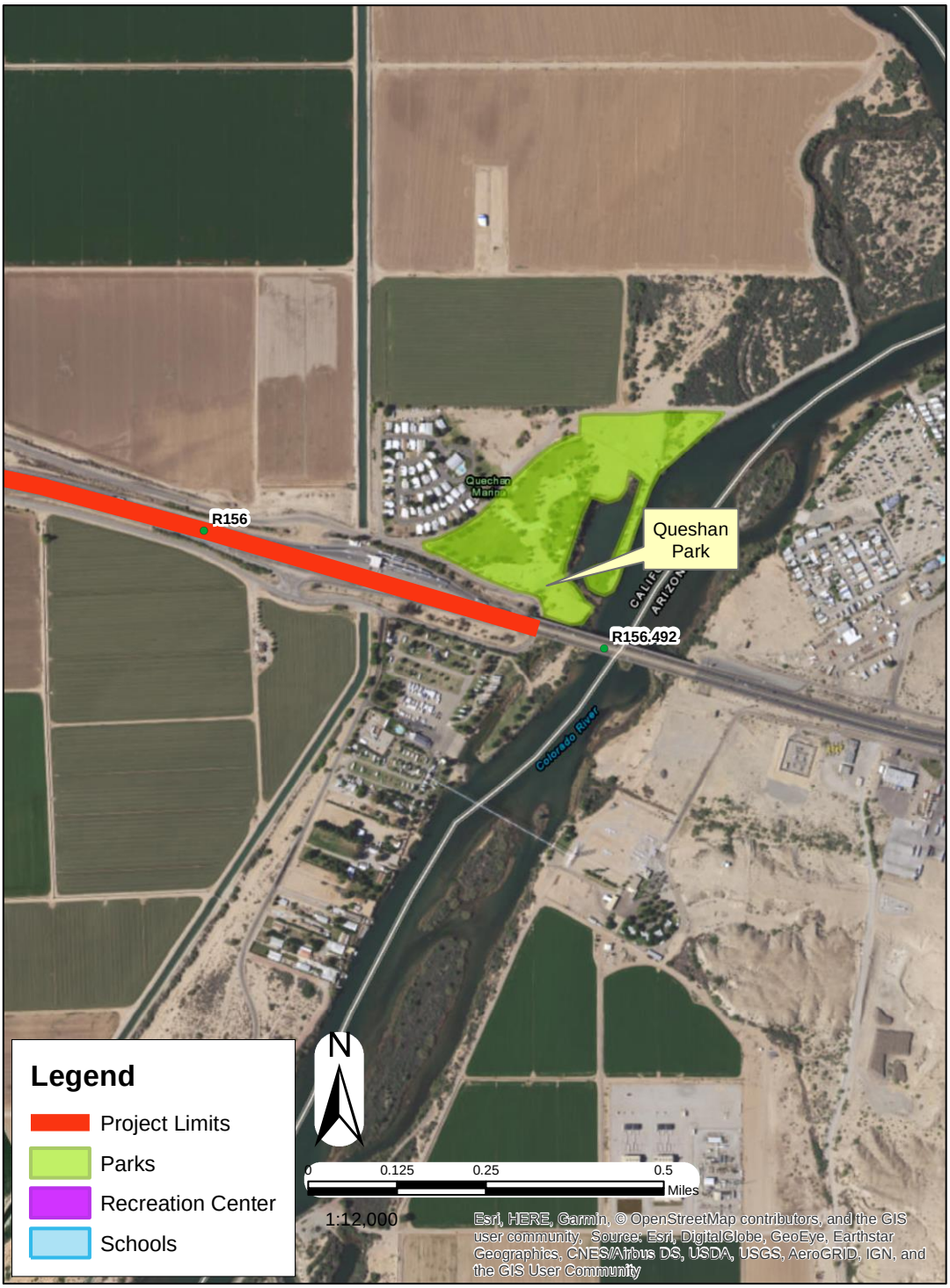
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Appendix A-1

Section 4(f) Coordination Documents

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State of California • Natural Resources Agency Gavin Newsom, *Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION Lisa Ann L. Mangat, *Director*
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95816-7100
Telephone: (916) 445-7000 FAX: (916) 445-7053
calshpo.ohp@parks.ca.gov www.ohp.parks.ca.gov

January 28, 2019

VIA EMAIL

In reply refer to: CATRA_2018_1228_001

Mr. David Price
Acting Section 106 Coordinator
Cultural Studies Office
Caltrans Division of Environmental Analysis
1120 N Street, MS-27
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Finding of No Adverse Effect without Standard Conditions for the I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps Project (08-1C083), Riverside County, California

Dear Mr. Price:

On December 27, 2018, the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) received a letter from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for the above referenced undertaking. Caltrans is initiating consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in accordance with the January 1, 2014 *First Amended Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the California Department of Transportation Regarding Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as it Pertains to the Administration of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in California* (PA). Caltrans' Public Resources Code (PRC) 5024 responsibilities for this project are being conducted in accordance with the January 2015 *Memorandum of Understanding between the California Department of Transportation and the California State Historic Preservation Officer regarding Compliance with Public Resource Code Section 5024 and Governor's Executive Order W-26-92* (PRC 5024 MOU). Pursuant to Stipulation X.B.2 of the Section 106 PA, Caltrans is seeking SHPO comment on a finding of no adverse effect without standard conditions. Enclosed with Caltrans' letter is a Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) with attached Archaeological Survey Report (ASR), and Finding of Effect (FOE). A more detailed description of the undertaking and area of potential effects (APE) is on pages one and two of the HPSR.

As currently proposed, the purpose of the undertaking is to rehabilitate the existing Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement on I-10 from 1.05 miles west of the Wiley Well Road Interchange (PM R134.0) to the California/Arizona state line (PM R155.6) using a full depth pavement replacement strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC

pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0-foot-thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JRCP). The undertaking will occur in the Caltrans Right-of-Way and within a previously disturbed roadway, shoulders, and median.

Caltrans' efforts to identify historic properties that may be affected by the undertaking included a record search, Native American consultation, and an archaeological pedestrian survey. Efforts identified two cultural resources requiring evaluation according to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) criteria:

- CHL-985 (The Desert Training Center/California-Arizona Maneuver Area [DTC/C-AMA]), a historic-era military training/maneuver area that encompasses portions of California, Arizona, and Nevada desert environs. This resources was listed on the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) as a California Registered Historical Landmark on June 12, 1989; and
- Prehistoric Trails Network Cultural Landscape (PTNCL), an extensive network of trade and exchange trails that prehistorically crossed the desert regions of southeastern California, spanning from the Pacific Coast to the Colorado River. The PTNCL consists of important destinations in the Colorado Desert near Blythe, California, the network of trails that tie them together, the features, and sites associated with the trails.

Pursuant to Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the Section 106 PA and Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the PRC 5024 MOU, Caltrans will consider the DTC/C-AMA as eligible for the NRHP under the following criteria:

- Criterion A for its association with World War II;
- Criterion B for its association with General George S. Patton;
- Criterion C for the design and layout of the individual camps, tactical maneuver areas, firing ranges, and other associated features; and
- Criterion D for the data potential of the entirety of the DTC/C-AMA.

The DTC/C-AMA's period of significance is 1942 to 1944. Caltrans' assumption of eligibility of the DTC/C-AMA is for the purposes of this undertaking only because evaluation was not possible. Caltrans will also assume the PTNCL as eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion D for the purposes of this undertaking only because evaluation was not possible.

Identification efforts for this undertaking identified two sets of tank tracks, contributing elements to the DTC/C-AMA within the APE. Caltrans argues that the tank tracks represent a ubiquitous-lesser-ranked feature due to the tracks' copious and monolithic distribution throughout the 18,000 square-mile DTC/C-AMA. Caltrans' efforts also identified three loci (field designations SRI-1013, 1028, and 1032 [all lithic scatters]) that are contributing elements to the PTNCL. The archaeological pedestrian surveys conducted for this undertaking concluded that the Loci were redeposited along with fill consolidated during the prior construction of I-10. Caltrans therefore concluded that the loci lack integrity of at least location and association.

In applying the criteria of adverse effect pursuant to Stipulation X.A of the Section 106 PA Caltrans finds that as a whole the undertaking will result in a finding of no adverse effect with non-standard conditions. Caltrans finds that effects to the tank tracks resulting from this undertaking will not adversely affect the DTC/C-AMA's ability to convey its significance under the assumed NRHP criteria A, B, C, and D. Caltrans also finds that the effects to loci SRI-1013, 1028, and 1032 resulting from this undertaking will not adversely affect the PTNCL's ability to convey its significance under the assumed NRHP Criterion D.

Pursuant to Stipulation X.B.2.a of the Section 106 PA and Stipulation X.B.2.c of the PRC 5024 MOU, Caltrans has found that the proposed undertaking will have no adverse effect on historic properties. Caltrans has established an Archaeological Monitoring Area (AMA) as a non-standard condition at the behest of the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians between post mile 142.7 and 143.4. During confidential, the Soboba requested tribal monitoring of pavement removal in this location in the event that underlying soil contained human remains or grave goods. Because there are no known historic properties requiring avoidance measures such as environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs), Caltrans has identified the AMA as a Cultural Sensitive Area (CSA) and has agreed to the Soboba's request for tribal monitoring. Based on review of the submitted documentation and Caltrans' proposed non-standard conditions, **I do not object** to Caltrans' finding of no adverse effect without standard conditions.

If you have any questions, please contact State Historian Natalie Lindquist at (916) 445-7014 or at natalie.lindquist@parks.ca.gov or Associate State Archaeologist Alicia Perez at (916) 445-7020 or at alicia.perez@parks.ca.gov .

Sincerely,

Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer

State of California • Natural Resources Agency Gavin Newsom, *Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION Lisa Ann L. Mangat, *Director*
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95816-7100
Telephone: (916) 445-7000 FAX: (916) 445-7053
calshpo.ohp@parks.ca.gov www.ohp.parks.ca.gov

January 28, 2019

VIA EMAIL

In reply refer to: FHWA_2018_1228_001

Mr. David Price
Acting Section 106 Coordinator
Cultural Studies Office
Caltrans Division of Environmental Analysis
1120 N Street, MS-27
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Finding of No Adverse Effect without Standard Conditions for the I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps Project (08-1C083), Riverside County, California

Dear Mr. Price:

On December 27, 2018, the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) received a letter from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for the above referenced undertaking. Caltrans is initiating consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in accordance with the January 1, 2014 *First Amended Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the California Department of Transportation Regarding Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as it Pertains to the Administration of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in California* (PA). Caltrans' Public Resources Code (PRC) 5024 responsibilities for this project are being conducted in accordance with the January 2015 *Memorandum of Understanding between the California Department of Transportation and the California State Historic Preservation Officer regarding Compliance with Public Resource Code Section 5024 and Governor's Executive Order W-26-92* (PRC 5024 MOU). Pursuant to Stipulation X.B.2 of the Section 106 PA, Caltrans is seeking SHPO comment on a finding of no adverse effect without standard conditions. Enclosed with Caltrans' letter is a Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) with attached Archaeological Survey Report (ASR), and Finding of Effect (FOE). A more detailed description of the undertaking and area of potential effects (APE) is on pages one and two of the HPSR.

As currently proposed, the purpose of the undertaking is to rehabilitate the existing Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement on I-10 from 1.05 miles west of the Wiley Well Road Interchange (PM R134.0) to the California/Arizona state line (PM R155.6) using a full depth pavement replacement strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC

pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0-foot-thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JRCP). The undertaking will occur in the Caltrans Right-of-Way and within a previously disturbed roadway, shoulders, and median.

Caltrans' efforts to identify historic properties that may be affected by the undertaking included a record search, Native American consultation, and an archaeological pedestrian survey. Efforts identified two cultural resources requiring evaluation according to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) criteria:

- CHL-985 (The Desert Training Center/California-Arizona Maneuver Area [DTC/C-AMA]), a historic-era military training/maneuver area that encompasses portions of California, Arizona, and Nevada desert environs. This resources was listed on the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) as a California Registered Historical Landmark on June 12, 1989; and
- Prehistoric Trails Network Cultural Landscape (PTNCL), an extensive network of trade and exchange trails that prehistorically crossed the desert regions of southeastern California, spanning from the Pacific Coast to the Colorado River. The PTNCL consists of important destinations in the Colorado Desert near Blythe, California, the network of trails that tie them together, the features, and sites associated with the trails.

Pursuant to Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the Section 106 PA and Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the PRC 5024 MOU, Caltrans will consider the DTC/C-AMA as eligible for the NRHP under the following criteria:

- Criterion A for its association with World War II;
- Criterion B for its association with General George S. Patton;
- Criterion C for the design and layout of the individual camps, tactical maneuver areas, firing ranges, and other associated features; and
- Criterion D for the data potential of the entirety of the DTC/C-AMA.

The DTC/C-AMA's period of significance is 1942 to 1944. Caltrans' assumption of eligibility of the DTC/C-AMA is for the purposes of this undertaking only because evaluation was not possible. Caltrans will also assume the PTNCL as eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion D for the purposes of this undertaking only because evaluation was not possible.

Identification efforts for this undertaking identified two sets of tank tracks, contributing elements to the DTC/C-AMA within the APE. Caltrans argues that the tank tracks represent a ubiquitous-lesser-ranked feature due to the tracks' copious and monolithic distribution throughout the 18,000 square-mile DTC/C-AMA. Caltrans' efforts also identified three loci (field designations SRI-1013, 1028, and 1032 [all lithic scatters]) that are contributing elements to the PTNCL. The archaeological pedestrian surveys conducted for this undertaking concluded that the Loci were redeposited along with fill consolidated during the prior construction of I-10. Caltrans therefore concluded that the loci lack integrity of at least location and association.

In applying the criteria of adverse effect pursuant to Stipulation X.A of the Section 106 PA Caltrans finds that as a whole the undertaking will result in a finding of no adverse effect with non-standard conditions. Caltrans finds that effects to the tank tracks resulting from this undertaking will not adversely affect the DTC/C-AMA's ability to convey its significance under the assumed NRHP criteria A, B, C, and D. Caltrans also finds that the effects to loci SRI-1013, 1028, and 1032 resulting from this undertaking will not adversely affect the PTNCL's ability to convey its significance under the assumed NRHP Criterion D.

Pursuant to Stipulation X.B.2.a of the Section 106 PA and Stipulation X.B.2.c of the PRC 5024 MOU, Caltrans has found that the proposed undertaking will have no adverse effect on historic properties. Caltrans has established an Archaeological Monitoring Area (AMA) as a non-standard condition at the behest of the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians between post mile 142.7 and 143.4. During confidential, the Soboba requested tribal monitoring of pavement removal in this location in the event that underlying soil contained human remains or grave goods. Because there are no known historic properties requiring avoidance measures such as environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs), Caltrans has identified the AMA as a Cultural Sensitive Area (CSA) and has agreed to the Soboba's request for tribal monitoring. Based on review of the submitted documentation and Caltrans' proposed non-standard conditions, **I do not object** to Caltrans' finding of no adverse effect without standard conditions.

If you have any questions, please contact State Historian Natalie Lindquist at (916) 445-7014 or at natalie.lindquist@parks.ca.gov or Associate State Archaeologist Alicia Perez at (916) 445-7020 or at alicia.perez@parks.ca.gov .

Sincerely,

Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
P.O. BOX 942874, MS 27
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TTY (916) 653-4086
www.dot.ca.gov

Making Conservation a California Way of Life.

December 24, 2018

Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer
California Office of Historic Preservation
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95816

Attn: Natalie Lindquist

RE: Transmittal of Finding of No Adverse Effect with Non-Standard Conditions for the I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps Project (08-1C083) in Riverside County

Dear Ms. Polanco,

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is initiating consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) regarding Caltrans Project EA: 08-1C083, Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps, located in Riverside County. This consultation is undertaken in accordance with the January 1, 2014 *First Amended Programmatic Agreement among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the California Department of Transportation* (Section 106 PA). Caltrans is concurrently complying with PRC 5024 pursuant to Stipulation III of the *Memorandum of Understanding between the California Department of Transportation and the California State Historic Preservation Officer regarding Compliance with Public Resources Code Section 5024 and Governor's Executive Order W-26-92* (PRC 5024 MOU). We are consulting with you under Section 106 PA Stipulation X.B.2, which requires SHPO consultation regarding findings of effect.

The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated December 23, 2016 and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

The Undertaking proposes to rehabilitate the existing Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement on 1-10 from 1.05 miles west of the Wiley Well Road Interchange (PM R134.0) to the California/Arizona state line (PM R155.6) using full depth pavement replacement strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0-foot-thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JPCP). This proposed scope of work will take place in the Caltrans Right of Way (RoW) within previously disturbed roadway, shoulders, and median.

Enclosed for your review, you will find a Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) and Finding of Effect (FOE). The HPSR dated November 2018 was prepared for the proposed undertaking. The HPSR determined that there are two (2) Historic Properties within the APE which were assumed eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for the purposes of this project:

- **CHL-985: DTC/C-AMA**
  The Desert Training Center/ California-Arizona Maneuver Area is a historic-period military training/maneuver area. This Historic Property stretches from Indio, California eastward toward Prescott, Arizona and from Yuma, Arizona to Searchlight, Nevada covering approximately 18,000 square miles. The area was chosen by Gen. George S. Patton, Jr. to prepare troops for the harsh conditions and environment of combat for the North Africa Campaign. This property was listed on the California Register of Historic Places (CHRP) as a California Registered Historical Landmark June 12, 1989 but has not been formally evaluated for the NRHP. *For the purposes of this project only, on September 9, 2018, the DTC/C-AMA was assumed eligible for listing on the NRHP per Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the PA, under Criterion A* for its association with World War II; *Criterion B* for its association with General George S. Patton; *Criterion C* for the design and layout of the individual camps, tactical maneuver areas, firing ranges, and other associated features; *and Criterion D* for the data potential of the entirety of the DTC/C-AMA. The period of significance is 1942 to 1944. Character defining features (tank tracks) were located within the APE.

- **Prehistoric Trails Network Cultural Landscape (PTNCL)**
  The Prehistoric Trails Network Cultural Landscape (PTNCL), is an extensive network of trade and exchange trails that prehistorically crossed the desert regions of southeastern California, spanning from the Pacific Coast to the Colorado River. This landscape consists of important destinations in the Colorado Desert near Blythe, California, the network of trails that tie them together, features and sites associated with the trails. The PTNCL site types are divided into three categories: destinations, trails, and trail-associated sites or features. This property has not been formally evaluated for the NRHP or CRHR. However, for the purposes of this project only, on August 7, 2018, the PTNCL was assumed eligible for listing on the NRHP per Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the PA, Criterion D for its potential to yield data important to the prehistory of the region.

Pursuant to Stipulation X.A of the Section 106 PA and the PRC 5024 MOU, Caltrans has applied the Criteria of Adverse Effect and has determined that a finding of **No Adverse Effect with Non-Standard Conditions** is appropriate for the Undertaking as a whole, per Stipulation X.B.2 of the Section 106 PA and PRC 5024 MOU. Caltrans is seeking SHPO concurrence on this finding.

Caltrans has established an Archaeological Monitoring Area (AMA) as a non-standard condition at the behest of the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians between postmile 142.7 and 143.4. During confidential Section 106 consultation efforts, Soboba requested tribal monitoring of pavement removal in this location in case the underlying soil contained human remains or grave goods. Since there is no archaeological site at this location that requires ESA protection, Caltrans has identified this area as a Culturally Sensitive Area (CSA) and agreed to the monitoring request.

Caltrans, as assigned by FHWA, intends to make a *de minimis* finding for Section 4(f) use of a historic property (CHL-985: DTC/C-AMA) based on your concurrence on the Section 106 effect finding, pursuant to Section 6009(a) of SAFETEA-LU. Please note that if no response is received from the SHPO within 30 days of receipt of this submittal, Caltrans will still make a *de minimis* impact finding for purposes of Section 4(f) as described in our August 11, 2006 letter agreement.

We look forward to receiving your response within 30 days of your receipt of this submittal in accordance with Stipulation X.B.2.b of the Section 106 PA. Thank you for your assistance with this Undertaking. If you need any additional information, please contact me by phone at (916) 653-0516 or david.price@dot.ca.gov, or District 08 Environmental Branch Chief, Historian Andrew Walters by phone at 909-388-2647 or email at andrew.walters@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

David Price
Acting Section 106 Coordinator
Cultural Studies Office
Division of Environmental Analysis
Enclosure:
Historic Property Survey Report for EA:08-1C083, Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps, Riverside County, California (December 2018), with attached Finding of Effect

cc: Andrew Walters, District 08 Branch Chief - Environmental Support/Cultural Studies
Shannon Clarendon, District 08 Environmental Planner-Archaeology

Appendix B Title VI Policy Statement

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
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Making Conservation a California Way of Life.

April 2018

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The California Department of Transportation, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ensures *"No person in the United States shall, on the ground 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 federal statutes and state law further those protections to include sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and age.

For information or guidance on how to file a complaint, please visit the following web page: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/bep/title_vi/t6_violated.htm.

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille or in a language other than English, please contact the California Department of Transportation, Office of Business and Economic Opportunity, 1823 14th Street, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 95811. Telephone (916) 324-8379, TTY 711, email Title.VI@dot.ca.gov, or visit the website www.dot.ca.gov.

LAURIE BERMAN
Director

Appendix C Comments and Coordination

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Native American Consultation

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Sacred Lands File & Native American Contacts List Request

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

1550 Harbor Blvd., Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95691
(916) 373-3710
(916) 373-5471 – Fax
nahc@nahc.ca.gov

Information Below is Required for a Sacred Lands File Search

Project: EA-1C082 and EA-1C083

Location: 08-Riv-State Route 10-PM R105/R135

County: RIVERSIDE

USGS Quadrangle Name: DESERT CENTER
(7.5-minute topographic)

Township: 05S **Range:** 15S **Section(s):** 27 **(SBBM)**

USGS Quadrangle Name: CORN SPRING
(7.5-minute topographic)

Township: 05S **Range:** 15E **Section(s):** 25, 26, 27 **(SBBM)**

Township: 05S **Range:** 16E **Section(s):** 27, 28, 29, 30, 34, 35, 36 **(SBBM)**

USGS Quadrangle Name: SIDEWINDER WELL
(7.5-minute topographic)

Township: 05S **Range:** 16E **Section(s):** 36 **(SBBM)**

Township: 05S **Range:** 17E **Section(s):** 31 **(SBBM)**

Township: 06S **Range:** 17E **Section(s):** 04, 05, 06, 09, 10, 11, 12, 13 **(SBBM)**

Township: 06S **Range:** 18E **Section(s):** 18 **(SBBM)**

USGS Quadrangle Name: FORD DRY LAKE
(7.5-minute topographic)

Township: 06S **Range:** 18E **Section(s):** 16, 17, 18 **(SBBM)**

USGS Quadrangle Name: EAST OF AZTEC MINE
(7.5-minute topographic)

Township: 06S **Range:** 18E **Section(s):** 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, **(SBBM)**

Township: 06S **Range:** 19E **Section(s):** 28, 29, 30, 33 **(SBBM)**

USGS Quadrangle Name: HOPKINS WELL
(7.5-minute topographic)

Township: 06S **Range:** 19E **Section(s):** 33, 34, 35, 36 **(SBBM)**

Township: 06S **Range:** 20E **Section(s):** 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 **(SBBM)**

USGS Quadrangle Name: ROOSEVELT MINE
(7.5-minute topographic)

Township: 06S **Range:** 20E **Section(s):** 35, 36 **(SBBM)**

Township: 06S **Range:** 21E **Section(s):** 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 **(SBBM)**

USGS Quadrangle Name: RIPLEY
(7.5-minute topographic)

Township: 06S **Range:** 21E **Section(s):** 36 **(SBBM)**

Township: 06S **Range:** 23E **Section(s):** 31 **(SBBM)**

USGS Quadrangle Name: BLYTHE
(7.5-minute topographic)

Township: 06S **Range:** 23E **Section(s):** 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36 **(SBBM)**

Company/Firm/Agency: California Department of Transportation, District 8

Street Address: 464 West Fourth Street, 6th Floor, MS 825

City: San Bernardino, CA Zip: 92401

Phone: (909) 383-4482

Fax: _____

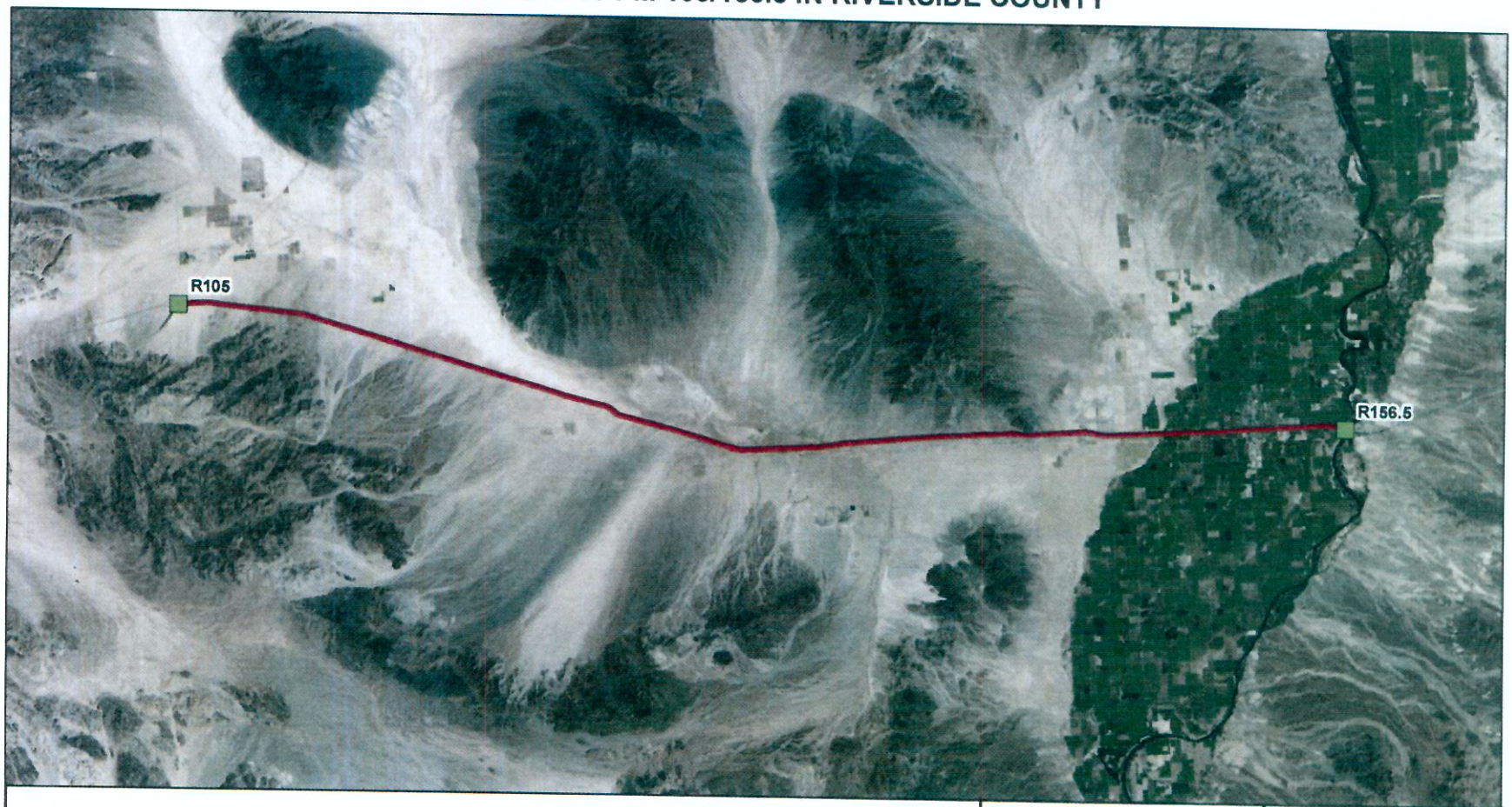
Email: shannon.clarendon@dot.ca.gov

Project Description:
The following project description is consistent for both EA-1C082 and EA-1C083. It is proposed to rehabilitate the existing Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement on I-10 from SR-177 Junction (PM RI 05.4) to California /Arizona State line (PM R156.5). This project proposal is to rehabilitate existing 1-10 AC pavement using full depth pavement-replacement-strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0 foot thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JPCP). For the proposed CRCP or JPCP dimensions see the attached exhibit. Some of the expected construction features included within the project limits are listed below:

- Removal of existing mainline AC pavement and base
- Removal of existing inside and outside shoulders
- Remove and replace existing drainage inlets, all dikes, overside drain, etc.
- Removal of rumble strips
- Remove guardrails
- Install Midwest Guardrail System with vegetation control.
- Construct CRCP or JPCP and associated Base (most likely lean concrete base) for traveled-way and shoulders, including outside Shoulder Backing on both roadbeds
- Construct new drainage inlets, dikes, overside drain, etc. as needed
- Widen existing Bridges for the sole purpose of Construction Traffic Handling
- Regrade the Median to accommodate temporary drainage during construction
- Upgrade existing American with Disabilities Act (ADA) facilities at ramp termini.
- Existing ramps will be cold planed and overlaid with Hot Mix Asphalt- A (HMA-A).

To handle traffic during construction a two lane temporary detour and crossovers will be constructed by widening within the median in the eastbound direction. As a result of detour construction, all existing bridges and/or drainage crossings on the eastbound direction will be widened towards the median as shown in the attached exhibit. The proposed detour pavement section will consist of approximately 0.55' HMA-A over 1.35' Aggregate Base. Temporary detour will remain in place after completion of the project. To accommodate the need to reconstruct and/or construct the outside Shoulder Backing, an approximate 50-foot wide stripe along the outside edge of shoulder within the existing RW will be required. All proposed improvements will be done within the existing State Right of Way.

EA: 1C082 &1C083: RIV-10 BLYTHE PAVEMENT REHAB: MAINLINE, SHOULDERS, RAMP
INTERSTATE 10 PM 105/156.5 IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY



0 14,000 28,000 56,000 84,000 112,000
Feet

0 4,000 8,000 16,000 24,000 32,000
Meters

1: 275,000

N

Legend

Post Miles

Project Area

FEBRUARY 2018

EA: 1C082 &1C083
08-Riv-10-PM105/156.5

Consultation Map

CALTRANS Data Informational Only

STATE OF CALIFORNIA — Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Governor

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION
Cultural and Environmental Department
1550 Harbor Blvd., Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95691
(916) 373-3710

February 26, 2018

Shannon Clarendon
California Department of Transportation, District 8

Sent by E-mail: Shannon.clarendon@dot.ca.gov

RE: Proposed EA-1C082 and EA-1C083 Project, Interstate 10 from State Route-177 to the California/Arizona State Line; Desert Center, Corn Spring, Sidewinder Well, Ford Dry Lake, East of Aztec Mine, Hopkins Well, Roosevelt Mine, Ripley, and Blythe USGS Quadrangles, Riverside County, California

Dear Ms. Clarendon:

A record search of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) *Sacred Lands File* was completed for the area of potential project effect (APE) referenced above with negative results. Please note that the absence of specific site information in the *Sacred Lands File* does not indicate the absence of Native American cultural resources in any APE.

Attached is a list of tribes culturally affiliated to the project area. I suggest you contact all of the listed Tribes. If they cannot supply information, they might recommend others with specific knowledge. The list should provide a starting place to locate areas of potential adverse impact within the APE. By contacting all those on the list, your organization will be better able to respond to claims of failure to consult. If a response has not been received within two weeks of notification, the NAHC requests that you follow-up with a telephone call to ensure that the project information has been received.

If you receive notification of change of addresses and phone numbers from any of these individuals or groups, please notify me. With your assistance we are able to assure that our lists contain current information. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact via email: gayle.totton@nahc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Gayle Totton, M.A., PhD.
Associate Governmental Program Analyst
(916) 373-3714

Native American Heritage Commission
Native American Contact List
Riverside County
2/26/2018

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
Jeff Grubbe, Chairperson
5401 Dinah Shore Drive — Cahuilla
Palm Springs, CA, 92264 — Luiseno
Phone: (760) 699 - 6800
Fax: (760) 699-6919

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
Patricia Garcia-Plotkin, Director
5401 Dinah Shore Drive — Cahuilla
Palm Springs, CA, 92264 — Luiseno
Phone: (760) 699 - 6907
Fax: (760) 699-6924
ACBCI-THPO@aguacaliente.net

Augustine Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians
Amanda Vance, Chairperson
P.O. Box 846 — Cahuilla
Coachella, CA, 92236
Phone: (760) 398 - 4722
Fax: (760) 369-7161

Cabazon Band of Mission Indians
Doug Welmas, Chairperson
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway — Cahuilla
Indio, CA, 92203
Phone: (760) 342 - 2593
Fax: (760) 347-7880

Cahuilla Band of Indians
Daniel Salgado, Chairperson
52701 U.S. Highway 371 — Cahuilla
Anza, CA, 92539
Phone: (951) 763 - 5549
Fax: (951) 763-2808
Chairman@cahuilla.net

Campo Band of Mission Indians
Ralph Goff, Chairperson
36190 Church Road, Suite 1 — Kumeyaay
Campo, CA, 91906
Phone: (619) 478 - 9046
Fax: (619) 478-5818
rgoff@campo-nsn.gov

Chemehuevi Reservation
Charles Wood, Chairperson
P.O. Box 1976 1990 Palo Verde Drive — Chemehuevi
Havasu Lake, CA, 92363
Phone: (760) 858 - 4219
Fax: (760) 858-5400
chairman@cit-nsn.gov

Colorado River Indian Tribe
Dennis Patch, Chairman
26600 Mojave Road — Chemehuevi
Parker, AZ, 85344 — Mojave
Phone: (928) 669 - 9211
Fax: (928) 669-1925
crit.museum@yahoo.com

Ewiiaapaayp Tribal Office
Robert Pinto, Chairperson
4054 Willows Road — Kumeyaay
Alpine, CA, 91901
Phone: (619) 445 - 6315
Fax: (619) 445-9126

Ewiiaapaayp Tribal Office
Michael Garcia, Vice Chairperson
4054 Willows Road — Kumeyaay
Alpine, CA, 91901
Phone: (619) 445 - 6315
Fax: (619) 445-9126
michaelg@leaningrock.net

Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
Timothy Williams, Chairperson
500 Merriman Ave — Mojave
Needles, CA, 92363
Phone: (760) 629 - 4591
Fax: (760) 629-5767

Jamul Indian Village
Erica Pinto, Chairperson
P.O. Box 612 — Kumeyaay
Jamul, CA, 91935
Phone: (619) 669 - 4785
Fax: (619) 669-4817

This list is current only as of the date of this document. Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resource Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources assessment for the proposed EA-1C082 and EA-1C083 Projects, Riverside County.

Native American Heritage Commission
Native American Contact List
Riverside County
2/26/2018

La Posta Band of Mission Indians
Gwendolyn Parada, Chairperson
8 Crestwood Road — Kumeyaay
Boulevard, CA, 91905
Phone: (619) 478 - 2113
Fax: (619) 478-2125
LP13boots@aol.com

La Posta Band of Mission Indians
Javaughn Miller, Tribal Administrator
8 Crestwood Road — Kumeyaay
Boulevard, CA, 91905
Phone: (619) 478 - 2113
Fax: (619) 478-2125
jmiller@LPtribe.net

Los Coyotes Band of Mission Indians
Shane Chapparosa, Chairperson
P.O. Box 189 — Cahuilla
Warner Springs, CA, 92086-0189
Phone: (760) 782 - 0711
Fax: (760) 782-0712
Chapparosa@msn.com

Los Coyotes Band of Mission Indians
John Perada, Environmental Director
P. O. Box 189 — Cahuilla
Warner Springs, CA, 92086
Phone: (760) 782 - 0712
Fax: (760) 782-2730

Manzanita Band of Kumeyaay Nation
Angela Elliott Santos, Chairperson
P.O. Box 1302 — Kumeyaay
Boulevard, CA, 91905
Phone: (619) 766 - 4930
Fax: (619) 766-4957

Morongo Band of Mission Indians
Denisa Torres, Cultural Resources Manager
12700 Pumarra Rroad — Cahuilla
Banning, CA, 92220 — Serrano
Phone: (951) 849 - 8807
Fax: (951) 922-8146
dtorres@morongo-nsn.gov

Morongo Band of Mission Indians
Robert Martin, Chairperson
12700 Pumarra Rroad — Cahuilla
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Phone: (951) 849 - 8807
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Ramona Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians
Joseph Hamilton, Chairperson
P.O. Box 391670 — Cahuilla
Anza, CA, 92539
Phone: (951) 763 - 4105
Fax: (951) 763-4325
admin@ramonatribe.com

Ramona Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians
John Gomez, Environmental Coordinator
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jgomez@ramonatribe.com

San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians
John Flores, Environmental Coordinator
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Phone: (760) 749 - 3200
Fax: (760) 749-3876
johnf@sanpasqualtribe.org

This list is current only as of the date of this document. Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resource Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources assessment for the proposed EA-1C082 and EA-1C083 Projects, Riverside County.

Native American Heritage Commission
Native American Contact List
Riverside County
2/26/2018

San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians
Allen E. Lawson, Chairperson
P.O. Box 365 — Kumeyaay
Valley Center, CA, 92082
Phone: (760) 749 - 3200
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allenl@sanpasqualtribe.org

Santa Rosa Band of Mission Indians
(951) 659-2700Steven Estrada, Chairperson
P.O. Box 391820 — Cahuilla
Anza, CA, 92539
Phone: (951) 659 - 2700
Fax: (951) 659-2228

Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians
Carrie Garcia, Cultural Resources Manager
P. O. Box 487 — Cahuilla
San Jacinto, CA, 92583 — Luiseno
Phone: (951) 654 - 2765
Fax: (951) 654-4198
carrieg@soboba-nsn.gov

Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians
Scott Cozart, Chairperson
P. O. Box 487 — Cahuilla
San Jacinto, CA, 92583 — Luiseno
Phone: (951) 654 - 2765
Fax: (951) 654-4198

Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians
Joseph Ontiveros, Cultural Resource Department
P.O. BOX 487 — Cahuilla
San Jacinto, CA, 92581 — Luiseno
Phone: (951) 663 - 5279
Fax: (951) 654-4198
jontiveros@soboba-nsn.gov

Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation
Lisa Haws, Cultural Resources Manager
1 Kwaaypaay Court — Kumeyaay
El Cajon, CA, 92019
Phone: (619) 312 - 1935
lhaws@sycuan-nsn.gov

Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation
Cody J. Martinez, Chairperson
1 Kwaaypaay Court — Kumeyaay
El Cajon, CA, 92019
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Fax: (619) 445-1927
ssilva@sycuan-nsn.gov

Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
Michael Mirelez, Cultural Resource Coordinator
P.O. Box 1160 — Cahuilla
Thermal, CA, 92274
Phone: (760) 399 - 0022
Fax: (760) 397-8146
mmirelez@tmdci.org

Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
Anthony Madrigal, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
46-200 Harrison Place — Chemehuevi
Coachella, CA, 92236
Phone: (760) 775 - 3259
amadrigal@29palmsbomi-nsn.gov

Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
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46-200 Harrison Place — Chemehuevi
Coachella, CA, 92236
Phone: (760) 863 - 2444
Fax: (760) 863-2449
29chairman@29palmsbomi-nsn.gov

This list is current only as of the date of this document. Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resource Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources assessment for the proposed EA-1C082 and EA-1C083 Projects, Riverside County.

Native American Heritage Commission
Native American Contact List
Riverside County
2/26/2018

Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians
Julie Hagen,
1 Viejas Grade Road
Alpine, CA, 91901
Phone: (619) 445 - 3810
Fax: (619) 445-5337
jhagen@viejas-nsn.gov

Kumeyaay

Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians
Robert Welch, Chairperson
1 Viejas Grade Road
Alpine, CA, 91901
Phone: (619) 445 - 3810
Fax: (619) 445-5337
jhagen@viejas-nsn.gov

Kumeyaay

This list is current only as of the date of this document. Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resource Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources assessment for the proposed EA-1C082 and EA-1C083 Projects, Riverside County.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
464 W. FOURTH STREET, 6TH FLOOR
SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1400
PHONE (909) 383-4042
FAX (909) 383-6494
TTY (909) 383-6300

Making Conservation a California Way of Life

March 19, 2018

Carrie Garcia
Cultural Resourses Manager
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians
P.O. Box 487
San Jacinto Ca, 92583

08-Riv-10 PM 105/156.5
Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab:
Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps
EA: 08-1C082 AND 1C083
PN: 08-1600-0087 AND 08-1600-0090

Dear Ms. Garcia:

Subject: Initial Native American Consultation for Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects)

As assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes two Projects to rehabilitate Interstate 10 (I-10). The proposed Projects involve rehabilitate existing 1-10 Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement using full depth pavement-replacement-strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0 foot thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JPCP). The work is located on I-10 from post mile 105 to 156.5 (see enclosed Project Location Map). The Projects are located in the following USGS Quadrangles: Desert Center, Corn Spring, Sidewinder Well, Ford Dry Lake, East of Aztec Mine, Hopkins Well, Roosevelt Mine, Ripley, and Blythe.

Please consider this letter and preliminary project information as the initiation of Section 106 consultation pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act. In addition, this letter serves as the formal notification of the proposed Projects as required under the California Environmental Quality Act. This notification is required under Public Resources Code 21080.3.1 and Chapter 532 Statutes of 2014 (i.e. AB 52). If no response is received by April 23, 2018, I will attempt to contact you by phone or email to follow up regarding this letter. Please provide a designated lead contact person if you have not provided that information to us already.

Caltrans requested that a Sacred Lands File (SLF) Search be performed by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The SLF was completed on February 26, 2018 for the project, with negative results.

Additional studies for these Projects shall include cultural resources investigations and consultation with interested parties. On behalf of FHWA, Caltrans is interested in receiving input from your community regarding any concerns related to the proposed project. If you know of any cultural resources that may be of religious or cultural significance to your community, or if you would like more information, please contact me at (909) 383-4482, the above address, or my email

shannon.clarendon@dot.ca.gov. In return correspondence, please refer to these Projects by the EA numbers, 08-1C082/1C083.

Your time and involvement in this process is appreciated.

Respectfully,

SHANNON CLARENDON
Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Environmental Support/Cultural Studies

Enclosure: Project Location Map

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
464 W. FOURTH STREET, 6TH FLOOR
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PHONE (909) 383-4042
FAX (909) 383-6494
TTY (909) 383-6300

Making Conservation a California Way of Life

March 19, 2018

Joseph Ontiveros
Cultural Resource Department
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians
P.O. Box 487
San Jacinto Ca, 92583

08-Riv-10 PM 105/156.5
Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab:
Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps
EA: 08-1C082 AND 1C083
PN: 08-1600-0087 AND 08-1600-0090

Dear Mr. Ontiveros:

Subject: Initial Native American Consultation for Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects)

As assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes two Projects to rehabilitate Interstate 10 (I-10). The proposed Projects involve rehabilitate existing 1-10 Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement using full depth pavement-replacement-strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0 foot thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JPCP). The work is located on I-10 from post mile 105 to 156.5 (see enclosed Project Location Map). The Projects are located in the following USGS Quadrangles: Desert Center, Corn Spring, Sidewinder Well, Ford Dry Lake, East of Aztec Mine, Hopkins Well, Roosevelt Mine, Ripley, and Blythe.

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shannon.clarendon@dot.ca.gov. In return correspondence, please refer to these Projects by the EA numbers, 08-1C082/1C083.

Your time and involvement in this process is appreciated.

Respectfully,

SHANNON CLARENDON
Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Environmental Support/Cultural Studies

Enclosure: Project Location Map

April 27, 2018

Attn: Shannon Clarendon, Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Caltrans, District 8 – San Bernardino
464 West Fourth Street, 6th Floor, MS-825
San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400

SOBOBA BAND OF LUISEÑO INDIANS
EST. JUNE 19, 1883

RE: AB 52 Consultation; Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects) – EA 08-1C082/1C083

The Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians has received your notification pursuant under Assembly Bill 52.

Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians is requesting to initiate formal consultation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). A meeting can be scheduled by contacting me via email or phone. All contact information has been included in this letter.

I look forward to hearing from and meeting with you soon.

Sincerely,

Joseph Ontiveros, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians
P.O. Box 487
San Jacinto, CA 92581
Phone (951) 654-5544 ext. 4137
Cell (951) 663-5279
jontiveros@soboba-nsn.gov

April 27, 2018

Attn: Shannon Clarendon, Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Caltrans, District 8 – San Bernardino
Environmental Planning (MS 825)
464 W. Fourth Street, 6th Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400

SOBOBA BAND OF LUISEÑO INDIANS
EST. JUNE 19, 1883

RE: Section 106 Consultation; Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects) – EA 08-1C082/1C083

The Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians appreciates your observance of Tribal Cultural Resources and their preservation in your project. The information provided to us on said project has been assessed through our Cultural Resource Department, where it was concluded that although it is outside the existing reservation, the project area does fall within the bounds of our Tribal Traditional Use Areas. This project location is in proximity to known sites, is a shared use area that was used in ongoing trade between the tribes, and is considered to be culturally sensitive by the people of Soboba.

Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians is requesting the following:

1. **Government to Government** consultation in accordance to Section 106. Including the transfer of information to the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians regarding the progress of this project should be done as soon as new developments occur.

2. Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians continue to be a consulting tribal entity for this project.

3. Working in and around traditional use areas intensifies the possibility of encountering cultural resources during the construction/excavation phase. For this reason the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians requests that Native American Monitor(s) from the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians Cultural Resource Department to be present during any ground disturbing proceedings. Including surveys and archaeological testing.

4. Request that proper procedures be taken and requests of the tribe be honored (Please see the attachment)

The Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians is requesting a face-to-face meeting between the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Soboba Cultural Resource Department. Please contact me at your earliest convenience either by email or phone in order to make arrangements.

Sincerely,

Joseph Ontiveros, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians
P.O. Box 487
San Jacinto, CA 92581
Phone (951) 654-5544 ext. 4137
Cell (951) 663-5279
jontiveros@soboba-nsn.gov

Cultural Items (Artifacts). Ceremonial items and items of cultural patrimony reflect traditional religious beliefs and practices of the Soboba Band. The Developer should agree to return all Native American ceremonial items and items of cultural patrimony that may be found on the project site to the Soboba Band for appropriate treatment. In addition, the Soboba Band requests the return of all other cultural items (artifacts) that are recovered during the course of archaeological investigations. When appropriate and agreed upon in advance, the Developer's archeologist may conduct analyses of certain artifact classes if required by CEQA, Section 106 of NHPA, the mitigation measures or conditions of approval for the Project. This may include but is not limited or restricted to include shell, bone, ceramic, stone or other artifacts.

The Developer should waive any and all claims to ownership of Native American ceremonial and cultural artifacts that may be found on the Project site. Upon completion of authorized and mandatory archeological analysis, the Developer should return said artifacts to the Soboba Band within a reasonable time period agreed to by the Parties and not to exceed (30) days from the initial recovery of the items.

Treatment and Disposition of Remains

A. The Soboba Band shall be allowed, under California Public Resources Code § 5097.98 (a), to (1) inspect the site of the discovery and (2) make determinations as to how the human remains and grave goods shall be treated and disposed of with appropriate dignity.

B. The Soboba Band, as MLD, shall complete its inspection within twenty-four (24) hours of receiving notification from either the Developer or the NAHC, as required by California Public Resources Code § 5097.98 (a). The Parties agree to discuss in good faith what constitutes "appropriate dignity" as that term is used in the applicable statutes.

C. Reburial of human remains shall be accomplished in compliance with the California Public Resources Code § 5097.98 (a) and (b). The Soboba Band, as the MLD in consultation with the Developer, shall make the final discretionary determination regarding the appropriate disposition and treatment of human remains.

D. All parties are aware that the Soboba Band may wish to rebury the human remains and associated ceremonial and cultural items (artifacts) on or near, the site of their discovery, in an area that shall not be subject to future subsurface disturbances. The Developer should accommodate on-site reburial in a location mutually agreed upon by the Parties.

E. The term "human remains" encompasses more than human bones because the Soboba Band's traditions periodically necessitated the ceremonial burning of human remains. Grave goods are those artifacts associated with any human remains. These items, and other funerary remnants and their ashes are to be treated in the same manner as human bone fragments or bones that remain intact.

Coordination with County Coroner's Office. The Lead Agencies and the Developer should immediately contact both the Coroner and the Soboba Band in the event that any human remains are discovered during implementation of the Project. If the Coroner recognizes the human remains to be those of a Native American, or has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, the Coroner shall ensure that notification is provided to the NAHC within twenty-four (24) hours of the determination, as required by California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5 (c).

Non-Disclosure of Location Reburials. It is understood by all parties that unless otherwise required by law, the site of any reburial of Native American human remains or cultural artifacts shall not be disclosed and shall not be governed by public disclosure requirements of the California Public Records Act. The Coroner, parties, and Lead Agencies, will be asked to withhold public disclosure information related to such reburial, pursuant to the specific exemption set forth in California Government Code § 6254 (r).

Ceremonial items and items of cultural patrimony reflect traditional religious beliefs and practices of the Soboba Band. The Developer agrees to return all Native American ceremonial items and items of cultural patrimony that may be found on the project site to the Soboba Band for appropriate treatment. In addition, the Soboba Band requests the return of all other cultural items (artifacts) that are recovered during the course of archaeological investigations. Where appropriate and agreed upon in advance, Developer's archeologist may conduct analyses of certain artifact classes if required by CEQA, Section 106 of NHPA, the mitigation measures or conditions of approval for the Project. This may include but is not limited or restricted to include shell, bone, ceramic, stone or other artifacts.

May 23, 2018
Wednesday

May 2018

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June 2018

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WEDNESDAY

23

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World Turtle Day

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FW: ENVIRONMENAL CULTURAL STUDIE
[redacted]

Cultural Staff Meeting
[redacted]

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Various Caltrans Projects
Soboba Cultural Dept
Jessica Valdez

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Notes

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
464 W. FOURTH STREET, 6TH FLOOR
SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1400
PHONE (909) 383-4482
FAX (909) 383-6494
TTY (909) 383-6300

Making Conservation a California Way of Life

October 08, 2018

Joseph Ontiveros
Cultural Resource Department
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians
P.O. Box 487
San Jacinto Ca, 92583

08-Riv-10 PM 105/156.5
Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab:
Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps
EA: 08-1C082 AND 1C083
PN: 08-1600-0087 AND 08-1600-0090

Dear Mr. Ontiveros:

Subject: Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects)

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the enclosed cultural documentation contains a Draft HPSR including Attachments and associated maps for Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians's review. The enclosed documentation describes the limits of previous disturbances, as well as information regarding the unlikely potential to encounter and affect any Cultural Resources within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). If you have any questions or comments regarding the content of the documentation, please contact me at (909) 383-4482 or at shannon.clarendon@dot.ca.gov

Respectfully,

SHANNON CLARENDON
Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Environmental Support/Cultural Studies

Enclosure: Draft HPSR + Attachments Disc for Projects 1C082 and 1C083, and Records Search Disc 1 and 2

Clarendon, Shannon@DOT

From: Clarendon, Shannon@DOT
Sent: Monday, November 05, 2018 10:57 AM
To: 'jontiveros@soboba-nsn.gov'
Cc: 'jvaldez@soboba-nsn.gov'
Subject: Follow- up regarding-Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects) – EA 08-1C082 and 1C083

Mr. Ontiveros,
This email constitutes a follow-up regarding a consultation package dated October 8, 2018, containing the Draft Cultural Documents for two separate but similar projects on I-10 (referenced as 1C082 and 1C083), including HPSRs, ASRs, and Finding of Effect documents. Caltrans proposes a Finding of No Adverse Effect for both undertakings, and would like to know if you have any further comments, questions, or concerns regarding the information therein.

Please find my contact information below if you have any questions or concerns regarding the proposed projects.

Shannon Clarendon
Environmental Support- Cultural Studies
Archaeologist
Caltrans District 8
464 W. 4th Street- MS 825
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 383-4482

December 6, 2018

Thursday

December 2018

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January 2019

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THURSDAY

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Soboba Meeting
San Jacinto

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EA 1C850 SR 74 Ortega Highway Wideni
Soboba Cultural Dept
Jessica Valdez

12 PM

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Notes

Clarendon, Shannon@DOT

From:	Clarendon, Shannon@DOT
Sent:	Monday, December 17, 2018 3:01 PM
To:	'jontiveros@soboba-nsn.gov'
Cc:	'jvaldez@soboba-nsn.gov'
Subject:	Monitoring Request for Project 1C083 Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Project)
Attachments:	NA_MONITRING_SUPPORT.pdf; 1C083_ASR.pdf

Good afternoon Mr. Ontiveros,
Please see attached

Shannon Clarendon
Environmental Support- Cultural Studies
Archaeologist
Caltrans District 8
464 W. 4th Street- MS 825
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 383-4482

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
464 W. FOURTH STREET, 6TH FLOOR
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PHONE (909) 383-4042
FAX (909) 383-6494
TTY (909) 383-6300

Make conservation a California way of Life!

December 17, 2018

Joseph Ontiveros
Cultural Resource Department
Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians
P.O. Box 487
San Jacinto Ca, 92583

08-Riv-10 PM 134.0/156.5
Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps
EA: 08-1C083
PN: 08-1600-0090

Dear Mr. Joseph Ontiveros,

Subject: Native American Monitoring Request for Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Project), in Riverside County, California.

On behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and as discussed per our consultation meeting regarding the above referenced project December 06, 2018, Caltrans acknowledges and supports your request to have a Native American monitor present during the removal of existing pavement between I-10 Post miles R142.8-R143.6 associated with the Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps Project in Riverside County, California.

It is Caltrans policy and practice to solicit Native American monitoring in three circumstances: (1) during archaeological excavations, (2) during construction and construction-related activities adjacent to known Native American archaeological or cultural sites, or such sites identified as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), and (3) during construction or related activities in areas where there is a high probability that there may be a buried deposit based on the geomorphology of the area (Gary Winters memo, 2003).

Our identification efforts, summarized below and in the attached Archaeological Survey Report (ASR), identified contributing elements of a surrounding historic property, but did not confirm a high probability of intact, buried cultural deposits within the overlying disturbed Area of Potential Effects (APE). However, because deposited cultural material was identified within the imported fill and posed concerns for Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, Caltrans will delineate this section of the Undertaking as a culturally sensitive area and supports Native American Monitoring within this area, for this project as discussed.

The literature review, records search, and pedestrian archaeological surveys only identified isolated cultural resources within the APE and those that are considered to be in secondary disposition due to the massive amount of disturbances the APE has experienced via historic construction of US-60/70 and its modern widening into the I-10, subsequent maintenance projects, urbanization, large scale agricultural development and placement of imported fill

throughout. Additionally, the Project traverses over wide expanses of desert pavement, which lack depth. Thus, Caltrans maintains the likely hood of encounter *in situ* deposits within the APE, to be extremely low. Caltrans does not presume to confirm the likelihood of encountering non-contextual cultural material within the imported fill particularly with regard to human remains and burial goods, as such Caltrans will support Native American Monitoring. Please see the attached ASR for detailed information regarding subsurface sensitivity.

Please feel free to contact me at (909) 383-4482 or shannon.clarendon@dot.ca.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Shannon Clarendon
Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Environmental Support/Cultural Studies

Enclosure
Archaeological Survey Report for the Interstate 10 Blythe Pavement Rehabilitation, Riverside County, California. (December 2018).

Clarendon, Shannon@DOT

From:	Clarendon, Shannon@DOT
Sent:	Monday, December 17, 2018 3:04 PM
To:	'jontiveros@soboba-nsn.gov'
Cc:	'jvaldez@soboba-nsn.gov'
Subject:	Notification of Findings for Project 1C083 Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Project)
Attachments:	NOTICE OF FINDINGS.pdf; 1C083_FOE.pdf

Good afternoon Mr. Ontiveros,
Please see attached

Shannon Clarendon
Environmental Support- Cultural Studies
Archaeologist
Caltrans District 8
464 W. 4th Street- MS 825
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 383-4482

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
464 W. FOURTH STREET, 6TH FLOOR
SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1400
PHONE (909) 383-4042
FAX (909) 383-6494
TTY (909) 383-6300

Making Conservation a California Way of Life

December 17, 2018

Joseph Ontiveros
Cultural Resource Department
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians
P.O. Box 487
San Jacinto, Ca 92583

08-Riv-10 PM 134.0/156.5
Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab:
Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps
EA: 08-1C083
PN: 08-1600-0090

Dear Mr. Ontiveros:

Subject: Notification for Finding of **No Adverse Effect** and Document Advancement to SHPO for Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Project) EA: 1C083

Pursuant to Caltrans Section 106 PA Stipulation IV and per Assembly Bill 52 (AB-52) as required under the California Environmental Quality Act, Caltrans District 08 is currently participating in consultation with Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians. Additionally, Pursuant to Caltrans Stipulation X.B.2., and Stipulation VIII.C.7., this letter serves as a two-fold follow-up notification regarding Caltrans' finding of **No Adverse Effects** with respect to the Prehistoric Trails Network Cultural Landscape (PTNCL), and its assumed eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). For the purposes of this project only, Caltrans has deemed the PTNCL eligible for the NRHP under Stipulation VII.C.4. Three (3) sites SRI-1013, 1028, and 1032 (sparse lithic scatters) were identified in the APE within the I-10 median and in both shoulders. Caltrans' study findings disclose that these sites retain little integrity and context, due to the original 60/70 highway construction, its widening into the I-10, and subsequent maintenance over the past several decades which has destroyed the underlain desert pavement. However, SRI-1013, 1028, and 1032 were considered contributing elements to the overall PTNCL, as a minuscule portion of an adjacent procurement area, and thus an even smaller portion of the overall cultural landscape (< 0.3%). Caltrans' findings conclude that further disturbance or destruction of these non-integral sites by the proposed Undertaking do not rise to the level of an adverse effect to the PTNCL as a whole.

Caltrans included a draft of Project Findings; No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties, per your request, for this Undertaking in the consultation package sent via certified mail October 8, 2018 and signed for receipt October 15, 2018. A follow up email was sent November 5, 2018 that restated the Project Findings of **No Adverse Effect** and asked for comments and/or concerns regarding the findings. Caltrans is moving forward to the next phase of the Project and will submit the study findings and associated documentation to SHPO for concurrence.

Respectfully,

SHANNON CLARENDON
Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Environmental Support/Cultural Studies

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
464 W. FOURTH STREET, 6TH FLOOR
SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1400
PHONE (909) 383-4042
FAX (909) 383-6494
TTY (909) 383-6300

Making Conservation a California Way of Life

March 19, 2018

Anthony Madrigal, Jr.
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
46-200 Harrison Place
Coachella Ca, 92236

08-Riv-10 PM 105/156.5
Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab:
Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps
EA: 08-1C082 AND 1C083
PN: 08-1600-0087 AND 08-1600-0090

Dear Mr. Madrigal:

Subject: Initial Native American Consultation for Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects)

As assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes two Projects to rehabilitate Interstate 10 (I-10). The proposed Projects involve rehabilitate existing 1-10 Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement using full depth pavement-replacement-strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0 foot thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JPCP). The work is located on I-10 from post mile 105 to 156.5 (see enclosed Project Location Map). The Projects are located in the following USGS Quadrangles: Desert Center, Corn Spring, Sidewinder Well, Ford Dry Lake, East of Aztec Mine, Hopkins Well, Roosevelt Mine, Ripley, and Blythe.

Please consider this letter and preliminary project information as the initiation of Section 106 consultation pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act. In addition, this letter serves as the formal notification of the proposed Projects as required under the California Environmental Quality Act. This notification is required under Public Resources Code 21080.3.1 and Chapter 532 Statutes of 2014 (i.e. AB 52). If no response is received by April 23, 2018, I will attempt to contact you by phone or email to follow up regarding this letter. Please provide a designated lead contact person if you have not provided that information to us already.

Caltrans requested that a Sacred Lands File (SLF) Search be performed by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The SLF was completed on February 26, 2018 for the project, with negative results.

Additional studies for these Projects shall include cultural resources investigations and consultation with interested parties. On behalf of FHWA, Caltrans is interested in receiving input from your community regarding any concerns related to the proposed project. If you know of any cultural resources that may be of religious or cultural significance to your community, or if you would like more information, please contact me at (909) 383-4482, the above address, or my email

shannon.clarendon@dot.ca.gov. In return correspondence, please refer to these Projects by the EA numbers, 08-1C082/1C083.

Your time and involvement in this process is appreciated.

Respectfully,

SHANNON CLARENDON
Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Environmental Support/Cultural Studies

Enclosure: Project Location Map

TWENTY-NINE PALMS BAND OF MISSION INDIANS

46-200 Harrison Place . Coachella, California . 92236 . Ph. 760.863.2444 . Fax: 760.863.2449

April 19, 2018

Shannon Clarendon, Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Department of Transportation | District 8
Environmental Planning (MS 825)
464 W. Fourth St, 6th Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400

RE: Initial Native American Consultation for Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects)

Dear Ms. Clarendon,

This letter is in regards to consultation in compliance with AB 52 (California Public Resources Code § 21080.3.1) and Section 106 of the NHPA (National Historic Preservation Act) for the Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehabilitation (EA 08-1C825, -1C083). This undertaking proposes to rehabilitate existing pavement. The Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) is aware of numerous sites and isolates adjacent to the I-10 corridor and is aware of four (4) culturally sensitive area(s)/site(s) that are within the undertaking. Additionally, the project is within the Chemehuevi Traditional Use Area (TUA). For these reasons, the project could have an adverse effect on potential cultural resources that concern the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians (Tribe).

The THPO requests copies of all available cultural reports related to this project along with detailed maps showing the area of potential effects (APE). Please include the extent of previous disturbance. Further recommendations will be issued after review of all available cultural reports. If no other response is given within the 30-day timeframe stipulated in California Public Resources Code § 21080.3.1, the Tribe automatically elects to be a consulting party under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Tribe and THPO look forward to working with Caltrans on this project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Tribal Historic Preservation Office at (760) 775-3259 or by email: TNPConsultation@29palmsbomi-nsn.gov.

Sincerely,

Anthony Madrigal, Jr.
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Darrell Mike, Twenty-Nine Palms Tribal Chairman
Sarah Bliss, Twenty-Nine Palms Cultural Resources Manager

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
464 W. FOURTH STREET, 6TH FLOOR
SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1400
PHONE (909) 383-4482
FAX (909) 383-6494
TTY (909) 383-6300

Making Conservation a California Way of Life

October 08, 2018

Anthony Madrigal, Jr.
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
46-200 Harrison Place
Coachella Ca, 92236

08-Riv-10 PM 105/156.5
Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab:
Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps
EA: 08-1C082 AND 1C083
PN: 08-1600-0087 AND 08-1600-0090

Dear Mr. Madrigal:

Subject: Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects)

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the enclosed cultural documentation contains a Draft HPSR including Attachments and associated maps for Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians's review. The enclosed documentation describes the limits of previous disturbances, as well as information regarding the unlikely potential to encounter and affect any Cultural Resources within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). If you have any questions or comments regarding the content of the documentation, please contact me at (909) 383-4482 or at shannon.clarendon@dot.ca.gov

Respectfully,

SHANNON CLARENDON
Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Environmental Support/Cultural Studies

Enclosure: Draft HPSR + Attachments Disc for Projects 1C082 and 1C083, and Records Search Disc 1 and 2

Clarendon, Shannon@DOT

From: Clarendon, Shannon@DOT
Sent: Monday, November 05, 2018 10:50 AM
To: 'TNPConsultation@29palmsbomi-nsn.gov'
Cc: Sarah Bliss (sbliss@spotlight29.com)
Subject: Follow- up regarding-Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects) – EA 08-1C082 and 1C083

Mr. Madrigal,
This email constitutes a follow-up regarding a consultation package dated October 8, 2018, containing the Draft Cultural Documents for two separate but similar projects on I-10 (referenced as 1C082 and 1C083), including HPSRs, ASRs, and Finding of Effect documents. Caltrans proposes a Finding of No Adverse Effect for both undertakings. Caltrans would like to know if you have any further comments, questions, or concerns regarding the information therein.

Please find my contact information below if you have any questions or concerns regarding the proposed projects.

Caltrans
Shannon Clarendon
Environmental Support- Cultural Studies
Archaeologist
Caltrans District 8
464 W. 4th Street- MS 825
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 383-4482

Clarendon, Shannon@DOT

From:	Clarendon, Shannon@DOT
Sent:	Tuesday, December 04, 2018 10:07 AM
To:	'TNPConsultation@29palmsbomi-nsn.gov'
Cc:	Sarah Bliss (sbliss@spotlight29.com)
Subject:	Notification for Finding of No Adverse Effect and Document Advancement to SHPO for Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Project) EA: 1C083
Attachments:	FOE_to_SHPO_notification.pdf

Mr. Madrigal,
Please see attached regarding above referenced project. Thank you.

Shannon Clarendon
Environmental Support- Cultural Studies
Archaeologist
Caltrans District 8
464 W. 4th Street- MS 825
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 383-4482

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
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SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1400
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Making Conservation a California Way of Life

December 4, 2018

Anthony Madrigal, Jr.
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
46-200 Harrison Place
Coachella, Ca 92236

08-Riv-10 PM 134.0/156.5
Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab:
Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps
EA: 08-1C083
PN: 08-1600-0090

Dear Mr. Madrigal:

Subject: Notification for Finding of **No Adverse Effect** and Document Advancement to SHPO for Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Project) EA: 1C083

Pursuant to Caltrans Section 106 PA Stipulation IV and per Assembly Bill 52 (AB-52) as required under the California Environmental Quality Act, Caltrans District 08 is currently participating in consultation with Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians. Additionally, Pursuant to Caltrans Stipulation X.B.2., and Stipulation VIII.C.7., this letter serves as a two-fold follow-up notification regarding Caltrans' finding of **No Adverse Effects** with respect to the Prehistoric Trails Network Cultural Landscape (PTNCL), and its assumed eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). For the purposes of this project only, Caltrans has deemed the PTNCL eligible for the NRHP under Stipulation VII.C.4. Three (3) sites SRI-1013, 1028, and 1032 (sparse lithic scatters) were identified in the APE within the I-10 median and in both shoulders. Caltrans' study findings disclose that these sites retain little integrity and context, due to the original 60/70 highway construction, its widening into the I-10, and subsequent maintenance over the past several decades which has destroyed the underlain desert pavement. However, SRI-1013, 1028, and 1032 were considered contributing elements to the overall PTNCL, as a minuscule portion of an adjacent procurement area, and thus an even smaller portion of the overall cultural landscape (< 0.3%). Caltrans' findings conclude that further disturbance or destruction of these non-integral sites by the proposed Undertaking do not rise to the level of an adverse effect to the PTNCL as a whole.

Caltrans included a draft of Project Findings; No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties, per your request, for this Undertaking in the consultation package sent via certified mail October 8, 2018 and signed for receipt October 12, 2018. A follow up email was sent November 5, 2018 that restated the Project Findings of **No Adverse Effect** and asked for comments and/or concerns regarding the findings. Caltrans is moving forward to the next phase of the Project and will submit the study findings and associated documentation to SHPO for concurrence.

Respectfully,

SHANNON CLARENDON
Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Environmental Support/Cultural Studies

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
464 W. FOURTH STREET, 6TH FLOOR
SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1400
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FAX (909) 383-6494
TTY (909) 383-6300

Making Conservation a California Way of Life

March 19, 2018

Brian Etsitty
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Colorado River Indian Tribes
26600 Mojave Road
Parker AZ, 85344

08-Riv-10 PM 105/156.5
Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab:
Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps
EA: 08-1C082 AND 1C083
PN: 08-1600-0087 AND 08-1600-0090

Dear Mr. Etsitty:

Subject: Initial Native American Consultation for Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects)

As assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes two Projects to rehabilitate Interstate 10 (I-10). The proposed Projects involve rehabilitate existing 1-10 Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement using full depth pavement-replacement-strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0 foot thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JPCP). The work is located on I-10 from post mile 105 to 156.5 (see enclosed Project Location Map). The Projects are located in the following USGS Quadrangles: Desert Center, Corn Spring, Sidewinder Well, Ford Dry Lake, East of Aztec Mine, Hopkins Well, Roosevelt Mine, Ripley, and Blythe.

Please consider this letter and preliminary project information as the initiation of Section 106 consultation pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act. In addition, this letter serves as the formal notification of the proposed Projects as required under the California Environmental Quality Act. This notification is required under Public Resources Code 21080.3.1 and Chapter 532 Statutes of 2014 (i.e. AB 52). If no response is received by April 23, 2018, I will attempt to contact you by phone or email to follow up regarding this letter. Please provide a designated lead contact person if you have not provided that information to us already.

Caltrans requested that a Sacred Lands File (SLF) Search be performed by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The SLF was completed on February 26, 2018 for the project, with negative results.

Additional studies for these Projects shall include cultural resources investigations and consultation with interested parties. On behalf of FHWA, Caltrans is interested in receiving input from your community regarding any concerns related to the proposed project. If you know of any cultural resources that may be of religious or cultural significance to your community, or if you would like more information, please contact me at (909) 383-4482, the above address, or my email

shannon.clarendon@dot.ca.gov. In return correspondence, please refer to these Projects by the EA numbers, 08-1C082/1C083.

Your time and involvement in this process is appreciated.

Respectfully,

SHANNON CLARENDON
Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Environmental Support/Cultural Studies

Enclosure: Project Location Map

Clarendon, Shannon@DOT

From: Bryan Etsitty <betsitty@crit-nsn.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2018 2:24 PM
To: Clarendon, Shannon@DOT
Cc: rena.vanfleet@crit-nsn.gov
Subject: RE: Follow- up regarding-Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects) - EA 08-1C082/ 1C083

Hello Shannon,

I've seen several notices of road work, I cant say for sure if I received that specific one If I don't have it I will let you know.
Thank you,

Bryan Etsitty, Acting Director
COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
26600 Mohave Road
Parker, AZ 85344
Telephone: (928)669-5822
Fax: (928) 669-5843

From: Clarendon, Shannon@DOT <Shannon.Clarendon@dot.ca.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2018 2:17 PM
To: betsitty@crit-nsn.gov
Subject: Follow- up regarding-Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects) – EA 08-1C082/ 1C083

Mr. Etsitty,

This email is a follow-up regarding the above referenced project. A consultation package was delivered March 22, 2018, containing the preliminary information for the proposed project. Caltrans would like to know if you have received the package and if you have any comments regarding the information provided. Please find my contact information below if you have any questions or concerns regarding the proposed project.

Regards,

Caltrans
Shannon Clarendon
Environmental Support- Cultural Studies
Archaeologist

Caltrans District 8
464 W. 4th Street- MS 825
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 383-4482

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
464 W. FOURTH STREET, 6TH FLOOR
SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1400
PHONE (909) 383-4042
FAX (909) 383-6494
TTY (909) 383-6300

Making Conservation a California Way of Life

March 19, 2018

Dennis Patch
Chairperson
Colorado River Indian Tribe
26600 Mojave Road
Parker Az, 85344

08-Riv-10 PM 105/156.5
Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab:
Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps
EA: 08-1C082 AND 1C083
PN: 08-1600-0087 AND 08-1600-0090

Dear Mr. Patch:

Subject: Initial Native American Consultation for Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects)

As assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes two Projects to rehabilitate Interstate 10 (I-10). The proposed Projects involve rehabilitate existing 1-10 Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement using full depth pavement-replacement-strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0 foot thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JPCP). The work is located on I-10 from post mile 105 to 156.5 (see enclosed Project Location Map). The Projects are located in the following USGS Quadrangles: Desert Center, Corn Spring, Sidewinder Well, Ford Dry Lake, East of Aztec Mine, Hopkins Well, Roosevelt Mine, Ripley, and Blythe.

Please consider this letter and preliminary project information as the initiation of Section 106 consultation pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act. In addition, this letter serves as the formal notification of the proposed Projects as required under the California Environmental Quality Act. This notification is required under Public Resources Code 21080.3.1 and Chapter 532 Statutes of 2014 (i.e. AB 52). If no response is received by April 23, 2018, I will attempt to contact you by phone or email to follow up regarding this letter. Please provide a designated lead contact person if you have not provided that information to us already.

Caltrans requested that a Sacred Lands File (SLF) Search be performed by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The SLF was completed on February 26, 2018 for the project, with negative results.

Additional studies for these Projects shall include cultural resources investigations and consultation with interested parties. On behalf of FHWA, Caltrans is interested in receiving input from your community regarding any concerns related to the proposed project. If you know of any cultural resources that may be of religious or cultural significance to your community, or if you would like more information, please contact me at (909) 383-4482, the above address, or my email

shannon.clarendon@dot.ca.gov. In return correspondence, please refer to these Projects by the EA numbers, 08-1C082/1C083.

Your time and involvement in this process is appreciated.

Respectfully,

SHANNON CLARENDON
Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Environmental Support/Cultural Studies

Enclosure: Project Location Map

Clarendon, Shannon@DOT

From: Clarendon, Shannon@DOT
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2018 2:23 PM
To: 'crit.museum@yahoo.com'
Subject: Follow- up regarding-Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects) – EA 08-1C082/ 1C083

Mr. Patch,

This email is a follow-up regarding the above referenced project. A consultation package was delivered March 26, 2018, containing the preliminary information for the proposed project. Caltrans would like to know if you have received the package and if you have any comments regarding the information provided. Please find my contact information below if you have any questions or concerns regarding the proposed project.

Regards,

Caltrans
Shannon Clarendon
Environmental Support- Cultural Studies
Archaeologist
Caltrans District 8
464 W. 4th Street- MS 825
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 383-4482

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
464 W. FOURTH STREET, 6TH FLOOR
SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1400
PHONE (909) 383-4042
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TTY (909) 383-6300

Making Conservation a California Way of Life

March 19, 2018

Timothy Williams
Chairperson
Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
500 Merriman Ave
Needles Ca, 92363

08-Riv-10 PM 105/156.5
Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab:
Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps
EA: 08-1C082 AND 1C083
PN: 08-1600-0087 AND 08-1600-0090

Dear Mr. Williams:

Subject: Initial Native American Consultation for Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects)

As assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes two Projects to rehabilitate Interstate 10 (I-10). The proposed Projects involve rehabilitate existing 1-10 Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement using full depth pavement-replacement-strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0 foot thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JPCP). The work is located on I-10 from post mile 105 to 156.5 (see enclosed Project Location Map). The Projects are located in the following USGS Quadrangles: Desert Center, Corn Spring, Sidewinder Well, Ford Dry Lake, East of Aztec Mine, Hopkins Well, Roosevelt Mine, Ripley, and Blythe.

Please consider this letter and preliminary project information as the initiation of Section 106 consultation pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act. In addition, this letter serves as the formal notification of the proposed Projects as required under the California Environmental Quality Act. This notification is required under Public Resources Code 21080.3.1 and Chapter 532 Statutes of 2014 (i.e. AB 52). If no response is received by April 23, 2018, I will attempt to contact you by phone or email to follow up regarding this letter. Please provide a designated lead contact person if you have not provided that information to us already.

Caltrans requested that a Sacred Lands File (SLF) Search be performed by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The SLF was completed on February 26, 2018 for the project, with negative results.

Additional studies for these Projects shall include cultural resources investigations and consultation with interested parties. On behalf of FHWA, Caltrans is interested in receiving input from your community regarding any concerns related to the proposed project. If you know of any cultural resources that may be of religious or cultural significance to your community, or if you would like more information, please contact me at (909) 383-4482, the above address, or my email

Clarendon, Shannon@DOT

From: Clarendon, Shannon@DOT
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2018 2:28 PM
To: ahamakav@citilink.net
Subject: Follow- up regarding- Caltrans, Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects) – EA 08-1C082/ 1C083

Ms. Otero,

This email is a follow-up regarding the above referenced project. A consultation package was delivered March 2, 2018, to the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, and contained the preliminary information for the proposed project. Caltrans would like to know if you have received the package and if you have any comments regarding the information provided. Please find my contact information below if you have any questions or concerns regarding the proposed project.

Regards,

Caltrans
Shannon Clarendon
Environmental Support- Cultural Studies
Archaeologist
Caltrans District 8
464 W. 4th Street- MS 825
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 383-4482

Clarendon, Shannon@DOT

From: Clarendon, Shannon@DOT
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2018 7:56 AM
To: 'ahamakav@citilink.net'
Subject: 2nd Follow- up regarding- Caltrans, Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects) – EA 08-1C082/ 1C083

Ms. Otero,

This email is a follow-up regarding the above referenced project. A consultation package was delivered March 2, 2018, to the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, and contained the preliminary information for the proposed project. Caltrans would like to know if you have received the package and if you have any comments regarding the information provided. Please find my contact information below if you have any questions or concerns regarding the proposed project.

Regards,

Caltrans
Shannon Clarendon
Environmental Support- Cultural Studies
Archaeologist
Caltrans District 8
464 W. 4th Street- MS 825
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 383-4482

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
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SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1400
PHONE (909) 383-4042
FAX (909) 383-6494
TTY (909) 383-6300

Making Conservation a California Way of Life

March 19, 2018

Charles Wood
Chairperson
Chemehuevi Reservation
P.O. Box 1976 1990 Palo Verde Srive
Havasu Lake Ca, 92363

08-Riv-10 PM 105/156.5
Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab:
Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps
EA: 08-1C082 AND 1C083
PN: 08-1600-0087 AND 08-1600-0090

Dear Mr. Wood:

Subject: Initial Native American Consultation for Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects)

As assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes two Projects to rehabilitate Interstate 10 (I-10). The proposed Projects involve rehabilitate existing 1-10 Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement using full depth pavement-replacement-strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0 foot thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JPCP). The work is located on I-10 from post mile 105 to 156.5 (see enclosed Project Location Map). The Projects are located in the following USGS Quadrangles: Desert Center, Corn Spring, Sidewinder Well, Ford Dry Lake, East of Aztec Mine, Hopkins Well, Roosevelt Mine, Ripley, and Blythe.

Please consider this letter and preliminary project information as the initiation of Section 106 consultation pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act. In addition, this letter serves as the formal notification of the proposed Projects as required under the California Environmental Quality Act. This notification is required under Public Resources Code 21080.3.1 and Chapter 532 Statutes of 2014 (i.e. AB 52). If no response is received by April 23, 2018, I will attempt to contact you by phone or email to follow up regarding this letter. Please provide a designated lead contact person if you have not provided that information to us already.

Caltrans requested that a Sacred Lands File (SLF) Search be performed by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The SLF was completed on February 26, 2018 for the project, with negative results.

Additional studies for these Projects shall include cultural resources investigations and consultation with interested parties. On behalf of FHWA, Caltrans is interested in receiving input from your community regarding any concerns related to the proposed project. If you know of any cultural resources that may be of religious or cultural significance to your community, or if you would like more information, please contact me at (909) 383-4482, the above address, or my email

shannon.clarendon@dot.ca.gov. In return correspondence, please refer to these Projects by the EA numbers, 08-1C082/1C083.

Your time and involvement in this process is appreciated.

Respectfully,

SHANNON CLARENDON
Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
Environmental Support/Cultural Studies

Enclosure: Project Location Map

Clarendon, Shannon@DOT

From: Clarendon, Shannon@DOT
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2018 2:31 PM
To: chairman@cit-nsn.gov
Subject: Follow- up regarding-Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects) – EA 08-1C082/ 1C083

Mr. Wood,

This email is a follow-up regarding the above referenced project. A consultation package was delivered March 23, 2018, containing the preliminary information for the proposed project. Caltrans would like to know if you have received the package and if you have any comments regarding the information provided. Please find my contact information below if you have any questions or concerns regarding the proposed project.

Regards,

Caltrans
Shannon Clarendon
Environmental Support- Cultural Studies
Archaeologist
Caltrans District 8
464 W. 4th Street- MS 825
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 383-4482

Clarendon, Shannon@DOT

From: Clarendon, Shannon@DOT
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2018 7:55 AM
To: 'chairman@cit-nsn.gov'
Subject: 2nd Follow- up regarding-Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps (Projects) – EA 08-1C082/ 1C083

Mr. Wood,

This email is a follow-up regarding the above referenced project. A consultation package was delivered March 23, 2018, containing the preliminary information for the proposed project. Caltrans would like to know if you have received the package and if you have any comments regarding the information provided. Please find my contact information below if you have any questions or concerns regarding the proposed project.

Regards,

Caltrans
Shannon Clarendon
Environmental Support- Cultural Studies
Archaeologist
Caltrans District 8
464 W. 4th Street- MS 825
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 383-4482

State Historic Preservation Officer

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
P.O. BOX 942874, MS 27
SACRAMENTO, CA 94273-0001
PHONE (916) 653-7507
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TTY (916) 653-4086
www.dot.ca.gov

Making Conservation a California Way of Life.

December 24, 2018

Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer
California Office of Historic Preservation
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95816

Attn: Natalie Lindquist

RE: Transmittal of Finding of No Adverse Effect with Non-Standard Conditions for the I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps Project (08-1C083) in Riverside County

Dear Ms. Polanco,

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is initiating consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) regarding Caltrans Project EA: 08-1C083, Riv-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps, located in Riverside County. This consultation is undertaken in accordance with the January 1, 2014 *First Amended Programmatic Agreement among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the California Department of Transportation* (Section 106 PA). Caltrans is concurrently complying with PRC 5024 pursuant to Stipulation III of the *Memorandum of Understanding between the California Department of Transportation and the California State Historic Preservation Officer regarding Compliance with Public Resources Code Section 5024 and Governor's Executive Order W-26-92* (PRC 5024 MOU). We are consulting with you under Section 106 PA Stipulation X.B.2, which requires SHPO consultation regarding findings of effect.

The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated December 23, 2016 and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

The Undertaking proposes to rehabilitate the existing Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement on 1-10 from 1.05 miles west of the Wiley Well Road Interchange (PM R134.0) to the California/Arizona state line (PM R155.6) using full depth pavement replacement strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0-foot-thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JPCP). This proposed scope of work will take place in the Caltrans Right of Way (RoW) within previously disturbed roadway, shoulders, and median.

Enclosed for your review, you will find a Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) and Finding of Effect (FOE). The HPSR dated November 2018 was prepared for the proposed undertaking. The HPSR determined that there are two (2) Historic Properties within the APE which were assumed eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for the purposes of this project:

- **CHL-985: DTC/C-AMA**
  The Desert Training Center/ California-Arizona Maneuver Area is a historic-period military training/maneuver area. This Historic Property stretches from Indio, California eastward toward Prescott, Arizona and from Yuma, Arizona to Searchlight, Nevada covering approximately 18,000 square miles. The area was chosen by Gen. George S. Patton, Jr. to prepare troops for the harsh conditions and environment of combat for the North Africa Campaign. This property was listed on the California Register of Historic Places (CHRP) as a California Registered Historical Landmark June 12, 1989 but has not been formally evaluated for the NRHP. *For the purposes of this project only, on September 9, 2018, the DTC/C-AMA was assumed eligible for listing on the NRHP per Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the PA, under Criterion A* for its association with World War II; *Criterion B* for its association with General George S. Patton; *Criterion C* for the design and layout of the individual camps, tactical maneuver areas, firing ranges, and other associated features; *and Criterion D* for the data potential of the entirety of the DTC/C-AMA. The period of significance is 1942 to 1944. Character defining features (tank tracks) were located within the APE.

- **Prehistoric Trails Network Cultural Landscape (PTNCL)**
  The Prehistoric Trails Network Cultural Landscape (PTNCL), is an extensive network of trade and exchange trails that prehistorically crossed the desert regions of southeastern California, spanning from the Pacific Coast to the Colorado River. This landscape consists of important destinations in the Colorado Desert near Blythe, California, the network of trails that tie them together, features and sites associated with the trails. The PTNCL site types are divided into three categories: destinations, trails, and trail-associated sites or features. This property has not been formally evaluated for the NRHP or CRHR. However, for the purposes of this project only, on August 7, 2018, the PTNCL was assumed eligible for listing on the NRHP per Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the PA, Criterion D for its potential to yield data important to the prehistory of the region.

Pursuant to Stipulation X.A of the Section 106 PA and the PRC 5024 MOU, Caltrans has applied the Criteria of Adverse Effect and has determined that a finding of **No Adverse Effect with Non-Standard Conditions** is appropriate for the Undertaking as a whole, per Stipulation X.B.2 of the Section 106 PA and PRC 5024 MOU. Caltrans is seeking SHPO concurrence on this finding.

Caltrans has established an Archaeological Monitoring Area (AMA) as a non-standard condition at the behest of the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians between postmile 142.7 and 143.4. During confidential Section 106 consultation efforts, Soboba requested tribal monitoring of pavement removal in this location in case the underlying soil contained human remains or grave goods. Since there is no archaeological site at this location that requires ESA protection, Caltrans has identified this area as a Culturally Sensitive Area (CSA) and agreed to the monitoring request.

Caltrans, as assigned by FHWA, intends to make a *de minimis* finding for Section 4(f) use of a historic property (CHL-985: DTC/C-AMA) based on your concurrence on the Section 106 effect finding, pursuant to Section 6009(a) of SAFETEA-LU. Please note that if no response is received from the SHPO within 30 days of receipt of this submittal, Caltrans will still make a *de minimis* impact finding for purposes of Section 4(f) as described in our August 11, 2006 letter agreement.

We look forward to receiving your response within 30 days of your receipt of this submittal in accordance with Stipulation X.B.2.b of the Section 106 PA. Thank you for your assistance with this Undertaking. If you need any additional information, please contact me by phone at (916) 653-0516 or david.price@dot.ca.gov, or District 08 Environmental Branch Chief, Historian Andrew Walters by phone at 909-388-2647 or email at andrew.walters@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

David Price
Acting Section 106 Coordinator
Cultural Studies Office
Division of Environmental Analysis
Enclosure:
Historic Property Survey Report for EA:08-1C083, Riv 10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps, Riverside County, California (December 2018), with attached Finding of Effect

cc: Andrew Walters, District 08 Branch Chief - Environmental Support/Cultural Studies
Shannon Clarendon, District 08 Environmental Planner-Archaeology

State of California • Natural Resources Agency Gavin Newsom, *Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION Lisa Ann L. Mangat, *Director*
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95816-7100
Telephone: (916) 445-7000 FAX: (916) 445-7053
calshpo.ohp@parks.ca.gov www.ohp.parks.ca.gov

January 28, 2019

VIA EMAIL

In reply refer to: CATRA_2018_1228_001

Mr. David Price
Acting Section 106 Coordinator
Cultural Studies Office
Caltrans Division of Environmental Analysis
1120 N Street, MS-27
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Finding of No Adverse Effect without Standard Conditions for the I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehab: Mainline, Shoulders, Ramps Project (08-1C083), Riverside County, California

Dear Mr. Price:

On December 27, 2018, the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) received a letter from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for the above referenced undertaking. Caltrans is initiating consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in accordance with the January 1, 2014 *First Amended Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the California Department of Transportation Regarding Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as it Pertains to the Administration of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in California* (PA). Caltrans' Public Resources Code (PRC) 5024 responsibilities for this project are being conducted in accordance with the January 2015 *Memorandum of Understanding between the California Department of Transportation and the California State Historic Preservation Officer regarding Compliance with Public Resource Code Section 5024 and Governor's Executive Order W-26-92* (PRC 5024 MOU). Pursuant to Stipulation X.B.2 of the Section 106 PA, Caltrans is seeking SHPO comment on a finding of no adverse effect without standard conditions. Enclosed with Caltrans' letter is a Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) with attached Archaeological Survey Report (ASR), and Finding of Effect (FOE). A more detailed description of the undertaking and area of potential effects (APE) is on pages one and two of the HPSR.

As currently proposed, the purpose of the undertaking is to rehabilitate the existing Asphalt Concrete (AC) pavement on I-10 from 1.05 miles west of the Wiley Well Road Interchange (PM R134.0) to the California/Arizona state line (PM R155.6) using a full depth pavement replacement strategy for the mainline and shoulders. The existing AC

pavement on the mainline and shoulders will be removed and replaced with 1.0-foot-thick Continuous Reinforced Concrete Pavement (CRCP) or Jointed Plain Concrete Pavement (JRCP). The undertaking will occur in the Caltrans Right-of-Way and within a previously disturbed roadway, shoulders, and median.

Caltrans' efforts to identify historic properties that may be affected by the undertaking included a record search, Native American consultation, and an archaeological pedestrian survey. Efforts identified two cultural resources requiring evaluation according to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) criteria:

- CHL-985 (The Desert Training Center/California-Arizona Maneuver Area [DTC/C-AMA]), a historic-era military training/maneuver area that encompasses portions of California, Arizona, and Nevada desert environs. This resources was listed on the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) as a California Registered Historical Landmark on June 12, 1989; and
- Prehistoric Trails Network Cultural Landscape (PTNCL), an extensive network of trade and exchange trails that prehistorically crossed the desert regions of southeastern California, spanning from the Pacific Coast to the Colorado River. The PTNCL consists of important destinations in the Colorado Desert near Blythe, California, the network of trails that tie them together, the features, and sites associated with the trails.

Pursuant to Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the Section 106 PA and Stipulation VIII.C.4 of the PRC 5024 MOU, Caltrans will consider the DTC/C-AMA as eligible for the NRHP under the following criteria:

- Criterion A for its association with World War II;
- Criterion B for its association with General George S. Patton;
- Criterion C for the design and layout of the individual camps, tactical maneuver areas, firing ranges, and other associated features; and
- Criterion D for the data potential of the entirety of the DTC/C-AMA.

The DTC/C-AMA's period of significance is 1942 to 1944. Caltrans' assumption of eligibility of the DTC/C-AMA is for the purposes of this undertaking only because evaluation was not possible. Caltrans will also assume the PTNCL as eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion D for the purposes of this undertaking only because evaluation was not possible.

Identification efforts for this undertaking identified two sets of tank tracks, contributing elements to the DTC/C-AMA within the APE. Caltrans argues that the tank tracks represent a ubiquitous-lesser-ranked feature due to the tracks' copious and monolithic distribution throughout the 18,000 square-mile DTC/C-AMA. Caltrans' efforts also identified three loci (field designations SRI-1013, 1028, and 1032 [all lithic scatters]) that are contributing elements to the PTNCL. The archaeological pedestrian surveys conducted for this undertaking concluded that the Loci were redeposited along with fill consolidated during the prior construction of I-10. Caltrans therefore concluded that the loci lack integrity of at least location and association.

In applying the criteria of adverse effect pursuant to Stipulation X.A of the Section 106 PA Caltrans finds that as a whole the undertaking will result in a finding of no adverse effect with non-standard conditions. Caltrans finds that effects to the tank tracks resulting from this undertaking will not adversely affect the DTC/C-AMA's ability to convey its significance under the assumed NRHP criteria A, B, C, and D. Caltrans also finds that the effects to loci SRI-1013, 1028, and 1032 resulting from this undertaking will not adversely affect the PTNCL's ability to convey its significance under the assumed NRHP Criterion D.

Pursuant to Stipulation X.B.2.a of the Section 106 PA and Stipulation X.B.2.c of the PRC 5024 MOU, Caltrans has found that the proposed undertaking will have no adverse effect on historic properties. Caltrans has established an Archaeological Monitoring Area (AMA) as a non-standard condition at the behest of the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians between post mile 142.7 and 143.4. During confidential, the Soboba requested tribal monitoring of pavement removal in this location in the event that underlying soil contained human remains or grave goods. Because there are no known historic properties requiring avoidance measures such as environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs), Caltrans has identified the AMA as a Cultural Sensitive Area (CSA) and has agreed to the Soboba's request for tribal monitoring. Based on review of the submitted documentation and Caltrans' proposed non-standard conditions, **I do not object** to Caltrans' finding of no adverse effect without standard conditions.

If you have any questions, please contact State Historian Natalie Lindquist at (916) 445-7014 or at natalie.lindquist@parks.ca.gov or Associate State Archaeologist Alicia Perez at (916) 445-7020 or at alicia.perez@parks.ca.gov .

Sincerely,

Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer

United States Fish and Wildlife Service List of Threatened and Endangered Species – July 18, 2018

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United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Carlsbad Fish And Wildlife Office
2177 Salk Avenue - Suite 250
Carlsbad, CA 92008-7385
Phone: (760) 431-9440 Fax: (760) 431-5901
http://www.fws.gov/carlsbad/

In Reply Refer To:
Consultation Code: 08ECAR00-2018-SLI-1432
Event Code: 08ECAR00-2018-E-03096
Project Name: WBS 165.15

July 18, 2018

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location, and/or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, and proposed species, designated critical habitat, and candidate species that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the ECOS-IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the ECOS-IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at:

http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/TOC-GLOS.PDF

Please be aware that bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668 *et seq.*), and projects affecting these species may require development of an eagle conservation plan (http://www.fws.gov/windenergy/eagle_guidance.html). Additionally, wind energy projects should follow the wind energy guidelines (http://www.fws.gov/windenergy/) for minimizing impacts to migratory birds and bats.

Guidance for minimizing impacts to migratory birds for projects including communications towers (e.g., cellular, digital television, radio, and emergency broadcast) can be found at: http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/CurrentBirdIssues/Hazards/towers/towers.htm; http://www.towerkill.com; and http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/CurrentBirdIssues/Hazards/towers/comtow.html.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Tracking Number in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List

Official Species List

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Carlsbad Fish And Wildlife Office
2177 Salk Avenue - Suite 250
Carlsbad, CA 92008-7385
(760) 431-9440

Project Summary

Consultation Code: 08ECAR00-2018-SLI-1432

Event Code: 08ECAR00-2018-E-03096

Project Name: WBS 165.15

Project Type: TRANSPORTATION

Project Description: WBS 165.15

Project Location:

Approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: https://www.google.com/maps/place/33.607414247533086N114.57119525229669W

Counties: Riverside, CA

Endangered Species Act Species

There is a total of 4 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries[1], as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

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1. NOAA Fisheries, also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

Birds

NAME	STATUS
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher *Empidonax traillii extimus* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location is outside the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6749	Endangered
Yuma Clapper Rail *Rallus longirostris yumanensis* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3505	Endangered

Reptiles

NAME	STATUS
Desert Tortoise *Gopherus agassizii* Population: Wherever found, except AZ south and east of Colorado R., and Mexico There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location overlaps the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4481	Threatened

Fishes

NAME	STATUS
Razorback Sucker *Xyrauchen texanus* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location overlaps the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/530	Endangered

Critical habitats

There are 3 critical habitats wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction.

NAME	STATUS
Desert Tortoise *Gopherus agassizii* https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4481#crithab	Final
Razorback Sucker *Xyrauchen texanus* https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/530#crithab	Final
Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus* For information on why this critical habitat appears for your project, even though Yellow-billed Cuckoo is not on the list of potentially affected species at this location, contact the local field office. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3911#crithab	Proposed

Appendix D Environmental Commitments Record

In order to ensure all environmental commitments identified in this document are executed at the appropriate times, the following mitigation program (as mentioned in the Environmental Commitments Record [ECR]), would be implemented. During project design, avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures will be incorporated into the project's final plans, specifications, and cost estimate, as appropriate. All permits will be obtained prior to implementation of the project. During construction, environmental and construction/engineering staff will ensure that the commitments contained in the ECR are fulfilled. Following construction and appropriate phases of project delivery, long-term mitigation maintenance and monitoring will take place, as applicable. Commitment fields will be filled out/signature confirmed, as each of the measures are implemented and/or completed. Note: Some measures may apply to more than one resource area.

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Permit Type	Agency	Date Received	Expiration	Notes

Date of ECR: June 2019

Project Phase:
☒ PA/ED (*DED/FED*)
☐ PS&E Submittal_____ %
☐ Construction

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS RECORD
(I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehabilitation)

08-RIV-10
PM R134.0/R165.5
EA 08-1C083
PN 0816000090

Environmental Generalist:
Antonia Toledo
(909) 806-2541

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures	Environmental Analysis Source (Technical Study, Environmental Document, and/or Technical Discipline)	Responsible for Development and/or Implementation of Measure	Timing/ Phase	Action(s) Taken to Implement Measure/if checked No, add Explanation here	PS&E Task Completed	Construction Task Completed	Environmental Compliance	
					Date / Initials	Date / Initials	YES	NO
Community Impacts								
COM-1: Where acquisition is unavoidable, the provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970 (49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 24), as amended, and the Caltrans Right of Way Manual (California Department of Transportation 2018) will be followed. An independent appraisal of the affected property will be obtained, and an offer for the full amount of the approved appraisal will be offered.	Environmental Document	Caltrans	Final Design/ Pre-Construction					
Air Quality								
AQ-1: During bridge construction, the contractor must comply with Caltrans Standard Specifications pertaining to dust control and dust palliative and implement any particulate matter mitigation or control measures related to project construction or operation.	Environmental Document	Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					

Date of ECR: June 2019

Project Phase:
☒ PA/ED (*DED/FED*)
☐ PS&E Submittal_____ %
☐ Construction

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS RECORD
(I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehabilitation)

08-RIV-10
PM R134.0/R165.5
EA 08-1C083
PN 0816000090

Environmental Generalist:
Antonia Toledo
(909) 806-2541

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures	Environmental Analysis Source (Technical Study, Environmental Document, and/or Technical Discipline)	Responsible for Development and/or Implementation of Measure	Timing/ Phase	Action(s) Taken to Implement Measure/if checked No, add Explanation here	PS&E Task Completed	Construction Task Completed	Environmental Compliance	
					Date / Initials	Date / Initials	YES	NO
Noise								
NOI-1: Sound control will conform to the provisions of Section 14-8.02, Noise Control, of Caltrans' Standard Specifications (2015) and Standard Special Provision 14-8.02. According to the specifications, construction noise cannot exceed 86 A-weighted decibels (dBA) at 50 feet from the job site between 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.	Environmental Document	Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
Traffic and Transportation								
T-1: A TMP will be prepared and implemented for construction of the project. Public information and awareness campaigns, motorist information strategies, and incident management strategies in the TMP will inform the public about the proposed project.	Environmental Document	Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Final Design/ Construction					
Visual/Aesthetics								
VIA-1: Hydroseeding. After completion of detour-lane construction, disturbed soil will be agronomically tested, amended as recommended and hydroseeded with a native-plant seed mix to restore disturbed soil.	Environmental Document	Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
VIA-2: Planting. After completion of detour-lane construction, disturbed soil will be agronomically tested, amended as recommended and plants will be installed within affected interchanges	Environmental Document	Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					

Date of ECR: June 2019

Project Phase:
☒ PA/ED (*DED/FED*)
☐ PS&E Submittal_____ %
☐ Construction

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS RECORD
(I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehabilitation)

08-RIV-10
PM R134.0/R165.5
EA 08-1C083
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Environmental Generalist:
Antonia Toledo
(909) 806-2541

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures	Environmental Analysis Source (Technical Study, Environmental Document, and/or Technical Discipline)	Responsible for Development and/or Implementation of Measure	Timing/ Phase	Action(s) Taken to Implement Measure/if checked No, add Explanation here	PS&E Task Completed	Construction Task Completed	Environmental Compliance	
					Date / Initials	Date / Initials	YES	NO
Cultural Resources								
CUL-1. If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earthmoving activity within and around the immediate discovery area will be diverted until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find.	Historic Property Survey Report (December 2018)	Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
CUL-2. In the event that human remains are found, the county coroner shall be notified, and all construction activities within 60 feet of the discovery shall stop. Pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the NAHC, which will then notify the most likely descendent. The person who discovered the remains will contact the District 8 Division of Environmental Planning (Andrew Walters, DEBC, [909] 383-2647, and Gary Jones, DNAC, [909] 383-7505). Further provisions of PRC 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.	Historic Property Survey Report (December 2018)	Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
CUL-3. The portion of I-10 undergoing pavement removal between PM R142.8 to R143.6 shall be designated a Culturally Sensitive Area. As such, this area will also be designated an Archaeological Monitoring Area and subject to archaeological and tribal monitoring. The monitor's roles and responsibilities will be provided in the Responsible Parties table included as part of the finding of no adverse effect.	Historic Property Survey Report (December 2018)	District Cultural Studies/Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Final Design/ Construction					

Date of ECR: June 2019

Project Phase:
☒ PA/ED (*DED/FED*)
☐ PS&E Submittal_____ %
☐ Construction

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS RECORD
(I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehabilitation)

08-RIV-10
PM R134.0/R165.5
EA 08-1C083
PN 0816000090

Environmental Generalist:
Antonia Toledo
(909) 806-2541

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures	Environmental Analysis Source (Technical Study, Environmental Document, and/or Technical Discipline)	Responsible for Development and/or Implementation of Measure	Timing/ Phase	Action(s) Taken to Implement Measure/if checked No, add Explanation here	PS&E Task Completed	Construction Task Completed	Environmental Compliance	
					Date / Initials	Date / Initials	YES	NO
Hazardous Waste/Materials								
HAZ-1: Prior to project approval, Caltrans will ensure that soil sampling and ADL analysis are conducted within the Caltrans ROW (i.e., the project disturbance limits) to determine ADL concentrations. Soils with ADL concentrations that exceed stipulated thresholds will be managed in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications, Section 14-11.08, Material Containing Hazardous Waste Concentrations of Aerially Deposited Lead (2015), and the July 1, 2016, ADL agreement between Caltrans and the Department of Toxic Substances Control.	Environmental Document	Caltrans Project Manager/ Caltrans Project Engineer/ Contractor	Final Design/ Construction					
HAZ-2: ACMs may be present in bridge structures disturbed by the proposed project. Prior to project approval, samples of suspect ACMs will be collected for laboratory analysis. If ACMs are identified, abatement will be conducted in accordance with regulatory requirements.	Environmental Document	Caltrans Project Manager/ Caltrans Project Engineer/ Contractor	Final Design/ Construction					
HAZ-3: Caltrans is conducting Lead-Based Paint (LBP) and Asbestos-Containing Material (ACM) surveys for all bridge structures that will be disturbed in the proposed project. If asbestos minerals are identified in the materials sampled during this survey and should the materials be disturbed during demolition, renovation, and/or construction, any generated ACM wastes should be disposed as hazardous asbestos waste; and an ACM abatement is required by a licensed ACM abatement contractor prior to renovation, refurbishing, or demolition activities.	Environmental Document	Caltrans Project Manager/ Caltrans Project Engineer/ Contractor	Final Design/ Construction					

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PN 0816000090

Environmental Generalist:
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HAZ-4: Due to the possible presence of elevated levels of lead concentrations within the yellow thermoplastic and yellow-painted traffic stripes along the existing highway, the Contractor shall be required to properly manage removed stripe and pavement markings as hazardous waste, in accordance with section 14-11.12 of Caltrans' Standard Specifications.	Environmental Document	Caltrans Project Manager/ Caltrans Project Engineer/ Contractor	Final Design/ Construction					
HAZ-5: The handling, storing, and transporting of treated wood waste shall be in accordance with Caltrans' Standard Specifications section14-11.14. Treated wood waste shall be managed under 22 CA Code of Regs Div 4.5 Ch 34.	Environmental Document	Caltrans Project Manager/ Caltrans Project Engineer/ Contractor	Final Design/ Construction					
HAZ-6: Earth material containing lead shall be handled according to all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. The contractor shall be required to properly manage earth material containing lead from paint and thermoplastic, in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specification section 36-4.	Environmental Document	Caltrans Project Manager/ Caltrans Project Engineer/ Contractor	Final Design/ Construction					
HAZ-7: During bridge rehabilitation activities, the Contractor shall follow Caltrans' Standard Specification sections 14-9.02and 2-1.06B.	Environmental Document	Caltrans Project Manager/ Caltrans Project Engineer/ Contractor	Final Design/ Construction					
Biological Resources								
WET-1: Impacts to Jurisdictional Waters. The proposed project's impacts on jurisdictional areas will be mitigated and coordinated with USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW during the permitting process. A minimum ratio of 1:1 is anticipated, but subject to change during agency coordination.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Permitting					

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BIO-1: Materials and Spoils Control. Project materials will not be cast from the project site and project-related debris, spoils, and trash will be contained and removed to a proper disposal facility.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-2: Equipment Staging. Equipment storage, fueling, and staging areas shall be located on previously disturbed areas with minimal risks of direct drainage into riparian areas or other sensitive habitats. These designated areas shall be located in such a manner as to prevent any runoff from entering sensitive habitat. Necessary precautions shall be taken to prevent the release of cement or other toxic substances into surface waters. Project-related spills of hazardous materials shall be reported to the appropriate entities including but not limited to applicable jurisdictional cities, USFWS, CDFW, and RWQCB and shall be cleaned up immediately and contaminated soils removed to approved disposal areas.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-3: De-Water Plan: For all bridges that cross blue lines and are susceptible to running water, a de-watering/water control plan must be created and implemented in accordance with Caltrans Water Control Standard Specifications (Standard Specification 13-4.03G) if water is present or could be present during construction activities.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Pre-Construction/ Construction					

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BIO-4: Dust Control: The contractor shall implement dust control measures during construction activities to avoid inundating surrounding vegetation and to ensure biological monitors on the project site have visibility for monitoring the covered species.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-5: Pre-Construction Plant Survey. Within three days prior to construction, special-status plant species individuals will be flagged for clear identification to ensure they are visible to construction personnel for avoidance. Should multiple plants in a single location be found, the groupings will be fenced with environmental sensitive temporary fencing.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Pre-Construction					
BIO-6: Flagging and Fencing. Within three days prior to the start of construction, special status plant species individuals will be flagged for clear identification to ensure they are visible to construction personnel for avoidance. Should multiple plants in a single location be found, the groupings will be fenced with environmental sensitive temporary fencing.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Pre-Construction					

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BIO-7: Nesting Season Avoidance. Construction activities will not be scheduled to occur during nesting bird breeding season, recognized as the period from March 1 to September 15, within 300 feet of all suitable habitat unless one of the following exceptions applies: 1. Pre-construction surveys conducted by a qualified biologist during the year of implementation determined the site to be unoccupied; or 2. Noise levels resulting from the project implementation within the suitable habitat are not above ambient levels.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Pre-Construction					
BIO-8: Pre-construction Surveys during Nesting Season. Pre-construction surveys for nesting and breeding special-status birds will be conducted no more than one week prior to construction activities scheduled during nesting season.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Pre-Construction					
BIO-9: Non-nesting Migratory Bird Survey. Pre-construction surveys for non-nesting migratory birds will be conducted during the migration season if any migratory bird in areas where foraging habitat is present will be affected by project activities. Should migratory birds be present, a qualified contractor-supplied biologist will monitor to ensure the enforcement of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Pre-Construction					

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BIO-10: Pre-Construction Burrowing Owl 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.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Pre-Construction					
BIO-11: Burrowing Owl Detection: Should any burrowing owls or sign be detected during any future surveys or construction monitoring for this project, coordination with CDFW shall be conducted to determine the appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures required for the project.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Pre-Construction/ Construction					
BIO-12: Identifying Burrowing Owl Burrows. Use bright orange environmentally sensitive area fencing, and clearly mark areas supporting burrows and a buffer zone setback area (as shown below).	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					

Time of Year	Level of Disturbance in Meters		
	Low	Medium	High
April 1–August 15	200	500	500
August 16–October 15	200	200	500
October 16–March 31	50	100	500

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BIO-13: Burrowing Owl Nesting Season Avoidance. Occupied burrows and the established buffer zone setback area surrounding each of the occupied burrows, as specified in BIO-12, shall not be disturbed during the nesting season (February 1 to August 31) unless a biologist can verify through noninvasive methods that either the owls have not begun egg laying and incubation or that juveniles from the occupied burrows are foraging independently and are capable of independent flight.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-14: Burrow Exclusion. For unavoidable impacts on occupied burrowing owl burrows, the burrows must be excluded and closed by a qualified biologist to permanently exclude burrowing owls. One-way doors would need to be temporarily installed in burrow openings during the non-breeding season (September 1 to January 31) and before breeding behavior has begun. Suitable habitat (including suitable burrows) must be available adjacent to or near the disturbance site or artificial burrows shall be provided nearby. Once the biologist has confirmed that the owls have left the burrow, burrows shall be excavated using hand tools and filled to prevent reoccupation. All burrowing owls associated with occupied burrows that shall be directly affected (temporarily or permanently) by the project shall be passively relocated.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					

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BIO-15: Burrowing Owl Relocation. All burrowing owl relocation shall be approved by CDFW. The permitted biologist shall monitor the relocated owls a minimum of three days per week for a minimum of three weeks. A report summarizing the results of the relocation and monitoring shall be submitted to CDFW within 30 days following completion of the relocation and monitoring of the owls.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					

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BIO-16: Worker Environmental Awareness Training. A qualified biologist will present to each employee (including temporary workers, contractors, and subcontractors) a worker environmental awareness training prior to the initiation of work. They will be advised of the special-status species in the BSA, the steps to avoid impacts on the species, and the potential penalties for taking such species. At a minimum, the program will include the following topics: occurrence of the listed and sensitive species in the area and their general ecology, sensitivity of the species to human activities, legal protection afforded these species, penalties for violations of federal and state laws, reporting requirements, and project features designed to reduce the impacts on these species and promote continued successful occupation of the project area environs. Included in this program will be color photos of the listed species, which will be shown to the employees. Following the education program, the photos 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 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.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Pre-Construction					

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BIO-17: Compliance of Protective Measure. Caltrans will submit the names and qualifications of biologists that it believes meet the minimum requirements to serve as Authorized Biologists to USFWS for review and authorization under the biological opinion prior to beginning on-site activities (forms at http://www.fws.gov/ventura/speciesinfo/protocols_guidelines/). Once a biologist has been authorized by USFWS, that individual may work on subsequent projects pursuant to the biological opinion without additional approval, provided that his or her performance remains satisfactory. Caltrans will maintain a record of all authorized biologists who work on its projects.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Pre-Construction/ Construction					
BIO-18: Biological Monitor. A contractor-supplied biologist will be designated to oversee compliance of all protective measures and will monitor all construction-related activities. The biological monitor will notify the resident engineer of project activities that may not be in compliance. The resident engineer will stop work until the protective measures are fully implemented.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-19: Pre-Construction Desert Tortoise Survey. Immediately prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities, and prior to the installation of any desert tortoise exclusion fencing, clearance surveys for the desert tortoise will be conducted by the biologist. The entire project area will be surveyed for desert tortoise and its burrows by the contractor-supplied biologist prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Pre-Construction					

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BIO-20: Desert Tortoise Under Equipment. The contractor-supplied biologist and project personnel shall carefully check under parked vehicles and equipment for desert tortoises before any of the vehicles or equipment can be moved. Desert tortoises found within the staging and/or construction areas will be allowed to move away from such areas to a location away from danger, of their own accord. Workers will not be allowed to capture, handle, touch, or relocate tortoises. Project activities shall re-commence only once the desert tortoise is safely outside the project areas or required protected areas.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-21: Desert Tortoise in Work Area. If at any time a desert tortoise is observed in the ROW, the contractor-supplied biologist will have the authority to halt any activities, through the resident engineer or any other identified authority in charge of implementation, that may pose a threat to desert tortoises and to direct movements of equipment and personnel to avoid injury or mortality to desert tortoises. The contractor-supplied biologist will remove the tortoise from the work site in accordance with the CDFW protocols and relocate the tortoise to the resource agency approved, pre-determined translocation site.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					

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BIO-22: Exclusionary Desert Tortoise Fencing. Temporary exclusion fencing will be installed outlining the perimeter of any construction staging, storage, or batch plant areas to prevent entry by desert tortoises into the work site. Exclusion fencing will be installed following USFWS guidelines (2005) or by more current protocol. The biologist must check the fencing daily and make any necessary repairs should it become damaged.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-23: Deceased or Injured Desert Tortoise within the Project Site. The contractor-supplied biologist will inform USFWS and CDFW of any injured or dead desert tortoises (and other special-status species) found on site (verbal notification within 24 hours and written notification within five days).	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-24: Desert Tortoise Monitoring Reports. The contractor-supplied biologist will conduct daily on-site monitoring and submit a weekly monitoring report for desert tortoises (and additional special-status species) during construction.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-25: Transportation of Injured Tortoise. Injured desert tortoises will be transported to a veterinarian for treatment at the expense of the contractor or Caltrans. Only the authorized biologist or an approved desert tortoise biological monitor will be allowed to handle an injured tortoise. If an injured animal recovers, the appropriate USFWS field office will be contacted for final disposition of the animal.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					

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BIO-26: Speed Limits in Desert Tortoise Habitat. Except on maintained public roads designated for higher speeds or within desert tortoise-proof fenced areas, driving speeds will not exceed 20 miles per hour through potential desert tortoise habitat on unpaved roads.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-27: Firearms and Pets. No firearms or pets, including dogs, will be allowed within the work area. Firearms carried by authorized security and law enforcement personnel and working dogs under the control of a handler will be exempt from this protective measure.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-28: Predation Prevention. To preclude attracting predators, such as the common raven (Corvus corax) and coyotes (Canis latrans), food-related trash items will be removed daily from the work sites in their entirety and disposed of at an appropriate refuse disposal site. Workers are prohibited from feeding any and all wildlife.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-29: Desert Tortoise Fence Guidelines. Desert tortoise exclusion fence construction will follow the guidelines in Chapter 8 of the Desert Tortoise Field Manual (USFWS 2010) which is available at the USFWS website (www.fws.gov/ventura).	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					

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BIO-30: Pre-Construction Survey and Monitoring by a Qualified Bat Biologist. Prior to construction, a qualified bat biologist will conduct a survey to determine if bats are roosting on any of the bridges. If work on bridges that support bat roosting during the bat maternity season (April 1 – August 31) cannot be avoided, a qualified bat biologist will perform a humane eviction/exclusion of roosting bats from the bridges in the fall (September or October) before initiation of construction. The exclusionary material will be inspected regularly and maintained during construction activities, and will be removed at the completion of construction.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-31: Avoidance of Tree Trimming During Bat Maternity Season. If trimming or removal of mature trees and snags is necessary for project construction, removal activities will be performed outside of the bat maternity season (April 1 – August 31). In addition, a qualified bat biologist will perform a humane eviction/exclusion of roosting bats from mature trees and snags in the fall (September or October) before initiation of construction.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-32: Pre-Construction Survey. A qualified contractor supplied biologist will conduct pre-construction surveys for DKF and American badger within the project site and BSA boundaries no more than 30 days prior to the commencement of ground-breaking activities. Dens will be classified as inactive, potentially active, or definitely active. Should dens be deemed active, additional surveys will be required.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Pre-Construction					

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BIO-33: Den Complex Monitoring. All DKF/American badger den complexes in the project site identified as potentially active or definitely active will be monitored in accordance with CDFW guidelines. Once the monitoring is concluded, if no DKF/American badger tracks are found at the burrow entrance or no photos of the target species using the den are observed, the den can be excavated and backfilled by hand. If a den is identified as being active, it must further be classified as a non-natal or natal den. Potential natal den complexes are to be monitored for a minimum of three additional days using infrared wildlife cameras and/or tracking media to determine their status. If the den complex is determined to be natal during the denning period (February–June), a 200-foot non-disturbance buffer zone will be established surrounding natal dens, and monitoring by infrared cameras or weekly visits by a qualified contractor-supplied biologist will continue until it has been determined that the young have dispersed. The final buffer distance will be determined in consultation with BLM and CDFW. If the den complex within the project site is determined to be non-natal, passive hazing techniques will be used to discourage DKF/American badger from using the den complex.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					

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Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures	Environmental Analysis Source (Technical Study, Environmental Document, and/or Technical Discipline)	Responsible for Development and/or Implementation of Measure	Timing/ Phase	Action(s) Taken to Implement Measure/if checked No, add Explanation here	PS&E Task Completed	Construction Task Completed	Environmental Compliance	
					Date / Initials	Date / Initials	YES	NO
BIO-34: Passive Relocation. DKF/American badgers must be excluded from all den complexes within the project site portion of the project disturbance area. Inactive dens that are within the project site will immediately be excavated by hand and backfilled to prevent reuse by DKF/American badger. If tracks or DKF/American badger are captured in camera photos, then various passive hazing techniques will be implemented to deter DKF/American badger from using the den complex. If DKF/American badger are present and passive relocation techniques fail, CDFW will be contacted to explore other relocation options, such as trapping, in consultation with BLM.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-35: Stop Work Restrictions. If during construction activities a DKF/American badger is within the project site, all construction activities shall stop and the contractor-supplied biologist shall be notified. Consultation with resource agencies may be required, as appropriate.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-36: Entrapment Avoidance. To prevent inadvertent entrapment of DKF, American badgers, desert tortoise, or other animals during the construction phase of the project, all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches more than two feet deep shall be covered at the close of each working day by plywood or similar materials, or provided with one or more escape ramps constructed of earthen fill or wooden planks. Before such holes or trenches are filled, they shall be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					

Date of ECR: June 2019

Project Phase:
☒ PA/ED (*DED/FED*)
☐ PS&E Submittal_____ %
☐ Construction

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS RECORD
(I-10 Blythe Pavement Rehabilitation)

08-RIV-10
PM R134.0/R165.5
EA 08-1C083
PN 0816000090

Environmental Generalist:
Antonia Toledo
(909) 806-2541

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					Date / Initials	Date / Initials	YES	NO
BIO-37: Sick or Injured Animals. If a DKF/American badger is found sick, injured, and/or incapacitated in any area associated with the project site, CDFW personnel will be contacted for immediate capture and transport of the animal to a CDFW-approved wildlife rehabilitation and/or veterinarian clinic. CDFW, in consultation with Caltrans and BLM, will determine the final disposition of the sick animal, if it recovers. If the animal dies, a necropsy will be performed by a CDFW-approved facility to determine the cause of death. Results will be provided to CDFW. Written notification of the incident will contain, at a minimum, the date, time, location, and circumstances of the incident.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-38: Night Work Monitoring. Should night work be necessary, a contractor-supplied biologist will be present during all construction activities in areas determined to support DKF/American badger.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Construction					
BIO-39: Desert Tortoise Mitigation. It is anticipated that impacts to Desert Tortoise and its critical habitat will be mitigated at a minimum of 1:1 ratio. However, this is subject to change as mitigation for permanent impacts will be determined and finalized during the regulatory agency 2081 incidental take permit consultation period and/or permitting phase.	Natural Environment Study (January 2019)	Biological Studies/ Resident Engineer/ Contractor	Permitting					