County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
**STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR**

# EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

APPLICANT: Fresno County Design Division

APPLICATION NOS.: Initial Study Application No. 7334

DESCRIPTION: The proposed project consists of replacing the functionally obsolete Fresno Canal Bridge on N. Del Rey Avenue. The existing 2-lane timber bridge would be replaced with a new 2-lane concrete bridge that meets current standards.

LOCATION: The Fresno Canal Bridge is located on N. Del Rey Avenue, 0.5 miles south of its intersection with East McKinley Avenue.

This is the second circulation of Initial Study No. 7334. This Evaluation of Environmental Impacts was original circulated for public review through the State Clearinghouse between May 27, 2020 and June 26, 2020. Public Comments received during the original circulation period expressed some concerns with certain aspects of the project related to Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Geology and Soils and Hazards and Hazardous Materials. In order to address some of those concerns, two supplemental biological studies were undertaken.

The replacement of the existing bridge would address deficiencies such as a narrow deck width, substandard barrier rails and approach guard rails as well as scour erosion at the existing abutments. Because widening a timber structure is not allowable, replacement is the only option. The existing bridge is 71 feet long, 23.6 feet wide, was built in 1939 and widened in 1967. The proposed bridge will be 73 feet long and 39 feet wide to accommodate two 12-foot wide travel lanes and 6-foot wide shoulders. Approach work is expected to extend up to 400 feet on either side of the bridge. The driveways/access roads on all four corners would require realignment to accommodate the new approach railing and private driveway gates and fences would require relocation. Trees and other vegetation would be removed during construction.

The bridge would be closed during construction requiring a 3.7-mile detour to allow a shorter construction period. The existing Average Daily Traffic (ADT) is 1,200 vehicles per day. Right-of-way acquisition is anticipated.

Existing utilities at the bridge will also need to be relocated: PG&E electrical transmission overhead lines are located on the east side of the bridge and will

remain in place. PG&E will refeed the west side distribution lines from the north and remove the lines above the bridge. The distribution line feeding a house on the north side of the bridge will be moved northward to clear an access road. AT&T's telephone lines are located on the west side of the bridge and will be rerouted underground by directional bore method. A portion of Conterra's fiber optic cable located aerially on the north west side of the bridge will be rerouted underground with minimum depth of 10 feet below the canal bottom. Another portion, which is buried along west side of the north approach, will be relocated within County right-of-way, and buried at minimum 4 feet depth for a distance of approximately 300 feet. Directional bore method will be applied for this work with drilling diameter of 1.25 inch and two 3-foot by 5-foot bore pits.

The project would not involve pile driving; although structure demolition, excavation and some stream channel work is included in the scope of work, the work would be temporary and intermittent. Construction activities would occur during normal working hours, Monday through Friday, and would comply with Fresno County's Noise Ordinance and Caltrans Standard Specifications for noise.

Note: The "entire project limits" as used in the following report and the associated Mitigation Measures, includes all of the following: the road approaches approximately 400 feet north and 400 feet south of the bridge easement; the Fresno Canal including the area of the canal beneath the existing bridge; approximately 230 feet up and 220 feet downstream of the 60-foot bridge right-of-way along the length of the project site; and a 4.3-acre staging area northwest of the bridge.

## I. AESTHETICS

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

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

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

In the original circulation of this Evaluation of Environmental Impacts, it incorrectly stated that up to 174 trees would be removed as a result of this project. An additional supplemental memo regarding tree removal, by LSA, dated September 17, 2020, indicated the project is anticipated to result in the removal of up to approximately 30 trees during construction. While these trees may be removed in order to allow the replacement of the bridge, this does not present a significant impact because there is always a break in the tree line and natural vegetation where a bridge is established. The slight increase in this gap in this area will not have a significant impact on the visual quality of the area. The air quality impact of tree removal is discussed under Section III Air Quality.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

North Del Rey Avenue is not considered a scenic or landscaped drive. However, Belmont Avenue to the south and Academy Avenue to the east are considered to be scenic drives. The project will have no impact on these drives because the low elevation of the bridge prevents it from being visible from any location on these roads. The bridge itself is not eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No new lighting is proposed as part of this application and the road surface will be of similar composite as the existing roadway: asphalt pavement. There are currently no streetlights along the bridge, and none are proposed as part of this application. As a result, there is no change to the existing sources of light or glare in the vicinity of the project and no impacts as a result of new sources of light and glare.

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

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

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

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project would result in the conversion of approximately 0.13 acre (5,663 square feet) of Prime Farmland along the roadway edge to accommodate the bridge approaches. Approximately 3,431 square feet of the farmland which would be impacted is restricted by a Williamson Act Contract. The removal of this portion of land does not represent a conflict with the Contract because it does not present a reduction of farming acreage to less than 20 acres. Further, the removal of a small amount of fringe farmland from the larger parcel will not adversely affect the ability to farm the remainder and lastly, use of this section as right-of-way will not create pressure for surrounding farmland to convert to a non-agricultural use.

During review of this project under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a Farmland Conversion Impact Rating was calculated to determine if the loss of farmland would be considered significant. The site was given a conversion rating of 122 (*Farmland Conversion Impact Analysis for the Fresno Canal Bridge Replacement at Del Rey Avenue Project* by Area West Environmental, Inc., dated April 28, 2017). According to 7 CFR §658.4, projects which score less than 160 "need not be given further consideration for protection" because the measurable impacts of farmland conversion show that impacts will be less than significant. In the case of this project, more than two thirds of the value for the site was due to the prime farmland designation; however, the small amount to be converted was determined to be negligible compared both to the parent property and the farmable land in the County.

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

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located in an area where land is designated or zoned for timberland or timberland production. Therefore, the project will not 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Due to the lack of forestland in the vicinity of the project site, there will be no direct impacts to forestland. The replacement of this bridge will not result in the conversion of offsite forestland.

Despite the removal of a small amount of Prime and Williamson Act-restricted farmland, this project will not involve other changes which could result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use. The loss of farmland would be related to the need to

acquire additional right-of-way to ensure a safe approach to the bridge and farming in this area has historically occurred adjacent to the roadway.

The ultimate right-of-way along Del Rey Avenue in the project area is 60 feet, with 30 feet on either side of the section line and the existing right-of-way is 40 feet with 20 feet on either side of the section line. Based on the ultimate right-of-way, up to ten feet on either side of the section line could ultimately be converted to roadway. The ultimate right-of-way was determined as part of the Fresno County General Plan in October 2000 and loss of farmland associated with acquisition of right-of-way was considered in the General Plan EIR Background Report. Therefore, the proposed loss of farmland is not a new impact as a result of this application and this bridge replacement project will have no impact on pressures to convert farmland on nearby parcels.

III. AIR QUALITY

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

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

B. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard; or

C. Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under a Federal or State ambient air quality standard; or

D. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Air District) reviewed this project and did not identify any concerns with potential air quality standards violations or nonconformity with existing Air Quality Plans. The project is anticipated to return to baseline traffic following construction because no additional through lanes are proposed. The proposed widening will create more space in each lane and add 6-foot shoulders for improved safety.

Therefore, the project's contribution to air quality impacts and release of greenhouse gases is limited to the construction period. The Greenhouse Gas Memo prepared by LSA (dated December 17, 2019) used the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District's Road Construction Emissions Model (ROADMod) to estimate the

project's emissions during construction: 647.12 metric tons of Carbon Dioxide equivalent (MTCO2e).

That memo also calculated the following emissions for the project: 0.47 tons of ROG, 4.02 tons of Carbon Monoxide, 4.67 tons of Nitrogen Oxide, 0.26 tons of Particulate Matter less than 10 microns in size, 0.39 tons of Particulate Matter less than 2.5 microns in size, 0.1 tons of Sulfur Oxides, 915.47 tons of Carbon Dioxide, 0.02 tons of Nitrous Oxide ($N_2O$), and 0.20 tons of Methane. Overall this results in 925.32 tons of $CO_2e$, which is equivalent to 839.44 metric tons.

The Air District has not adopted significant thresholds for construction impacts; however, the anticipated release of 839.44 MTCO2e is less than the 900 MTCO2e threshold recommended by the California Air Pollution Control Officer's Association (CAPCOA) for construction impacts. Therefore, the project is determined to have less than significant impacts on release of criteria pollutants.

According to a supplemental memo regarding Air Quality Analysis related to tree removal, by LSA, dated September 17, 2020, the project is anticipated to remove approximately 30 trees as part of construction activities. Generally, some trees are recognized for their ability to remove ground level ozone; however, some tree varieties release biogenic gases that create ground level ozone. Trees can capture criteria pollutants such as nitrogen oxides and particulate matter. The emissions resulting from, or benefit of, biogenic sources, such as those from trees or other vegetation are not considered in any of the methodologies for project evaluation contained in the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's (SJVAPCD) Guide For Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts (GAMAQI). According to the SJVAPCD, project impacts shall be based on mass emissions of criteria pollutants during project construction and operation. The SJVAPCD's thresholds for criteria pollutants are measured in tons of emissions per year. The very small change in emission levels associated with removal of trees in the project vicinity would not be measurable against these thresholds. Additionally, biogenic emissions are not included in the emission analysis because trees have a life cycle that involves a growing period where emissions are captured, which is then followed by a period of decay where emissions are released back into the atmosphere. Trees sequester carbon dioxide while they are actively growing, which is typically limited to the first 20 years of tree life. Thereafter, the accumulation of carbon in biomass slows with age, and is completely offset by losses from clipping, pruning and death. Due to the limited sequestration life remaining in the trees that would be removed as part of the project, it is not anticipated that there would be air quality impacts in the vicinity of the project site, therefore impacts would be less than significant.

## IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Discussion in this section is based on the *Natural Environment Study (Minimal Impacts)* report, dated October 2016, and the Biological Resources Update Survey, Fresno Canal at Del Rey Avenue, dated November 13, 2020 prepared by Lone Oaks Associates .

Would the project:

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) determined by Caltrans consists of the bridge itself; the road approaches approximately 400 feet north and south of the existing bridge easement; the Fresno Canal in the area of the bridge, 230 feet upstream, and 220 feet downstream of the bridge; a 4.3-acre staging area located northwest of the bridge, and a small portion of the adjacent farmland.

On June 19, 2016, a reconnaissance-level field survey of the APE was performed to determine if sensitive or protected species were likely to be present on site. Of special-status species which are known to occur in and around the quadrangle, the following have the potential to be present on site: western pond turtle, Swainson's hawk, and San Joaquin Kit Fox. On November 13, 2020, a field survey of the APE was conducted to provide an update on conditions within the APE since the 2016 survey, an determine if the avoidance measures of the original Natural Environmental Study are still appropriate to reduce all potential impacts to biological resources to a less than significant level. No changes to potential habitat or land uses since the 2016 survey were observed. No burrows of suitable dimensions for denning of San Joaquin Kit Fox were observed in the APE. No evidence of Kangaroo Rat, or American Badger habitation were observed. Suitable burrows for the Burrowing Owl are present within and adjacent to the proposed staging area northwest of the bridge. Based on the current site conditions, the mitigation measures stipulated in the original Natural Environmental Study are still appropriate.

Canals are capable of supporting western pond turtles; however, at the time of the survey, the water in the canal was flowing too quickly and the banks were too hard to support either swimming or basking. Therefore, it is unlikely that western pond turtle will be present onsite.

In regard to Swainson's Hawk, review of the project site determined that the site and surrounding area did not contain suitable foraging habitat, although the mature riparian trees in the vicinity of the canal offer potential nesting habitat. The surrounding development consists of tilled fields which have been eradicated of small mammals, such as ground squirrel, which would otherwise be a source of forage for the hawk. In the Central Valley, Swainson's hawks usually nest adjacent to areas where foraging is available, making this area generally unsuitable for long-term occupation; however, they may pass over the project site from time to time.

The San Joaquin kit fox prefers area of alkali sink scrub and alkali grassland, which is not present on the subject site. In addition, according to the *Natural Environment Study,* reports of observed kit fox in the area are not likely to be actual observations, as they appear to be at elevations of 1,000 to 2,000 feet in oak woodland habitat, where vegetation consists of brushy understory. The *Natural Environment Study* posits that based on the location of the observation these foxes were grey fox rather than kit fox

and determined that San Joaquin kit fox would be very unlikely to be present on site, even as transients.

At the existing bridge, birds were observed flying under the deck to roost and may have constructed nests in the underside of the bridge. No bats were observed during the field visit, but they have been known to roost on the undersides of timber bridges such as the existing bridge. No bat sign was observed; however, the water in the canal was only a few feet shy of the bridge deck, which prevented the biologist from close survey. Therefore, since it cannot be determined if bats are present on site and because raptors and other birds would find the underside of the bridge a suitable nesting location, mitigation is required to avoid impacts to these species. Impacts to birds outside of the nesting season would not be considered a significant impact.

*** *Mitigation Measures***

1. *In order to minimize adverse impacts to nesting raptors, migratory birds, and colonial nesting birds, the following mitigation measures shall be implemented:*

    a. *If construction (including equipment staging and tree removal) will occur during the breeding season for migratory birds and raptors (generally between February 15 and September 1), the County shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction nesting bird and raptor survey before the onset of construction activities. The preconstruction nesting bird and raptor survey shall be conducted between February 15 and September 1 within suitable habitat within the entire project limits. Surveys for nesting migratory birds shall be completed within 250 feet of the entire project limits. Surveys for Swainson's hawk should also extend 0.25 mile from the entire project limits to ensure that hawks are not indirectly affected by construction noise. The survey shall be conducted not more than 10 days before the initiation of construction activities. If no active nests are detected during the survey, no additional mitigation is required to address concerns relating to migratory birds and raptors.*

    b. *If migratory birds or raptors are found to be nesting in or adjacent to the entire project limits, a no-disturbance buffer of 100 feet around an active bird nest or 300 feet around an active raptor nest shall be established to avoid disturbance of the nest area and to avoid take. The buffer shall be maintained around the nest area until the end of the breeding season, or until a qualified biologist determines that the young have fledged and are foraging on their own. The extent of these buffers may be modified, as determined by the biologist (in coordination with Caltrans and CDFW), depending on the species identified, level of noise or construction disturbances, and other topographical or artificial barriers.*

2. *In order to minimize adverse impacts to roosting bats, the following mitigation measures shall be implemented:*

a. *Pre-construction surveys for roosting bats shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within 15 days of the onset of construction, during dusk when bats are likely to be active. The survey area will include the North Del Rey Avenue bridge over the Fresno Canal.*

b. *If construction activities commence between April 1 and August 31 (the bat breeding season) and the pre-construction surveys identified active roosting bats, a 100-foot construction setback shall be established around the bridge. Alternative avoidance measures may be approved by CDFW. Buffer areas will be identified on the ground with flagging, fencing, or by other easily visible means, to prevent construction equipment and workers from entering the setback area. Buffers shall remain in place for the duration of the breeding season, unless other arrangements are made with CDFW. After the breeding season, any remaining bats may be removed through passive relocation (see following measure).*

c. *During the non-breeding season, (September 1 to March 31), resident bats occupying the North Del Rey Avenue and Fresno Canal bridge may be passively relocated by a qualified biologist or professional pest control specialist. Passive relocation would entail installing one-way doors on the bridge or utilizing other humane exclusion methods where the bats are located and leaving these devices in place for at least 48 hours to ensure bats have vacated the bridge.*

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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Riparian habitat exists in the vicinity of the canal and is composed of a mix of native and non-native species and the canal itself is an engineered irrigation system lined with rock and riprap. The canal itself does not provide suitable habitat for special-status species; however, some riparian habitat exists on the banks of the canal. Approximately 0.02 acres of permanent impacts and 0.03 acres of temporary impacts will occur to non-native riparian habitat; and approximately 0.03 acre of temporary impacts and 0.02 acres of temporary impacts will occur to native riparian habitat. These impacts primarily occur in the areas immediately adjacent to the bridge where the land has been previously developed as the roadway and support for the existing bridge. Therefore, impacts to riparian habitat will be less than significant.

The modification of the canal bed with concrete and rock slope protection as part of the installation of the replacement bridge will not present a significant impact to the value of the canal to native and non-native species. The project is required to prepare an application for a Streambed Alteration Agreement, which allows the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to require specific minimization and avoidance measures for this project, if they are determined to be necessary. Compliance with this

existing regulation will result in less than significant impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities.

C. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally-protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

An ecologist examined the entire project site for possible waters of the United States and determined that the bed and lower bank of the Fresno Canal below the ordinary high-water mark would likely be considered a tributary water of the United States. The rational for this determination for an engineered canal is the existing connection between the canal and the San Joaquin River, although in most years water in the canal does not reach this connection point.

D. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The canal beneath the bridge is required to route fish waters in odd-numbered years. Therefore, the project would be required to install a diverter if water is flowing at the start of construction. If this is the case, an in-channel bypass will be provided by the Fresno Irrigation District. In addition, this project is required to comply with permitting associated with work in a streambed, such as the Streambed Alteration Agreement and preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Therefore, the project will have no significant adverse impacts on the movement of resident or migratory fish or wildlife species.

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

F. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources because it is not in area subject to any such regulations. Similarly, the project site is not subject to a Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plan.

The County of Fresno has general plan policies recommending compliance with the Oak Woodland Management Plan for projects which have the potential to impact Oak Woodlands. A Tree Impact Study prepared by Live Oak Associates, Inc. indicated that

the trees to be affected included the following species: Fremont's Cottonwood, Citrus, Eucalyptus, Almond, Cherry, Goodding's Black Willow, Red Willow, and Chinaberry – none of which are protected tree species.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Impacts to the canal were determined to be less than significant because the majority of work will occur outside of the streambed. While some work within the bed of the canal will occur, the installation and removal of bridge support structures will not impact the overall function of the canal as a water conveyance structure.

The subject bridge was constructed in 1939 and widened in 1967 and is listed in the Caltrans Historic Bridge Inventory as Category 5, which makes it ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The Fresno Canal and a transmission line, which runs parallel to the canal, were also identified as historic-era construction.

The transmission line first appears on the 1947 Round Mountain Quadrangle map and appears to be part of a 130-kilovolt line which connects the Sanger Substation to the Kerckhoff Powerhouse. The nearest lattice towers which support the line are located approximately 570 feet south and 125 feet north of the edge of the bridge. While electric distribution lines and telephone wires on the west side of the project site will be modified such that they run underground in this area, the transmission line to the east will not be impacted by this project.

Therefore, impacts to historical resources will be less than significant because the scope of the project does not involve material changes to such resources.

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

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

Tribal consultation pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act did not identify any existing cultural resources on the project site and the pedestrian survey conducted by Applied Earthworks on July 27, 2016 did not identify any resources that were visible at the surface of the project site. Records of surveys within the area of potential impacts and a 0.5-mile radius identified no known resources. However, one of the local tribes, Table Mountain Rancheria, identified that the project was proximate to an early native American trail, shown on an 1854 General

Land Office map (Applied Earthworks, 2017). Additional discussion is provided in Section XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources. Due to the increased potential for previously unidentified cultural resources to be present at a subsurface level, mitigation measures shall be required to ensure that impacts to cultural resources remain less than significant.

*** *Mitigation Measures***

1. *A qualified archaeologist/paleontologist, defined as one meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology (the "Qualified Archaeologist"), shall be on call during any ground-disturbing activity within the entire project limits to evaluate any possible resources uncovered.*

2. *The Qualified Archaeologist shall conduct a preconstruction meeting to orient the construction crew to the potential for encountering prehistoric archaeological deposits during construction. This instructional meeting shall include a discussion of the types of artifacts that could be encountered and the steps to take upon discovery to avoid inadvertent impacts to such finds. The tribal monitors may be present at the preconstruction meeting.*

3. *In the event that unanticipated archaeological resources are encountered during Project activities, compliance with federal and state regulations and guidelines regarding the treatment of cultural resources and/or human remains shall be required, specifically Caltrans Standard Specifications 14-2, along with implementation of the following mitigation:*

    a. *All construction activities within 60 feet shall halt, and the area of the find shall be secured to prevent the removal or taking of archaeological resources from the site. The Qualified Archaeologist shall be notified immediately.*
    b. *The Qualified Archaeologist shall inspect the findings and report the results of the inspection to the Applicant.*
    c. *In the event that the identified archaeological resource is determined to be prehistoric, the Applicant and Qualified Archaeologist will coordinate with and solicit input from the appropriate Native American Tribal Representatives, as determined by consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), regarding significance and treatment of the resource as a tribal cultural resource. Any tribal cultural resources discovered during project work shall be treated in consultation with the tribe, with the goal of preserving in place with proper treatment.*
    d. *If the County, in consultation with the Qualified Archaeologist and Native American Tribal Representatives, determines that the resource qualifies as a historical resource or a unique archaeological resource (as defined pursuant to CEQA Guidelines) and that the project has potential to damage or destroy the resource, mitigation shall be implemented in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(b)(3), mitigation shall be accomplished through either*

*preservation in place or, if preservation in place is not feasible, data recovery through excavation conducted by a qualified archaeologist implementing a detailed archaeological treatment plan.*

4. *If human remains are uncovered during Project activities, the contractor shall immediately halt work and secure the area. The Applicant shall contact the Fresno County Sheriff-Coroner to evaluate the remains, and follow the procedures and protocols set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 (e)(1). If the County Sheriff-Coroner determines that the remains are Native American in origin, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be notified, in accordance with Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5(c) and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 (as amended by AB 2641). The NAHC shall designate a Most Likely Descendent (MLD) for the remains per Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, and the landowner shall ensure that the immediate vicinity, according to generally accepted cultural or archaeological standards or practices, where the Native American human remains are located, is not damaged or disturbed by further development activity until the landowner has discussed and conferred, as prescribed in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, with the MLD regarding their recommendations for the disposition of the remains, taking into account the possibility of multiple human remains.*

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

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

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

This project does not have the potential to cause a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during operation because it will be a part of the existing circulation system and will not have any functions which require the use of energy. Therefore, the potential for inefficient use of energy may only occur during demolition of the existing bridge and construction of its replacement, along with the associated modifications to the utility structures. Uses include fuel necessary to operate construction equipment, transportation of materials to the project site, and the daily round trips by employees.

The Environmental Protection Agency and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Transportation have issued final rules to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve fuel economy by regulating the minimum acceptable miles-per-gallon ratio and other improvements such as air conditioner performance. Since these regulations apply to the manufacture of vehicles, they will be phased in as consumers replace old vehicles, leading to a general increase

in fuel efficiency. In addition, since this project will be constructed in coordination with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), it will be subject to those standards outlined in the Highway Design Manual, which include regulations for the conservation of materials and energy.

Compliance with these existing regulations will ensure that the project does not result in a wasteful or inefficient use of energy or nonrenewable resources during demolition, construction, and the reorganization of utility lines.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

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

1. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?

2. Strong seismic ground shaking?

3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

4. Landslides?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located in an area at risk of loss, injury, or death associated with the rupture of a known earthquake fault, strong seismic ground-shaking, seismic-related ground failure or landslides. The most recent Alquist-Priolo map shows that there are no known faults within 50 miles of the site and Figure 9-5 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR) shows that the project is located in an area with 0-20% risk of peak horizontal ground acceleration exceeding 10% within 50 years, which is the lowest level of risk.

Regarding landslides, the area of the project is generally flat except where the canal is located. As part of the preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, which is a required part of Section 401 permitting, the project will be required to protect against collapse of the streambanks both during construction and during the operation period when the project site will be unmanned. With compliance to these requirements, no impacts to risk of loss, injury, or death associated with landslides will occur.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

According to the Water Quality Technical Memorandum prepared for this project by Rincon Consultants, dated September 16, 2016, construction activities associated with the proposed staging area has the potential to compact soil and therefore increase impermeability of the soil in the short term leading to increased storm water runoff and potentially erosion. However, the existing paved road will be utilized for access to the proposed staging area so as to eliminate the need for the construction of new access roads, thereby minimizing the potential for soil disturbance and erosion. Additionally, the project will be required to prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) which will identify and minimize the potential for increased erosion and runoff resulting from the project.

C. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located in an area of steep slopes as identified by Figure 7-2 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR) and is therefore not at risk of on or off-site landslide. As previously discussed, the project site is area of low probability of strong seismic ground shaking which is associated with lateral spreading and liquefaction. According to the FCGPBR subsidence is the gradual settling or sinking of the earth's surface with little or no horizontal motion, usually as the result of the withdraw of oil, gas, or groundwater, or hydro compaction.

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located in an area of the County identified as having expansive soils, as identified by Figure 7-1 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR).

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The use of septic systems is not proposed as part of this application because such facilities are not required for bridge replacements. Portable facilities will be provided during construction and no such facilities are required for operation.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

No such unique resources were identified at the project site; however, if unique resources were present at a subsurface level, grading and other construction activity could excavate them, resulting in potential damage. Mitigation measures relating to the protection of Cultural Resources (Section V), which relate to non-unique cultural artifacts will extend the same protection to these potentially unique artifacts.

* ***Mitigation Measures***

1. *See Section V. Cultural Resources*

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

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

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

In general, the opportunity for this project to release greenhouse gases into the environment is limited to the destruction of the existing bridge and construction of the replacement. Because the scope of the project does not include additional lanes which would lead to an increase in traffic, there will be no operational increase.

During construction, the sources of greenhouse gas emissions include: diesel-powered construction equipment, expenditure of fossil fuels by employees during commute, and increased travel distance for users of the road who would experience a detour during construction. Based on the results of the RoadMod, the project would generate a total of approximately 839.44 metric tons of $CO_2e$.

The proposed project would comply with existing State regulations adopted to achieve the overall GHG emissions reduction goals identified in AB 32 and would be consistent with applicable plans and programs designed to reduce GHG emissions. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Routine operations for this project will not require the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. While it is possible that vehicles which are transporting such materials may use the bridge in the course of their business, this usage is considered part of the baseline and the proposed bridge replacement will have no impact on this factor. Based on historic photographs of the project site (Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment, Haro Environmental, November 11, 2015), show that the area of the project has historically been used for agriculture. A site visit on October 19, 2015 did not identify any hazardous materials or petroleum products at the site or at nearby sites. In addition, no discolored vegetation or other signs of prior hazardous waste releases were observed.

B. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

As discussed above, the project will have no modification to the baseline risk associated with the release of hazardous materials to the public during operation, since it will operate as part of the complete circulation system. However, during demolition, it is possible that lead and other heavy metals contained in paint and asbestos contained in concrete may be exposed in such a manner that could cause adverse health impacts on workers and could lead to a contamination of the Fresno Canal.

On March 27, 2017, soil samples from adjacent to the bridge were tested for lead content and it was determined that aerially deposited lead was present. The developer will implement Caltrans Guidance regarding the treatment of aerially deposited lead, which will ensure that no adverse impacts occur due to excessive exposure to contaminated soil. On April 13, 2017 samples of the concrete from the existing bridge were tested for asbestos content. Asbestos was not detected in any samples.

The construction of this project will occur through the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and will therefore incorporate the most recent Caltrans Standard Specifications. These specifications establish handling methods and testing requirements necessary to first, determine if hazardous materials are present in significant amounts and second, to protect workers in such a case. Handling and disposal are proscribed for cases where debris is considered hazardous and in cases where it is considered nonhazardous (Section 14.11, Caltrans Standard Specifications, 2018), ensuring that workers and the public are protected. Additional provisions are made in this section for projects which cross a body of water, requiring additional precautions over and above those required by the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan. Compliance to these existing policies and regulations will result in less than significant impacts.

It is also possible that the use of construction equipment and other vehicles could result in accidental spills of oil, grease, gasoline, brake fluid, antifreeze, or other vehicle-

related pollutants. The preparation of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan includes best management practices to ensure that spills are prevented from contaminating the canal. Erosion controls will be established where necessary and all equipment will be in good repair prior to use on the project site further reducing the possibility of leak or malfunction which could lead to pollution.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous materials and therefore will have no impact on the risk of the release of such materials within one quarter mile of a school.

D. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located on a hazardous materials site as listed by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Information, the Toxics Releases Inventory, the National Priorities List, the Assessment Clean-up and Redevelopment Exchange System, or the Radiation Information Database.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Following the demolition of the existing bridge and construction of its replacement, the project site will be unmanned and therefore will not result in a safety or noise hazard as a result of residency or employment in the vicinity of an airport.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is located on North Del Rey Avenue, between its intersections with E. McKinley Avenue to the north and E. Belmont Avenue to the south. The Fresno Canal winds between McKinley and Belmont Avenues, running generally east to west. While this bridge is being demolished and rebuilt, the next nearest connection between these two roads is N. McCall Avenue, approximately one mile west of N. Del Rey Avenue.

Major roads in this area are developed on a grid system, which typically provides major intersections at one- or two-mile intervals along the cardinal directions. To the east, N. Academy Avenue is two miles away. The detour as a result of the road closure is anticipated to be 3.7 miles. Due to the pattern of connectivity of roads in this area and the limited amount of time that the bridge will be closed, no impacts to emergency response and emergency evacuations plans would be anticipated.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located in an area which is at risk of wildland fires and is considered to be within a local responsibility area for fire protection services.

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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

This project has the potential to adversely impact water quality standards or to violate waste discharge requirements as a result of construction within the streambed; however, compliance to existing regulations will ensure that Fresno Canal is not contaminated by debris, lead-based paint, or other hazards. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed and approved by Caltrans which requires the adoption of special standards for the handling of lead-based paint and asbestos-containing materials where their presence might be anticipated, such as with this project. Adherence to those regulations will result in no impacts to water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.

It is possible that use of the bridge by motor vehicles will result in deposit of pollutants into Fresno Canal as a result of the combustion of gasoline and diesel fuel. Since the project does not propose to increase the number of through lanes on this bridge, there will be no increase from the baseline average daily traffic. The replacement bridge will be approximately 16.6 feet wider than the existing bridge, with increased width of the travel lanes (up to twelve feet) and six-foot shoulders. Such increased surface area between the travel lanes and the edge of the bridge would reduce the amount of contamination from typical usage of the bridge by motor vehicles.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Some water may be used during construction for dust control and other necessary purposes; however, such usage will be limited in duration and therefore will not have a substantial impact on groundwater recharge or management.

C. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?

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

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

3. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or

4. Impede or redirect flood flows?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

During construction, impacts may occur in the streambed due to debris from the demolition of the existing bridge falling into the streambed and/or increased sediment loads and turbidity during installation of the supports for the replacement bridge; however, compliance with the SWPPP and the Streambed Alteration Agreement, along with implementation of best management practices as required by Caltrans, will ensure that these impacts are not significant. These regulations require developers to ensure that debris and dust do not run off into the bed of the stream.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not near a coastline, which precludes adverse impacts as a result of tsunami. It is similarly not located near a large, stationary body of water which could be subject to seiche.

The area of the canal, including the bridge structure is located within Special Flood Hazard Zone AE and the area north of the bridge is located in Zone AO (depth 1 foot). The special flood hazard zones in this area appear to originate within the canal itself and are not impacted by the bridge replacement. The proposed bridge will be of similar height to the existing (aligned with the roadway) and therefore is subject to the same risks as the existing bridge. Therefore, the proposed project has no impact on the risk of pollutant release due to location in a flood hazard zone.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

This project is required to prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, which will prevent the release of pollutants to the canal during construction. Some water usage will also be necessary during construction. However, construction and its associated impacts including the risk of spill and water usage, will be a relatively short term event over the life of the bridge. The temporary nature of construction and adoption of best management practices around the streambed will ensure that the project will have less than significant impacts on quality of water in the stream.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

A. Physically divide an established community?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Bridges serve to connect places which are otherwise separated by a physical obstruction, in this case the Fresno Canal. Because this project will operate as an essential part of the circulation system as described in Section XVI. Transportation, it will not physically divide an established community. The two sides of the canal will temporarily be separated during the course of construction; however, there is a detour of less than three miles to make the connection. Further, the scattered residential development in the area of the canal do not represent an “established community.” Therefore, there are no impacts on the division of communities.

B. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

This project will proceed in compliance with Caltrans specifications for construction, which include requirements to minimize the release of pollution into the environment. County regulations also serve to prevent adverse impacts. Due to the necessary nature of the bridge replacement and the existing regulations which ensure compliance with environmental standards established by the County General Plan. No conflicts with policies or plans adopted for the purpose of mitigating an environmental effect were identified.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

B. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local General Plan, Specific Plan or other land use plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Figure 7-7 (FCGPBR) shows where valuable mineral resources are located in the County of Fresno. The project site is not located near any such mapped location and the scope of the project does not include the removal of any locally important mineral resource. Therefore, this project will have no impact on Mineral Resources.

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

A. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies; or

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Noise is generally considered to be unwanted sound. Adverse noise impacts from the project could occur from two sources: demolition/construction equipment and increased vehicular traffic on Del Rey Ave. During operation, because no increase in the number of through lanes is proposed, no substantial increase in traffic is anticipated. As a result, there will be no increase in the ambient noise levels.

However, construction equipment has the potential to cause temporary increases to the ambient, intermittent, and impulse noise levels around the construction site and may have the potential to cause elevated ground borne vibration or noise levels. There are two residences within 500 feet of the canal, which are the most likely to be impacted by adverse noise impacts. However, noise sources associated with construction are exempt from compliance with the provisions of the Noise Ordinance (Fresno County Ordinance Code Chapter 8.40), provided such activities do not take place before six a.m. or after nine p.m. on any day except Saturday or Sunday, or before seven a.m. or after five p.m. on Saturday or Sunday (§8.40.060). In addition, the project will implement Caltrans Standard Specification 14-8.02 (or the most recent standard associated with noise control, if 14-8.02 has been superseded at the time of construction), which limits the project's noise to 86 a-weighted decibels at 50 feet from the job site from 9 P.M. to 6 A.M. and all internal combustion engines will be equipped with a muffler. This standard does not exempt the project from compliance with other noise standards.

Impacts from the demolition of the existing bridge and construction of the replacement will be temporary and will comply with the existing Noise Ordinance. As a result, impacts will be less than significant.

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located within two miles of any airport, public or private. Therefore, no impacts will occur as a result of such location.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

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

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The replacement bridge will be approximately 16.6 feet wider than the existing bridge. Such increased area will allow for wider travel lanes and a six-foot shoulder in both directions; however, it will also require that the approach be widened for a smooth transition from roadway to bridge deck. This will result in necessary realignment of fences, driveways, and access roads which were constructed adjacent to the bridge approach. Despite the need to relocate or realign these features, no resident will be displaced from their home as a result of the project.

The proposed bridge replacement is not anticipated to result in substantial unplanned population growth because it represents required maintenance to a portion of the circulation system. Increasing the safety of the bridge on this section of N. Del Rey Avenue does not have the potential to induce an influx of residences to this area.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

A. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically-altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically-altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental

impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services?

1. Fire protection;

2. Police protection;

3. Schools;

4. Parks; or

5. Other public facilities?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

During demolition/construction traffic at the project site will be diverted around the bridge, resulting in an increase of approximately 3.7 miles per vehicle. As discussed previously, the major roads in this section of Fresno County are generally laid out in a mile-wide grid. Parallel roads exist one mile to the west and two miles to the east of N. Del Rey Avenue which provide the same connection between McKinley Avenue and Belmont Avenue. Because of the temporary nature of the detour and its short distance, this project will not have an adverse impact on response times in this area for police or fire protection. Because the project will not induce population growth, there will be no impact on the usage of schools, parks, and other public facilities and no impact on service ratios (the number of fire fighters and police officers serving a given population) for fire and police protection.

XVI. RECREATION

Would the project:

A. Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

There are no neighborhood or regional parks within two miles of the project site. As previously discussed, this project will not induce population growth or an increase in traffic along N. Del Rey Avenue. As a result, it will not lead to an increase in the use of parks or other recreational facilities in the area.

## XVI. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

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

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

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

D. Result in inadequate emergency access?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

As described in Section VIII, Hazard and Hazardous Materials, the project site is located along N. Del Rey Ave, approximately halfway between N. Del Rey's intersections with E. McKinley Ave to the north and E. Belmont Ave to the south. N. Del Rey Ave is classified as a local road in the County's general plan with an existing pavement width of approximately 23 feet, a 20-foot right-of-way on both sides of the section line, and ultimate right-of-way of 60 feet (30 on each side of the center line). Some right-of-way acquisition is anticipated as part of this project.

Improvements to the road may occur in order to ensure a smooth transition between road surface and bridge deck. Such improvements to the bridge are necessary in order to meet current standards of safety and therefore will be in line with County plans, ordinances, and policies addressing the circulation system and will reduce hazards related to geometric design. No increase in traffic is anticipated as a result of this project, ensuring that the operation of the roadway after construction will be unchanged.

## XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

1. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or

2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The County of Fresno consulted with local Native American Tribal Governments under the provisions of Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52). Notice that this application was complete was sent to Table Mountain Rancheria (TMR) and the Dumna Wo Wah Tribal Government (DWW) on August 24, 2017, with an additional notice being sent to the Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians (PRCI) on November 7, 2017. The letter to PRCI was sent later than the original letters because the County received their request for notification in late October of 2017. Staff determined that the project site was outside the area of interest for the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tribal Government, who also requested such notice.

Neither TMR nor PRCI provided a response to the County's notice that the project application was complete. DWW requested consultation with the County in a letter dated September 7, 2017, which was within the 30-day response time proscribed by AB 52. The County invited a tribal representative to a meeting to discuss this project and other projects on which the Tribe requested consultation in a letter dated October 25, 2017. A copy of the Archeological Survey Report and Historic Property Survey Report (Applied Earthworks, 2017) was provided to the Tribal Representative on February 21, 2018.

This report documents the surveys conducted by Applied Earthworks' (AE) Historical Archaeologist and Principal Architectural Historian and the results of AE's consultation with Table Mountain Rancheria. Caltrans was required to consult with Tribal Governments under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The TMR Representative did not identify any known resources at the project site and no existing resources were identified as part of the archaeological survey performed on September 14, 2016; however, the Representative identified this area as part of a Native American Trail that once crossed the river at or near this location. In order to address the issue of potential of significant but currently unknown resources being present below the ground surface, Caltrans and TMR agreed that archaeological monitoring during project construction would be necessary. That mitigation measure is provided below. With the inclusion of that mitigation measure and additional discussion relating to historic-era structures in the vicinity (See Section V Cultural Resources), the report determined that the project would have no significant impacts to historic properties or known cultural resources.

Staff received no response from the DWW Tribal Government. Based on the concerns raised by the Tribe in their initial letter and the concerns raised by TMR during Section 106 consultation, an additional mitigation measure was proposed, which describes the steps which shall be taken in the event that a previously

unknown resource is excavated during construction. The consultation process was concluded pursuant to PRC §21080.3.2(b)(2) on August 2, 2018.

* ***Mitigation Measures***

*The Mitigation Measures listed in Section V. Cultural Resources shall also be implemented to address potential impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources.*

1. *Forty-eight (48) hours prior to any ground-disturbing activities within the entire project limits, such as digging, trenching, or grading, the Applicant shall notify the Dumna Wo Wah Tribe of the opportunity to have a certified Native American Monitor present during those construction activities. Notification shall be by email to Chris Acree and Robert Ledger with the Dumna Wo Wah Tribal Government at cacree@hotmail.com and ledgerrobert@ymail.com. The tribal monitors shall be independently insured with policies conforming to County of Fresno requirements in order to enter the construction zone. Notification shall also be provided in the same manner at least 48 hours prior to any preconstruction meetings.*

2. *In the event archaeological materials are encountered during the course of grading or construction, the Project contractor shall cease any ground disturbing activities within 60 feet of the find and secure the area. The qualified archaeologist shall evaluate the significance of the resources and recommend appropriate treatment measures. Per CEQA Guidelines §15126.4(b)(3)(A), project redesign and preservation in place shall be the preferred means to avoid impacts to significant archaeological sites. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines §15126.4(b)(3)(C), if it is demonstrated that resources cannot be avoided, the qualified archaeologist shall develop additional treatment measures in consultation with the County, which may include data recovery or other appropriate measures. The County shall consult with appropriate Native American representatives in determining appropriate treatment for unearthed cultural resources if the resources are prehistoric or Native American in nature. Archaeological materials recovered during any investigation shall be curated at an accredited curational facility. The qualified archaeologist shall prepare a report documenting evaluation and/or additional treatment of the resource. A copy of the report shall be provided to the County and to the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center. Construction can recommence based on direction of the qualified archaeologist.*

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; or

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project does not involve development of a well or sewage disposal system and will not require the use of water or wastewater disposal during operation.

PG&E electrical transmission overhead lines are located on the east side of the bridge and PG&E will refeed the west side distribution lines from the north and remove the lines above the bridge. The distribution line feeding a house on the north side of the bridge will be moved northward to clear an access road. AT&T's telephone lines are located on the west side of the bridge and will be rerouted underground by directional bore method. A portion of Conterra's fiber optic cable located aerially on the north west side of the bridge will be rerouted underground with minimum depth of 10 feet below the canal bottom. Another portion, which is buried along west side of the north approach, will be relocated within County right-of-way, and buried at minimum 4 feet depth for a distance of approximately 300 feet. Directional bore method will be applied for this work with drilling diameter of 1.25 inch throughout. Excavation will require two 3-foot by 5-foot bore pits to perform the drilling.

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

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; or

D. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals; or

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The final project will have no daily employee presence and is not required to provide restroom facilities for users of the bridge. Portable units will serve the construction crew over the course of construction and will be removed when that portion of the project is complete.

During construction, the project will comply with all existing regulations, including those which regulate solid waste disposal and requirements to divert a percentage of waste to recycling centers rather than landfills. Based on experience with previous projects of this nature, the amount of solid waste generated by construction and demolition of the existing bridge will not be in excess of local standards.

Therefore, the project will have no impacts on wastewater treatment facilities or solid waste facilities and will comply with federal, state, and local regulations regarding waste management and reduction.

## XX. WILDFIRE

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

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

B. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire; or

C. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment; or

D. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is located in an area determined to be a non-wildland/non-urban hazard class, which is not a very high fire hazard severity zone. Further, following construction of the bridge, there will be no change in the risk at the site because the replacement bridge will serve the same purpose. The replacement bridge will have wider shoulders and wider lanes, which would improve safety for drivers in the event of an evacuation.

## XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

A. Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory; or

B. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The project has the potential to adversely impact special status species, the existing flow of the Fresno Canal, and to adversely impact potential tribal and cultural resources if they are excavated during construction. In order to prevent these impacts, the Mitigation Measures listed in Sections IV. Biological Resources, V. Cultural Resources, and XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources must be implemented. These measures require the developers to perform pre-construction surveys and training, and provide instructions on how to address potential impacts, such as the excavation of a resources or the observation of a nesting raptor.

* ***Mitigation Measures***

*See Section IV. Biological Resources*
*See Section V. Cultural Resources*
*See Section XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources*

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Impacts from this project are generally limited to the construction phase, which includes demolition of the existing bridge. The limited impacts during this time will not adversely affect human life and during operation, the replacement bridge will meet a higher standard of safety, potentially providing a beneficial impact to users of the bridge.

**CONCLUSION/SUMMARY**

Based upon the Initial Study prepared for the Fresno Canal at Del Rey Avenue bridge replacement project staff has concluded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

It has been determined that there would be no impacts to Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, and Wildfire.

Potential impacts related to Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Transportation, and Utilities and Service Systems. have been determined to be less than significant.

Potential impacts relating to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, and Tribal Cultural Resources have determined to be less than significant with compliance with the identified Mitigation measures.

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