

March 2021 | Final Negative Declaration

ERRATA TO RIDGEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL PROJECT

Paradise Unified School District

Prepared for:

Paradise Unified School District

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1. Responses Received During Public Review Period

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This document includes a compilation of the public comments received on the Ridgeview High School Project Initial Study and Negative Declaration (collectively, “ND;” State Clearinghouse No. 2021010372) and the Paradise Unified School District’s (District’s) responses to the comments.

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a lead agency is not required to prepare formal responses to comments on an ND. However, CEQA requires the District to have adequate information on the record explaining why the comments do not affect the conclusion of the ND that there are no potentially significant environmental effects. In the spirit of public disclosure and engagement, the District—as the lead agency—has responded to all written comments submitted on the ND during the 30-day public review period, which began February 2, 2021, and ended March 3, 2021.

1.2 CEQA REQUIREMENTS REGARDING COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

CEQA Guidelines Section 15204(b) outlines parameters for submitting comments on NDs and reminds persons and public agencies that the focus of review and comment of NDs should be on the proposed findings that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment. If the commenter believes that the project may have a significant effect, they should: (1) Identify the specific effect, (2) explain why they believe the effect would occur, and (3) explain why they believe the effect would be significant.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15204(c) further advises, “Reviewers should explain the basis for their comments, and should submit data or references offering facts, reasonable assumptions based on facts, or expert opinion supported by facts in support of the comments. Pursuant to Section 15064, an effect shall not be considered significant in the absence of substantial evidence.”

Section 15204(d) also states, “Each responsible agency and trustee agency shall focus its comments on environmental information germane to that agency’s statutory responsibility.” Section 15204(e) states, “This section shall not be used to restrict the ability of reviewers to comment on the general adequacy of a document or of the lead agency to reject comments not focused as recommended by this section.”

Finally, CEQA does not require a lead agency to conduct every test or perform all research, study, and experimentation recommended or demanded by commenters. When responding to comments, lead agencies need only respond to potentially significant environmental issues and do not need to provide all information requested by reviewers, as long as a good-faith effort at full disclosure is made in the environmental document.

1. Responses Received During Public Review Period

This section includes all written comments received on the circulated ND and the District's response to each comment.

Comment letters and specific comments are assigned letters and numbers for reference purposes. Where sections of the ND are excerpted in this document, they are indented. The following is a list of all comment letters received on the circulated ND during the public review period. Revisions to the text of the ND in response to comments are identified by underline for added text and deleted text is shown in ~~strikeout~~.

Letter Reference	Commenting Person/Agency	Date of Comment	Page No.
A	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Dave Derby	February 4, 2021	3

From: **Derby, Dave@CALFIRE**<Dave.Derby@fire.ca.gov>

Date: Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 8:14 AM

Subject: Ridgeview High School Project comments

To: jtimm@pusdk12.org<jtimm@pusdk12.org>

Mr. Timm,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the initial study for mitigated negative declaration for the Ridgeview High School Project. Here are my comments:

A-1

On page 21 of the initial study there is a statement that the Torres Martinez Dessert Cahuilla Indians were notified of the project. I am not sure what interest this tribal entity has in Butte County projects, but we are required to reach out to the local tribal groups (such as the Mechoopda Tribe) for our CAL FIRE CEQA projects.

A-2

On page 24 the initial study inaccurately states that the project will not convert forestland to a non-forest use. Parcel 053-110-009-000 was stocked with ponderosa pine and California black oak prior to the Camp Fire. A majority of the trees were removed as part of the salvage logging project for the high school. While the trees are now gone, this parcel is still capable of growing a crop of commercial timber and this project will convert the parcel to a non-forest use. Contact me regarding the appropriate CAL FIRE permit required for timberland conversion on this lot.

Dave Derby
Forester II - Unit Forester, RPF 2333

CAL FIRE

Butte Unit

6640 Steiffer Road

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1. Responses Received During Public Review Period

Response to Comments from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Dave Derby, dated February 4, 2021.

- A-1 The commenter states that the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is required to reach out to local tribal groups, such as the Mechoopda Tribe, for CEQA projects.

District Response – The District satisfied the requirements of Assembly Bill (AB) 52 as part of the proposed project. As stated on page 84 of the Initial Study, the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians and the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians–Kizh Nation are on the District’s notification list pursuant to AB 52. These tribes were notified by the District and given 30 days to request consultation for tribal cultural resources.

- A-2 The commenter states that the Initial Study inaccurately states the project will not convert forestland to a non-forest use as parcel 053-110-009-000 sustained Ponderosa pine and California black oak prior to the Camp Fire and is capable of growing commercial timber.

In response to this comment, the text in Section 3.2, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, (d), page 35 of the ND, has been revised as follows:

~~**No Impact.** The project site does not contain forestland, nor is the project site zoned as forestland. The project site is developed, and implementation of the proposed project would not convert forestland to non-forest use or result in a loss of forestland. Therefore, no impact would occur.~~ **Less Than Significant Impact.** Prior to the Camp Fire, the project site consisted of Ponderosa pine and California black oak. Thereafter, many trees were removed as part of a salvage logging project. The project site is partially developed and while much of the vegetation is now removed, the site can support native tree cover that could be used for commercial timber. Therefore, the proposed project would convert forestland to a non-forest use. Impacts would be less than significant.

2. Minor Revisions to the Draft Initial Study

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section contains revisions to the ND based on (1) comments received on the project during the 30-day public review period and review of such comments by District staff and the technical experts responsible for the supporting studies; (2) additional or revised information required to prepare the Ridgeview High School Project; and/or (3) applicable updated information that was not available at the time of ND publication. Revisions shown herein do not constitute new significant information, as described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5. That is, the revisions do not result in new significant environmental impacts, do not constitute significant new information, and do not alter the conclusions of the environmental analysis. Changes made to the ND are identified in ~~strikeout~~ text to indicate deletions and in underlined text to signify additions.

2.2 NEGATIVE DECLARATION REVISIONS

The following text has been revised in response to comments received on the ND and Ridgeview High School Project.

Section 3.2. Agriculture and Forestry Resources (d), page 35, is revised in response to Comment A2.

~~**No Impact.** The project site does not contain forestland, nor is the project site zoned as forestland. The project site is developed, and implementation of the proposed project would not convert forestland to non-forest use or result in a loss of forestland. Therefore, no impact would occur.~~ **Less Than Significant Impact.** Prior to the Camp Fire, the project site consisted of Ponderosa pine and California black oak. Thereafter, many trees were removed as part of a salvage logging project. The project site is partially developed and while much of the vegetation is now removed, the site can support native tree cover that could be used for commercial timber. Therefore, the proposed project would convert forestland to a non-forest use. Impacts would be less than significant.

2. Minor Revisions to the Draft Initial Study

Section 2.4. Evaluation of Environmental Impacts, II Agriculture and Forestry Resources, page 24, is revised based on the revisions made in the discussion of Section 3.2, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, (d), page 35, as follows.

II. AGRICULTURE 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 provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?				X
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?			X	X
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?				X

Pages 34 and 35, Section 3.2, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, (b), (c), and (e) have been revised to fix typographical errors.

No Impact. The project site is zoned ~~T-R 1/2 (Town Residential)~~ and C-F (Community Facilities) and is not zoned for agricultural use (Paradise 2020b). The project site is located on land not enrolled in a Williamson Act contract (Butte County 2015). No impact would occur.

No Impact. The project site is developed and is zoned ~~T-R 1/2 and~~ C-F. Project implementation would not cause rezoning of forestland or timberland. Therefore, no impact would occur.

No Impact. As shown in Figure 3, Aerial Photograph, the project site is not adjacent to agricultural uses. Improvements proposed with the project would result in one new single-story building, a parking lot, baseball field, and two basketball courts. The ~~T-R 1/2 and~~ C-F Zone Districts ~~are~~ is not considered an agricultural zones. As there is no potential to convert farmland to non-farm uses, no impact would occur.