



# County of Fresno

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

## EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- APPLICANT: Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning,  
Design Division
- APPLICATION NOS.: Initial Study Application No. 7589
- DESCRIPTION: The subject application proposes to replace the Dry Creek Bridge on Burrough Valley Road that consists of removal of the existing structure and allow construction of a replacement structure measuring 34 feet, 10 inches wide by 111 feet long and will accommodate two 12-foot wide traffic lanes, two 4-foot wide should and two Type 736 concrete barriers. The elevation of Burrough Valley Road and Tollhouse Road intersection will be raised to accommodate 100-year storm event. An existing box culvert on Tollhouse road north of Burrough Valley Road would also be removed and replaced and consist of a two cell 6-foot high by 12-foot wide precast concrete box culvert structure and will be buried approximately 2 feet in native creek bed soil to provide a natural creek bed through the structure.
- LOCATION: The project site is located on Burrough Valley Road, immediately east of its intersection with Tollhouse Road, in the unincorporated area of Fresno County. (SUP. DIST. 5).

### I. AESTHETICS

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

- A. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No scenic vistas have been identified in the area of the project and therefore this project does not have the potential to cause adverse impacts on such resources. The project is road right-of-way and although the elevation of the road will rise, the change will not significantly block or have an 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; or

- 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 points.) 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:

In the area of the proposed bridge replacement both Tollhouse Road and Burrough Valley Road are considered to be scenic drives. General Plan Goal OS-L is “to conserve, protect, and maintain the scenic quality of land and landscape adjacent to scenic roads in Fresno County.” Protection of these scenic resources focuses on the existing greenspace and or landscaped development that is adjacent to the roadway. Therefore, replacement of the bridge would not cause any adverse impacts, since it serves as part of the circulation system and does not add value to the scenic resource.

Impacts to the area in the vicinity of the bridge replacement may be considered adverse if they would negatively impact the quality of scenic resources at the project site. Per the Natural Environment Study produced for this project, in the subject area, sparse trees grow on both sides of Tollhouse and Burrough Valley Roads (oak woodland) with annual grassland growing in small patches in the northeastern and western portions of the project site.

Approximately 21 trees are proposed to be removed, primarily in the area where the detour road will be constructed. In this area, the view is dominated by the oak trees adjacent to the road, with rolling foothills in the background. Review of aerial photography (Google Earth, 2014) indicates that tree cover is prevalent in this area. During operation, the removal of these 21 trees will allow for the growth of more annual grassland in this area, which is consistent with the overall view-scape. The road in this area may appear more open to the south; however, other trees will be visible, reducing the impact of removal to less than significant.

During construction, areas adjacent to the roadway will be used for staging, which would adversely impact the natural view in this area; however, such impacts are limited only to the construction period and will be limited in duration for drivers passing through the area. Therefore, such impacts are considered to be less than significant.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The existing roadway in this area, including the subject bridge, is not lit at night and no new lighting is proposed. In addition, the materials proposed for the bridge replacement are similar to what is existing, and therefore will not cause adverse light or glare impacts.

## 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 Department 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 WITH MITIGATION  
INCORPORATED:

Two of the surrounding parcels are restricted by a Williamson Act Contract. The zoning on these parcels is AE-40 (Exclusive Agricultural, 40-acre minimum parcel size) and appears to be used for grazing land. This project will disturb a small amount of this land and will restrict access to the project site for a short time; however, this will be a temporary impact. Further, based on the large amount of additional grazing land, the temporary loss of less than two acres of land adjacent to a roadway would have no impact on use of this land for grazing purposes and therefore no conflicts with agricultural use.

The developer will be required to non-renew the land which must be dedicated for additional right-of-way. Because the amount of land to be removed from the Contract is less than 1% of the land restricted by contract on the parent parcel, this is considered to be a less than significant impact on conflicts with the Williamson Act Contract. To ensure that land under Williamson Act contract that is utilized for long-term right-of-way is removed the contract, a mitigation measure shall be incorporated to so that prior to construction, land utilized for long-term right-of-way purposes shall be removed from the Williamson Act through the Non-Renewal Process. With removal of land that is to be acquired for permanent right-of-way purposes, the project will not conflict with the identified Williamson Act Contracts.

### \* **Mitigation Measures**

1. *Prior to construction of the project, land under Williamson Act Contract to be acquired for permanent right-of-way purposes will be required to be removed from the Williamson Act Contract through the contract removal process (e.g. Cancellation, Non-Renewal or Public Acquisition Notice).*

- 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; or
- 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 forestland to non-forest use?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site has been designated by the Department of Agriculture's Important Farmland Map (Department of Conservation, 2016) as primarily Grazing Land with a small portion in the northeastern corner of the work site which is considered to be Farmland of Local Importance. Therefore, the project will not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural purposes. Similarly, due to the lack of such farmland at the project site, the project will not result in pressures for the conversion of important farmland to non-agricultural purposes.

The site is not zoned as forestland or for timberland production and therefore will have no conflicts with such land or zoning.

### III. AIR QUALITY

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

- A. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan; or
- B. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project proposes to replace a bridge that will not result in an increase in lanes and will remain in similar conditions in relation to traffic capacity. A temporary increase in criteria pollutants can occur during demolishing of the existing bridge and construction of the replacement bridge. This increase is considered less than significant as the circumstances that will lead to the increase will be temporary and confined to the removal of the existing bridge and construction of the replacement. As capacity of the replacement bridge is not expected to change, little to no change in criteria pollutants caused from traffic usage will occur. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District was included in review of the proposal and did not express concern to indicate that the project will conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan.

- C. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or
- D. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Aerial imaging of the area and project site indicate that the closest sensitive receptor is approximately 610 feet north of the project site. As stated before, the air pollutants resulting from removal of the existing bridge and subsequent construction of the replacement bridge and associated improvements can potentially result in increased pollutant concentrations. However, increased pollutant concentrations will be temporary and coincide with the described construction activities. Therefore, the temporary nature of construction and distance between the nearest sensitive receptor and the project area will result in a less than significant impact on sensitive receptors and will not adversely affect a substantial amount of people.

#### IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

Of the species which historically have potential to occur in the area of the project, a site visit determined that suitable habitat was only present for Western spadefoot toad, American badger, spotted bat, and western mastiff bat. For all other special-status plant or animal which could potentially occur on the project site, such visits are precluded due to lack of appropriate habitat.

The western spadefoot toad is a state species of special concern (no federal listing). At the project site, it is possible that the oak woodlands and annual grassland would provide suitable habitat for adults; however, the site lacks temporary or vernal pools which would support reproduction of this species. No western spadefoots were identified at the site during either of the site visits, although the potential still exists for impacts if they travel onto the project site prior to the start of construction. Mitigation Measures will be adopted which require pre-construction surveys for the western spadefoot toad.

The American badger is a state species of special concern (no federal listing) which prefers dry, open habitats where it can forage for small rodents, reptiles, invertebrates, and birds. In order to burrow, the American badger habitat must contain dry, often sandy soil, which may be found in the annual grasslands portion of the project site.

While presence of this species was not observed during either site visit, there have been three reported observations within 10 miles of the project site (California Natural Diversity Database). Mitigation Measures will be adopted requiring pre-construction surveys for American badger prior to the start of construction.

The spotted bat is a state species of special concern (no federal listing) which roosts in caves or crevices and forages in marshes, meadows, riparian zones, shrub-steppe, and open pine forests. The existing bridge may provide roosting habitat for this species and impacts could occur if they are present prior to demolition. Mitigation measures will be adopted through avoidance and minimization efforts to prevent impacts to bats during removal of the existing bridge structure.

The Western Mastiff Bat is a state species of special concern and is found in open semi-arid and arid habitats, which include conifer, deciduous woodland, coastal scrub, grassland, palm oases, chaparral, and desert scrub, and also can be found in urban areas. Roosting takes place in crevices within rock outcrops, high buildings, trees, and tunnels. There are three reported occurrence of this species within to miles of the project site, the closest of which is located approximately 7.2 miles northwest. Roosting habitat for this species may be present within the existing bridge structure. Construction activities associated with the project could impact his species, but implementation of avoidance and minimization efforts will allow the project to have a less than significant impact on the species during bridge removal.

In addition to the species identified from the prepared Natural Environment Study, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has identified four additional special status species that can potentially be affected by the project proposal. The CDFW has identified the Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog, the Western Pond Turtle, the Pallid Bat, and the Townsend's Big-Eared Bat.

The Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog is a threatened candidate species under California listing. According to the CDFW, the project area is within their historic range and several occurrence records are reported within the vicinity of the project area. The Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog are found in the vicinity of stream in a variety of habitats. While they are considered primarily stream dwelling, the species has been documented as far as 40 meters from a stream. CDFW recommends that Habitat Assessments and Surveys be conducted to ensure that Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog are properly addressed. Although CDFW has provided concern regarding the Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog (FYLF), the prepared Natural Environment Study (NES) indicates that habitat for the FYLF was not observed in the project area. Therefore, it was determined in the NES that there is no potential for the FYLF to occur in the project area. A mitigation measure shall be implemented to survey the project site prior to construction to verify if the FYLF occurs in the project site.

The Western Pond Turtle (WPT) is not a listed special status species, but CDFW recommends that considerations be made to the WPT as evidence shows that the species has been lost from greater than 99% of its range in the San Joaquin River drainage region. Threats to the species include land use changes and habitat fragmentation associated with development, as well as a decrease in suitable upland

nesting/overwintering habitat. WPT habitat includes aquatic habitat, upland habitat with loose soils and/or leaf litter for nesting. WPT are capable of nesting up to 1,600 feet away from waterbodies. Nesting occurs in spring or early summer and hatching occurs in fall. CDFW recommends avoidance and minimization measures to protect WPT. The NES indicates that the habitat for the WPT was not observed in the project area. Therefore, it was determined that the Western Pond Turtle is not likely to occur in the project area. A mitigation measure shall be implemented to survey the project site prior to construction to verify if the WPT occurs in the project site.

The Pallid Bat is an endangered species under state and federal listing. The Townsend's Big-Eared Bat is not a listed special status species, but CDFW recommends consideration of this species. For bat species, the subject bridge as well as large tree onsite or immediately adjacent to the project area have the potential to support roosting bats. Development of the project has the potential to disrupt bats roosting within these features. To avoid significant impacts to bats, CDFW recommends that pre-construction surveys be conducted and if detected consultation and avoidance be implemented.

\* **Mitigation Measures**

1. *Conduct preconstruction surveys for special-status animal species no less than 14 days prior to initiating ground-disturbing activities. A qualified biologist shall conduct preconstruction surveys in accordance with applicable regulations and guidelines for western spadefoot toad, the American badger, the Foothill yellow-legged frog, the western pond turtle, and special-status bats. If no evidence of special-status animal species are observed, no further mitigation is required. If evidence of special-status species presence is found during the preconstruction survey, the biologist shall contact the County within one day following the survey and contact CDFW for consultation on the identified species. All requirements provided by CDFW at the time of consultation shall be adhered to.*
2. *Prior to construction commencement, all construction personnel shall participate in environmental awareness training regarding identification and habitat indicators for special-status animal species within the BSA. If new construction personnel are added, they must receive the mandatory training prior to initiating work. As part of the training, an environmental awareness handout shall be distributed to all personnel that describes and illustrates all special-status animal species with the potential to occur within the BSA. The handout shall also list any applicable permit conditions provided by the regulatory agency.*
3. *In consultation with a qualified biologist, construction personnel shall demarcate the outer perimeter of the work area to prevent damage to adjacent habitat and to provide visual orientation to its limits. Marking shall be in place during all periods of construction. Persons employed or otherwise working on the project site shall be instructed about the restrictions that the marking represents.*
4. *During the months from late October through early March, the underside of the existing bridge shall be netted with tightly strung netting with less than half-inch*

*mesh and no opening greater than half-inch along any seams, transitions, or connection points with the bridge. Netting shall be checked weekly and repairs made immediately. Demolition and removal of the existing bridge shall only be initiated after the bridge has been confirmed to be bat free.*

5. *A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey for active nests should construction commence during the nesting season for birds of prey and migratory birds (between February 15 and September 1). Cavities within trees proposed to be removed shall be surveyed for roosting bats. The preconstruction survey will be conducted within 30 days prior to commencement of construction activities. If surveys show that there is no evidence of nests, then no additional mitigation will be required so long as construction commences within 30 days of the survey. If any active nests are located within the study area, a buffer zone shall be established around the nests. The biologist shall delimit the buffer zone until the end of the breeding season or the young have fledged. Guidance from CDFW will be requested if establishing a 250-foot buffer zone is impractical. Trees anticipated for removal should be removed prior to nesting season. The dates outside of the nesting season include from September 2 to February 14. If trees are anticipated to be removed during the nesting season, a preconstruction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist. If the survey shows that there is no evidence of active nests, then the tree shall be removed within ten days following the survey. If active nests are located within trees identified for removal, a 250-foot buffer shall be installed around the tree. Guidance from the CDFW will be requested if the 250-foot buffer is infeasible.*

- B. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; or
- C. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally-protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION  
INCORPORATED:

The major water system in the area of the project site is the Dry Creek; however, a small unnamed tributary also occurs northwest of Dry Creek. This stream generally flows on the west side of Tollhouse Road until just north of the existing bridge where it passes through a culvert to cross Tollhouse and connect with Dry Creek. Both of these systems are potentially Waters of the U.S. (Delineation of Waters of the U.S., Analytical Environmental Services, 2017). Dry Creek is a tributary of the San Joaquin River and is hydrologically connected to the San Francisco Bay through the same river.

Riparian habitat occurs on the edges of Dry Creek. Due to the intermittent nature of the stream, vegetation may or may not be present during construction.

The applicant is required to adhere to several regulations which require plans to reduce impacts to local water sources, including Waters of the U.S., such as the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, and Section 404 permitting. Adherence to these regulations will ensure that no adverse effects occur to Dry Creek and the unnamed tributary.

\* **Mitigation Measures**

1. *All in-stream construction activities will be performed during the dry season when no water is present in Dry Creek. In the event that it is not possible to complete in-stream work during the dry season, required permits will likely include provisions for dewatering, removal of fill within the stream, and sediment control. All construction activities shall conform to all applicable conditions within the issued permits.*

- 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; or
- 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: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will be required to receive permits for all work involved with Dry Creek and necessary mitigation associated with protection of special status species. The project will not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish. Work should be performed during the dry season to avoid impacts to aquatic species. No local policies, Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plan has been identified that could be in conflict with the project proposal.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or
- B. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or
- C. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

An Archeological Survey Report dated May 2017 was prepared for the project by Analytical Environmental Services. Per the report, the existing bridge has been identified as not being eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. A records review indicate that a prehistoric archaeological site (CA-FRE-2116) is located 370 feet northeast of the project area and consists of boulders with bedrock mortar cups spanning both sides of Dry Creek. A cultural resources study was completed on September 7, 2016 and did not identify archaeological resources. Consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission and contact with local Native American communities, and a previous cultural resources survey conducted in 1987 that covers part of the project site failed to identify any cultural resources within the project area.

Under the provisions of Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), staff notified participating California Native American Tribes of the subject application and given the opportunity to enter into consultation with the County. The Picayune Rancheria of Chuckchansi Indians responded to the consultation notice and consultation between the Tribal Government and County occurred. Cultural documents were made available to the Tribal Government and no additional concerns were received by staff from the reviewing Tribal Government, therefore consultation was concluded with no identification of cultural resources on the project site.

Based on the above information, cultural resources were not identified on the project site. A mitigation measure will be implemented in the unlikely event that cultural resources are discovered during ground disturbing activities to ensure that no negative impacts on the resource occurs after uncovering.

\* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

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

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

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

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Agency and Department review of the subject proposal did not express concern that the project would conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. The main intent of the project is to replace a deficient bridge and replace it with a structure that is compliant with current standards and regulations. Equipment and vehicle usage in relation to removal of the existing bridge and construction of the replacement bridge and other planned improvements will not result in significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

## VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

- A. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
  - 1. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per Figure 9-2 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR) and the California Department of Conservation Earthquake Hazards Zone Application, the project site is not located on or near a known earthquake fault.

- 2. Strong seismic ground shaking?
- 3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Figure 9-5 of the FCGPBR depicts the probabilistic seismic hazard within Fresno County assuming a 10% probability in 50 years. Per the figure, the subject site is subject to a 0% to 20% of hitting peak horizontal ground acceleration. This indicates that the subject site is not likely to be subject to a strong seismic ground shaking or seismic-related ground failure. Construction of the replacement bridge and other related improvements associated with this application will be subject to the approved seismic design standards for the improvements that will be consistent with the California Building Code.

- 4. Landslides?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per Figure 9-5 of the FCGPBR, the subject is not located in area as having an increased landslide hazard.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

A Water Quality Technical Memorandum dated April 2017 (WQTM), prepared by Analytical Environmental Services was produced for the project and analyzed soil conditions for potential erosion. The WQTM identifies the project site as consisting of three soil types, Auberry coarse sand loam with 3 to 9 percent slope, (AuB), Auberry coarse sandy loam with 9-15 percent slope (AuC), and Grangeville soils (Gp). The analysis estimated the susceptibility of soil to erosion by water and determined that the Grangeville soil is in the low range, and the AuB and AuC soils both being in the lower mid-range.

The project proposes to replace an obsolete bridge and construct additional improvements in the existing road right-of-way. The bridge can potentially alter the existing stream bed which can alter water flow. The bridge replacement however will meet current design standards for a rural minor stream and would improve the integrity and functionality of the existing creek. The culvert will be buried approximately two feet of native bed soil to provide a natural creek bed. A temporary creek crossing is also proposed to allow vehicular traffic to cross the creek while construction related to the bridge replacement occurs. Pipe culverts are proposed to pass the maximum anticipated summertime flow of Dry Creek. The replacement bridge is not expected to result in substantial changes in impervious surface.

Therefore, based on the project proposal and analysis of soil erosion potential in the prepared Water Quality Technical Memorandum, the project will not result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil that would have a significant impact.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No geologic unit or soil has been identified in the analysis that would be unstable or become unstable as a result of the project. The project has been designed will be built to California Building Code standards that will provide a safe structure under the existing soil/geologic conditions.

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:

According to Figure 7-1 of the Fresno County General Plan, the project site is not located in area identified as have soils exhibiting moderately high to high expansion potential.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The subject application does not propose the use of or construction of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. As there is no proposal for a septic tank or alternative wastewater disposal system, no soils were identified in the project site as being incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. If a system were to be proposed, a building permit from the Department of Public Works and Planning would further assess conditions of the site.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No paleontological resource or unique geologic feature was identified on the project site.

## VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

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

A Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Analysis has been prepared for the project by LSA and provides estimated GHG emissions generated from the project construction and operation. Estimates are based off the most current version of the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District's Road Construction Emissions Model (RoadMod). Construction emissions generated from the project is approximately 1,194.71 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>e). Per the project scope, the existing bridge is proposed to be replaced and the elevation of the intersection at Tollhouse Road and Burrough Valley Road is to be increased for flood zone purposes with no

expansion of road capacity proposed, therefore operational GHG emissions are not expected to increase and would return to pre-construction levels.

An analysis of relevant federal, state, and local standards highlight Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), Senate Bill 32, and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD), Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) and the SJVAPCD Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under CEQA (Guidance). Under AB 32, the effort aims at reducing GHG emissions to year 1990 levels by the year 2020. Under SB 32, the bill builds on AB 32 and increase to goal to 8% below 1990 by the year 2050. Under the SJVAPCD Guidance, evaluation and thresholds are established to analyze a projects significance with respect to GHG emissions. Project GHG emissions are considered to be less than significant if they can meet of the conditions addressed in the Guidance. These are: the project is exempt from CEQA; the project complies with an approved GHG emission reduction plan or GHG mitigation program; the project implements Best Performance Standards (BPS); or the project demonstrates that specific GHG emissions would be reduced or mitigated by at least 29% compared to Business-as-Usual (BAU), including GHG emission reductions achieved since the 2002-2004 baseline period. The SJVAPCD does not have an adopted threshold of significance for construction-related GHG emissions.

Based on LSA's analysis of the project and relevant federal, state, and local regulations, the project will be consistent with the goals of AB 32 and SB 32 and is consistent with applicable plans and programs designed to reduce GHG emissions. The project would not conflict with the goals and objectives of the SJVAPCD's CCAP. Therefore, the proposed project's incremental contribution to cumulative GHG emissions would not be cumulatively considerable.

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

**FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:**

An Initial Site Assessment (ISA) has been prepared for the project by Analytical Environmental Services. The purpose of this assessment is to identify Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) that may affect future uses of the project site. The ISA covers the project site and surrounding known sources of contamination up to approximately one-mile from the project site. The ISA details a site reconnaissance, relevant database listings of hazardous material sites, waste generators, and underground storage tanks and, historical maps and aerial photographs. Based on the site conditions during the reported site reconnaissance on September 7, 2016, no RECs

were identified on or in the immediate vicinity of the site, but did note that the existing bridge has the potential to contain both lead associated with paint and yellow traffic striping and asbestos associated with the bridge's concrete. As the proposed project will require the removal and disposal of the existing structure, the following actions will be implemented to ensure verification of the presence of RECs associated with the existing bridge and, proper handling and remediation of the materials should they be verified to contain hazardous materials.

\* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *An asbestos survey should be performed to determine whether or not the concrete will require special handling and disposal.*
2. *A lead-based paint survey should be performed to determine whether or not the railing paint contains elevated concentrations of lead which would require special handling and disposal.*
3. *Testing and removal requirements for yellow traffic striping and pavement marked materials should be performed in accordance with Caltrans Standard Special Provisions (SSPs) regarding removal of yellow traffic striping and pavement marking with hazardous waste residue.*

- 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:

Per the prepared Initial Site Assessment (ISA), the existing bridge could contain hazardous materials, but implementation of mitigation measures will ensure that the site will be surveyed and tested prior to removal to verify if hazardous materials are present, proper handling and remediation will occur. There is no proposed or existing school within a one quarter-mile of the project site, therefore no impact is seen.

- F. 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 prepared ISA as part of its analysis conducted a database search for sites and listings up to approximately one-mile from the approximate center of the project site. The ISA include a summary table of Agency database that was searched and if in their search parameters, a site is located in close proximity or on the project site. The search concluded that the site and surrounding area did not contain a hazardous material site.

- G. 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, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The intent of the project is to replace a functionally obsolete bridge with a bridge that is up to code. Noise associated with the project is temporary in nature and not expected to be excessive for people residing or working in the project area. The project is not expected to result in a safety hazard.

- H. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or
- I. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Department and agency review of the application did not indicate the project would impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Temporary right-of-way for creek crossing is proposed south of the existing bridge to ensure continuous right-of-way access for residents and emergency vehicles with the alternative being lengthy detours on the surrounding existing public right-of-way. The project is located in an area potentially at risk of wildfires, but the project would not expose people or structures either directly or indirectly to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildfires.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

- A. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

A prepared Water Quality Technical Memorandum (WQTM) identified applicable federal, state, and local standards that the project would need to abide by. Additionally, the WQTM identified the permits required to carry out the project which includes a Nationwide Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, a Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and a NPDES Construction Stormwater General Permit from the State Water Resources Control Board. With issuance and finalization of the listed permits and other terms required by regulatory agencies, the project is not expected to violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.

- 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:

A prepared Delineation of the Waters of the U.S. by Analytical Environmental Services on May 2017 conducted a delineation study for potential waters of the U.S. and provides information regarding local hydrology. The project site is within the Upper Dry watershed, with Dry Creek flowing southward into the San Joaquin Valley. Through channelized irrigation ditches within the valley floor and flows toward the San Joaquin River. The San Joaquin River flows north through the Central Valley and eventually connects to the San Francisco Bay and then into the Pacific Ocean.

It does not appear that the creek provides a substantial amount of groundwater recharge. The project does not substantially increase the amount of impervious surface from existing conditions. Therefore, the project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge.

- 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:

1. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

A Water Quality Technical Memorandum prepared for the project identifies three types of soils within the project site. Auberry Coarse Sand Loam at 3 to 9 percent slope (AuB), Auberry Coarse Sandy Loam at 9 to 15 percent slope (AuC), and Grangeville soils (Gp). The analysis of the soil types indicates that the Grangeville soils has a low erosion potential while both AuB and AuC are on the low range of moderate potential soil erosion. Per the scope of the project, the replacement bridge is not expected to expand in capacity that would substantially change erosion or siltation potential of the site. Creek bed disturbance from construction activities are expected, but will be constrained and regulated under federal, state and local permitting standards to ensure no negative impacts to the creek will occur.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

There is no planned expansion of capacity for the subject project site that would substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff which could result in flooding on or off site. Temporary easements related to construction equipment staging and right-of-way access is included during construction activities. During construction activities the change in use will have an effect on surface runoff. Temporary easements

resulting from this project will be improved so that the temporary changes to the project site will have minimal impact to surface runoff. The improvements to temporary easements will include pipe culverts to direct flow through the existing creek in a manner not detrimental to the existing environment and other design standards. Therefore, due to the temporary nature of construction activities that could have an effect on surface runoff and associated design features to reduce any temporary effects, a less than significant impact is seen.

3. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?
4. Impede or redirect flood flows?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

As stated, the project site is within the Upper Dry watershed, with Dry Creek flowing southward into the San Joaquin Valley. Through channelized irrigation ditches within the valley floor and flows toward the San Joaquin River. The San Joaquin River flows north through the Central Valley and eventually connects to the San Francisco Bay and then into the Pacific Ocean.

Construction activities related to removal and replacement of the bridge could potential provide sources of polluted runoff, but regulations and permitting from state and federal agencies will ensure that negative impacts will be avoided to the most possible extent. Work in the stream is expected to occur during the dry season to avoid polluted runoff and to avoid redirection of flood flows. In considering the existing nature of right-of-way in the project site, operation of the site will not provide significant changes compared to existing conditions after construction is completed. The major change is the increase in elevation of the right-of-way to meet current standards for avoidance of flood zones. This is being implemented into the project to avoid flood hazard and bring the project to current code standards.

- D. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation; or
- E. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per FEMA FIRM Panel C1100H, the subject site is located within Zone X, and is therefore not within a special flood hazard area. Agency and Department review of the project did not reveal any conflicts or obstructions of implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. It was noted in the Water Quality Technical Memorandum that there are several permits and measures needed to comply with federal and state regulations for water quality and working within the creek bed. Compliance with the regulatory agencies will allow the project to be compliant with

applicable water quality control plans and waterway management, therefore no impact is seen.

## XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

### A. Physically divide an established community?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes to replace an existing bridge and make other improvements to the right-of-way. A temporary creek crossing is planned to ensure that traffic flow is uninterrupted during project construction. Therefore, the project will not 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Based on the project description, a temporary creek crossing and a temporary construction staging area will be located on parcels that are Williamson Act contracted. As there are specific Fresno County General Plan Policies for the consideration of agricultural land preservation programs the project was reviewed by the Policy Planning Section of the Department of Public Works and Planning for consistency with the provisions of the contracted parcels within the project site. Per their review and the provisions of the Fresno County Williamson Act Guidelines, the proposed use described for easement purposes would not be compatible land uses on Williamson Act restricted property. The project areas proposed for easement purposes would be required to leave the Williamson Act Contract through the Nonrenewal process.

In considering the information provided by the Policy Planning Section, the project description does indicate that right-of-way acquisition may occur. In this case, if right-of-way acquisition does occur on parcels under Williamson Act contract, that land must be non-renewed under the provisions of the Williamson Act. However, land that is being proposed for temporary uses is not believed to be removed from the Williamson Act Contract as the uses will be temporary. Once construction of the project is complete, the land utilized for the construction staging area and that is proposed to be utilized as a temporary creek crossing for traffic and access to Tollhouse Road will be reclaimed to pre-construction conditions and then revert back to the existing use that is compatible with the Williamson Act. The amount of land that would be acquired for right-of-way purposes is small and would not interrupt the existing agricultural use, therefore there is no conflict with the Fresno County General Plan, in terms of agricultural preservation or consideration and terms of an agricultural land preservation program.

## 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:

Per Figure 7-7 and 7-8 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report the project site may be located near identified mineral resources. However, the project is mainly located within existing right-of-way with ground-disturbance occurring in already disturbed areas. The project will not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or locally-important mineral resource recovery site.

## XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project site is currently County-maintained right-of-way that is subject to traffic related noise levels. A temporary increase in noise levels are expected from project construction, but noise level increases will not be in excess of standards or have a negative impact on sensitive receptors. The nearest sensitive receptor that could potentially be affected by construction noise is approximately 590 feet north of the project site. Consideration shall be given to the Fresno County Noise Ordinance to ensure that the project and noise levels do not exceed established thresholds. In considering these factors, the temporary increase in noise levels related to project development is not expected to have a significant impact.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

There are no private airstrips or public airports within two miles of the project site, therefore, the project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.

#### 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 project is to replace an existing bridge and provide additional improvements to public right-of-way. A substantial amount of work will occur within area dedicated to right-of-way. There is no increase of road capacity planned with this project that could induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area. There are no areas where removal of people or housing will occur, therefore the project will not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

#### 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 following public services:
  - 1. Fire protection;
  - 2. Police protection;
  - 3. Schools;
  - 4. Parks; or
  - 5. Other public facilities?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

There were no reviewing agency or department that expressed concern to indicate that the project would result in the need for new or physically-altered governmental facilities that would cause significant environmental impacts. A Traffic Management Plan has been prepared and a temporary creek crossing is proposed to ensure traffic and emergency vehicles can still access service areas without significant impacts on response times.

## XVI. RECREATION

Would the project:

- A. Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or
- B. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project does not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. The project does not include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

## 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; or
- B. Be in conflict or be inconsistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The subject project intends to replace a functionally obsolete bridge and replace it with an up-to-code bridge. Additionally, the project will raise the elevation of the intersection and bridge above the flood hazard elevation produced by Dry Creek. A temporary creek crossing will be constructed to ensure traffic is uninterrupted in this area. Review of the project did not indicate that the project would result in a conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system. The project intends to repair and bring the right-of-way to current standards. There is no increase or capacity for the subject right-of-way associated with the project, therefore no impact on Vehicle Miles Traveled is seen.

- 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 WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

A Traffic Management Plan has been prepared to ensure that traffic safely navigate the area during project construction activities. A temporary right-of-way easement for creek crossing is also proposed to ensure continuous right-of-way is available for residents of the area and emergency vehicles that service the area. A Mitigation Measure will be implemented to ensure that the Traffic Management Plan is reviewed and complied with during construction activities.

\* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *During construction activities, the project shall be in conformance with the Traffic Management Plan approved by the County.*

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. 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:

Per Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) participating California Native American Tribes were notified of the subject application and given the opportunity to enter into consultation with the County and exchange information on potential cultural resources that may occur in the project site. The Picayune Rancheria of the Chuckchansi Indians responded with a consultation request. The County and the Picayune Rancheria Tribal Government entered into consultation and exchanged information on potential resources within the project area. An archeological survey was prepared for the project and given to the Picayune Rancheria for review. No further requests for information or

recommendation of mitigation were received from the tribe after. As no further correspondence was received within thirty days of the routing of the archeological survey, staff concluded consultation with the tribal government. Mitigation Measures will be implemented with this project in the event that cultural resources are unearthed during construction activities.

\* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. See Section V. Cultural Resources, Mitigation Measure #1.

## XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will replace an existing bridge and improve existing right-of-way. Associated improvements from this project include replacement or existing culverts and establishment of temporary culverts to avoid obstructing water flow during project construction. The proper permits for work involved have been identified and will be issued to the project prior to any construction activities being conducted. No other relocation or construction public utilities or services were identified or required as a result of the project. Therefore, a less than significant impact is seen due to the work needed

- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Water supply availability is not necessary for operation of the project. There is no wastewater treatment system needed or proposed for the operation of the project.

- D. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals; or
- E. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

No concerns were expressed to indicate that the project would conflict with federal, state or local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Review of the project scope indicates that the project will result in solid waste, but there were no concerns expressed to indicate that the solid waste produced from the project would be in amounts that would have a significant impact on local infrastructure.

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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The scope of the project will remove a bridge and impair traffic flow. The project does propose a temporary right-of-way easement that will allow creek crossing for traffic during removal and construction activities proposed. Review of the project and prepared Traffic Management Plan indicate that the project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The minor change in traffic patterns are temporary and will not cause impairment to traffic or emergency response vehicles.

- 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: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Per County records, the subject site is located within State Responsibility Areas and classified as a high fire hazard severity zone. The project is to replace an existing bridge and improve the existing right-of-way for compliance with current standards. The project site is located at the intersection of Burrough Valley Road and Tollhouse Road, with the bridge crossing Dry Creek. There is sparse residential development in the area

with the majority of land being undeveloped. They are no project occupants during the operation of the use, therefore no increase risk to project occupants are seen.

The infrastructure is proposed to be replaced and/or improved in the same area of existing paved right-of-way. The project has been reviewed by the Fresno County Fire Protection District (FCFPD) and did not indicate the need for additional infrastructure related to fire protection. Therefore there is little fire risk due to the project proposal.

The project will not increase exposure of people or structures to significant risks of flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes as the scope of the project is contained within already disturbed areas. The project will have a slight beneficial factor in that the replacement bridge and improvements to the right-of-way will bring the area into compliance with current codes and standards.

## XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project does propose and include work in a creek bed. There are also reported occurrences of special-status species and habitat for special-status species located in the project area. However, extensive mitigation has been implemented to avoid or minimize any negative impacts to the project area and surrounding area. With the implementation of mitigation, a less than significant impact will occur to the environment and wildlife species that may occur on or near the project area.

- 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:

No impacts were identified as having a cumulatively considerable impact. Impacts related to Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Transportation, and Tribal Cultural Resources have been determined to have a less than significant impact with implementation of mitigation measures. Therefore, no cumulatively considerable impacts are seen.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

No environmental effects were identified that could cause a substantial adverse effect on human beings either directly or indirectly. Environmental effects related to Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Transportation, and Tribal Cultural Resources have been determined to have a less than significant impact with implementation of mitigation measures.

### CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

Based upon the Initial Study prepared for Initial Study Application No. 7589, 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 Energy, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, and Recreation.

Potential impacts related to Aesthetics, Air Quality, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use Planning, Noise, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire have been determined to be less than significant. Potential impacts relating to Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Transportation, and Tribal Cultural Resources have determined to be less than significant with compliance with listed 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.

TK

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