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# INITIAL STUDY -

# 2021 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

# SISKIYOU COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

June 2021 - DRAFT



# Initial Study

## 2021 Siskiyou County Regional Transportation Plan

Report Prepared For:

Siskiyou County Local Transportation Commission

190 Greenhorn Road  
Yreka, CA 96094

Report Prepared By:



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# Introduction

## Project Title

*Siskiyou County 2021 Regional Transportation Plan*

## Lead Agency Name and Address

*Siskiyou County Local Transportation Commission  
190 Greenhorn Road  
Yreka, CA 96097*

## Contact Person and Phone Number

*Jeff Schwein, Executive Director  
530-895-1109*

## Project Sponsor's Name and Address

*Siskiyou County Local Transportation Commission  
190 Greenhorn Road  
Yreka, CA 96097*

## Project Location and Setting

The project area consists of the entire County of Siskiyou. Siskiyou County is located on the north-central boundary of California bordering the State of Oregon. The county is bounded by Del Norte, Humboldt and Trinity Counties on the west and southwest, Shasta County to the south, and Modoc County to the east (Figure 1). The county contains 6,300 square miles; it is the fifth largest county in the State of California and the largest county in northern California. Nearly 63 percent of the county's land is publicly owned. Siskiyou County includes nine incorporated cities: Doris, Dunsmuir, Etna, Fort Jones, Montague, Mount Shasta, Tulelake, Weed, and Yreka. Yreka is the County Seat, and has the largest population of all the cities, with approximately 7,746 residents, according to the Department of Finance (DOF) 2021 estimates. There are also 11 unincorporated places and 19 unincorporated communities in the county, including Lake Shastina, McCloud, Happy Camp, Hornbrook, Tennant, and Callahan. The Native American Tribal Governments of the Karuk Tribe, the Shasta Indian Nation, and the Quartz Valley Indian Community are also located within the county. Most of Siskiyou County is very rural in land use and population density. In 2021 the California Department of Finance reported a population of 24,212 in the unincorporated areas of the county. The combined population of the nine incorporated cities is approximately 20,118. The automobile is the predominant mode of travel within the county. The regional movement of people within the county can be classified into three broad categories: commuter, recreational, and tourist. The county commute consists mostly of automobile traffic from the smaller cities and rural areas into the I-5 corridor cities of Mt. Shasta, Weed, and Yreka. The closest commercial aviation service is in Redding or Medford, Oregon; no commercial air service is available in Siskiyou County. The county does have limited rail service provided by the Amtrak Coast Starlight.

Recent California Department of Finance (DOF) figures indicated that Siskiyou County's 2015 population was estimated at 44,721. In 2021, the population was estimated to be 44,330, which calculates to approximately -0.15 percent change per year on average. Countywide population density in 2015 was estimated to equal 7.2 persons per square mile. The DOF population forecast reports an overall population decrease for the next 20 years, with the county projected to decrease in population by approximately

0.27% annually.

The roadway network serving the county is comprised of approximately 2,655 miles of streets, roads, and highways. Approximately 353 miles of the system are State highways, 1,332 miles are County roads, and approximately 784 miles are maintained by the US Forest Service. The State highways transecting Siskiyou County are State Route (SR) 3, SR 96, and SR 89. Interstate 5 and US 96 also run through Siskiyou County, with US 97 connecting from the northern part of the county through Oregon. SR 96 provides connections through Happy Camp and Orleans and runs along the Klamath River. SR 3 connects the Town of Fort Jones and the City of Etna southwest of Yreka. SR 89 connects McCloud southeast of the City of Mount Shasta. Interstate 5 runs north/south through the center of Siskiyou County and connects to Oregon and north. All State highways in Siskiyou County serve as main streets for cities and towns within the county.

Siskiyou County has a diverse geography which includes dense forests, mountainous peaks, valleys, desert, chaparral, and numerous lakes, rivers, and streams. It is home to a diverse topography with elevations ranging from 4,000 feet to 14,180 feet at the summit of Mt. Shasta, the fourth highest point in the State of California. Siskiyou's climate is characterized by warm, dry summers, and cold winters with frequent severe snowstorms. Siskiyou County contains five rivers: Klamath, McCloud, Sacramento, Scott, and Shasta. Mt. Shasta, a stratovolcano with a peak elevation of 14,180 feet, is found in the southeastern portion of the county. The county can be characterized as rural and mountainous, with ample opportunities for recreation for both residents and tourists. Hiking, hunting, fishing, cycling, skiing, camping, are among the many recreational attractions in the county.

#### GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING

There are a variety of General Plan Land Use designations applicable throughout the entire county, which constitutes the project area. The Plan was designed to be consistent with the General Plans of Siskiyou County and the incorporated cities. The Circulation Elements from each of these general plans were used as references during the development of the Siskiyou County 2021 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The proposed Plan is consistent with each of these general plans and does not include any proposed changes to the above-referenced general plans.

The guiding principle in the Land Use/Circulation Element of the Siskiyou County General Plan is to allow the physical environment – including the transportation network – to determine the appropriate future land use patterns that will develop in Siskiyou County. This principle is reinforced in the RTP, which recognizes that future development should occur in areas that will be easiest to develop. Such areas have low public service costs, will have the least negative environmental effect, and will not displace nor endanger the county's critical natural resources. This approach will also result in lower improvement costs and increased operational efficiency of the existing transportation system because projects will be sized to reflect more compact growth closer to existing or planned services. This will help the county achieve all established greenhouse gas (GHG) targets.

#### Project Description

The Siskiyou County Local Transportation Commission (SCLTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Siskiyou County. The SCLTC is comprised of an executive director and the six-member Commission representing the various districts in the county and the local agencies. The RTPA is required by California law to adopt and submit an updated Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) every five years. The last update to the Siskiyou County RTP was adopted in 2016. The horizon year for the 2021 Siskiyou County RTP is 2041, with transportation improvements in the RTP identified as short-term (0-10 years) or long-term (11-20 years).

The 2021 Regional Transportation Plan is considered a “project” under CEQA and this Initial Study is focused on the Plan as a long-term planning effort. Projects identified within the Plan will be individually evaluated under CEQA at the project level when the project is being delivered. The RTP update must be consistent with the 2017 Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines, which requires inclusion of program-level outcome-based performance measures and close ties to the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP).

The overall focus of the 2021 RTP is directed at developing a coordinated and balanced multimodal regional transportation system that is financially constrained to the revenues anticipated over the life of the Plan. The coordination focus brings the County, Cities, Caltrans, local communities, governmental resource agencies, commercial interests, Native American Tribal Governments, citizens, and other stakeholders into the planning process. The balance is achieved by considering investment and improvements for moving people and goods across all modes including roads and bridges, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, and aviation.

The State and the region are at a pivotal moment in creating a new transportation pattern integrated with land use planning. Regions across California have been asked to develop plans for more efficient land use and development to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). As per Senate Bill 743, VMT data is annually reported as part of the Federal Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) program. The HPMS program uses a sample-based method that combines traffic counts stratified by functional classification of roadways by volume groups to produce sample based geographic estimates of VMT. HPMS VMT estimates are considered “ground truth” by the 1990 Federal Clean Air Act Amendments (November 15, 1990). HPMS VMT estimates are used to validate baseline travel demand models and to track modeled VMT forecasts over time. HPMS VMT estimates are reported for each county by local jurisdiction, state highway use, and other state/federal land roadways, e.g. State Parks, US Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and US Fish and Wildlife Service. HPMS VMT estimates are sample based. Due to smaller sampling requirements at the sub-county level of geography and in federal air quality attainment areas, desired 90/10 confidence level estimates of VMT are typically not attained in more rural areas of the State. Planners generally agree that reducing congestion, commute times, and VMT will lead to reduced carbon emissions while improving the quality of life for communities throughout California.

### **Purpose of the Plan**

As defined by the 2017 RTP Guidelines, the purpose of the Regional Transportation Plan is to accomplish the following objectives:

- Providing an assessment of the current modes of transportation and the potential of new travel options within the region;
- Projecting/estimating the future needs for travel and goods movement;
- Identification and documentation of specific actions necessary to address regional mobility and accessibility needs;
- Identification of guidance and documentation of public policy decisions by local, regional, state and federal officials regarding transportation expenditures and financing;
- Identification of needed transportation improvements, in sufficient detail, to serve as a foundation for the: (a) Development of the Federal State Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP, which includes the STIP), (b) Facilitation of the National Environmental Policy Act

(NEPA)/404 integration process and (c) Identification of project purpose and need;

- Employing performance measures that demonstrate the effectiveness of the system of transportation improvement projects in meeting the intended goals;
- Promotion of consistency between the CTP, the RTP and other plans developed by cities, counties, districts, California Tribal Governments, and state and federal agencies in responding to statewide and interregional transportation issues and needs;
- Providing a forum for: (1) participation and cooperation and (2) facilitation of partnerships that reconcile transportation issues which transcend regional boundaries; and,
- Involving community-based organizations as part of the public, Federal, State and local agencies, California Tribal Governments, as well as local elected officials, early in the transportation planning process so as to include them in discussions and decisions on the social, economic, air quality and environmental issues related to transportation. The SCLTC prepared this 2021 RTP based on these objectives consistent with the 2017 RTP Guidelines (adopted January 18, 2017).

### **Project Purpose and Need**

The RTP guidelines require that an RTP must “provide a clearly defined justification for its transportation projects and programs.” This requirement is often referred to as The Project Purpose and Need Statement. Caltrans’ Deputy Directive No. DD 83 describes a project’s “Need” as an identified transportation deficiency or problem, and its “Purpose” is the set of objectives that will be met to address the transportation deficiency. For Siskiyou County, each project by mode in the Action Element and Attachment E of the 2021 RTP includes a qualitative assessment of purpose and need indicating a project’s contribution to system preservation, safety, multimodal improvements, regional and local mobility. These broader categories capture the intended outcome for projects during the life of the RTP and serve to enhance and protect the “livability” for residents in the county.

All projects listed in the Action Element and Attachment E of the RTP fall into one of the following designations. It should be noted that projects within each grouping are for the most part in random order. Consequently, the SCLTC, County, and/or Caltrans may change the priority ranking or project scope during the RTP approval process.

- **Short Range:** RTP improvements represent short-range projects that are fully fundable from anticipated revenue sources, referred to as “constrained”, and will normally be programmed during the first 10 years (0-10 years) of the RTP.
- **Long Range:** RTP improvements represent long-range projects that are included on the unconstrained or “unfunded” list of projects in the RTP and are planned for programming in the 11-20 year time frame (2031 – 2041 and beyond).

There are no new roadways proposed as part of the proposed project. The RTP does not directly provide for the implementation of transportation projects and/or facilities. Rather, it identifies necessary improvements in order to provide the best possible transportation/circulation system to meet the mobility and access needs of the entire county.

Due to the regional nature of the RTP, the analysis in this Initial Study focuses on those impacts that are anticipated to be potentially significant on a regional system-wide level. As individual projects near implementation, it will be necessary to undertake project-specific environmental assessments before each project is approved and implemented. Such future environmental review will be required in

accordance with CEQA and, if federally funded, NEPA. Adoption of this Initial Study/Negative Declaration and approval of the RTP does not authorize Siskiyou County or Caltrans to undertake construction of specific improvement projects identified in the RTP without further environmental review and consideration.

The following definitions are used in the RTP document.

**System Preservation** – This category of improvement indicates a project that serves to maintain the integrity of the existing system so that access and mobility are not hindered for travelers. Improvements may include bridge repairs, upgrading of existing rail lines and signs, airport runway repairs, and traffic control devices, and striping. In addition, because Siskiyou County is very rural and contains several small communities, the lack of maintenance funding has resulted in a large amount of “deferred maintenance” that has actually lapsed into a serious need to “rehabilitate” roadways to maintain system preservation. Rehabilitation entails primarily overlay and/or chip seal work that can also be considered a safety improvement. The majority of road projects listed indicate either “rehabilitation” or “reconstruction” to maintain system preservation.

**Safety Projects** – Safety improvements are intended to reduce the chance of conflicts between modes, prevent injury to motorists using the transportation system, and to ensure that motorists can efficiently travel to their destination in a timely manner. Safety improvements may include roadway and intersection realignments to improve sight-distance, pavement or airport runway resurfacing to provide for a smooth travel surface, signage to clarify traffic and aviation operations, obstacle removal so that traffic flows are not hindered, and improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities to promote safe travel to desired destinations. In addition, bridge repairs and reinforcement serve to improve safety. The desired outcome is to reduce the incident of collisions on County facilities and the societal costs in terms of injury, death or property damage.

**Multimodal Enhancement** – These types of improvements focus on non-auto modes of travel such as bicycling, walking and transit. Projects that are designated as multimodal are designed to enhance travel by one or more of these modes, provide for better connectivity between modes, and to improve non-auto access to major destinations and activity centers. Typical projects include separated bike lanes, shared bike routes, sidewalks, transit amenities, street furniture, and signage.

## Regional Goals

The comprehensive goals, objectives, and policies that have been developed for this RTP meet the needs of the region and are consistent with the county’s regional vision and priorities for action, which set the framework for carrying out the roles and responsibilities of the SCLTC and assists them in their decision-making process for transportation investment. These objectives are intended to guide the development of a transportation system that is balanced, multimodal, and will maintain and improve the quality of life in Siskiyou County.

### Siskiyou County Regional Goals:

1. Provide and maintain a safe, efficient, and convenient countywide roadway system that meets the travel needs of people and goods within the region and connecting to points beyond.
2. Support the economic vitality of the region.
3. Maintain a local road system to serve the public’s needs for safety, mobility and to provide access to the county’s major activity centers.
4. Maintain existing local roads in good condition.
5. Provide a safe, convenient and efficient multimodal transportation system that is part of a balanced overall transportation system and provides amenities to provide safe travel for

- bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians on existing and proposed facilities.
6. Enhance opportunities for safe pedestrian and bicycle travel on and across state highways.
  7. Promote alternative transportation.
  8. Maintain affordable, safe and effective public and private transit that is a viable option for Siskiyou County residents, especially disabled residents and others with specialized transportation needs.
  9. Maintain safe and efficient commercial and general aviation facility and improve general aviation airports in Siskiyou County.
  10. Promote the continued and expanded use of air, rail and trucks for the transport of suitable products and materials while minimizing negative impacts on the local road system.
  11. Provide for the safe and efficient movement of regional and interregional goods.
  12. Promote opportunities for rail transport of freight and passengers to and from the county.
  13. Plan and coordinate for Tribal residents within the Siskiyou region to have safe, effective, functional transportation systems, including streets, roads pedestrian and bicycle facilities and transit.
  14. Improve safety and efficiency by using Transportation System Management (TSM), Transportation Demand Management (TDM), and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to reduce the demand for travel by single-occupant vehicles and improve traffic operations.
  15. Ensure that the allocation of transportation funding dollars maximizes the “highest and best use” for interregional and local projects.
  16. Ensure sensitivity to the environment in all transportation decisions.
  17. Include climate change strategies in transportation investment decisions.
  18. Maintain air quality standards established by the State Air Resources Board (ARB).
  19. Improve livability in the county through land use and transportation decisions that encourage walking, transit and bicycling.

### **Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required (e.g., Permits, etc.)**

Siskiyou County will be the Lead Agency for the proposed project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15050. No specific permits are required to approve the proposed project. Future permit approvals vary among projects and may include, but are not necessarily limited to: Caltrans, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, US Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, and the California Transportation Commission.

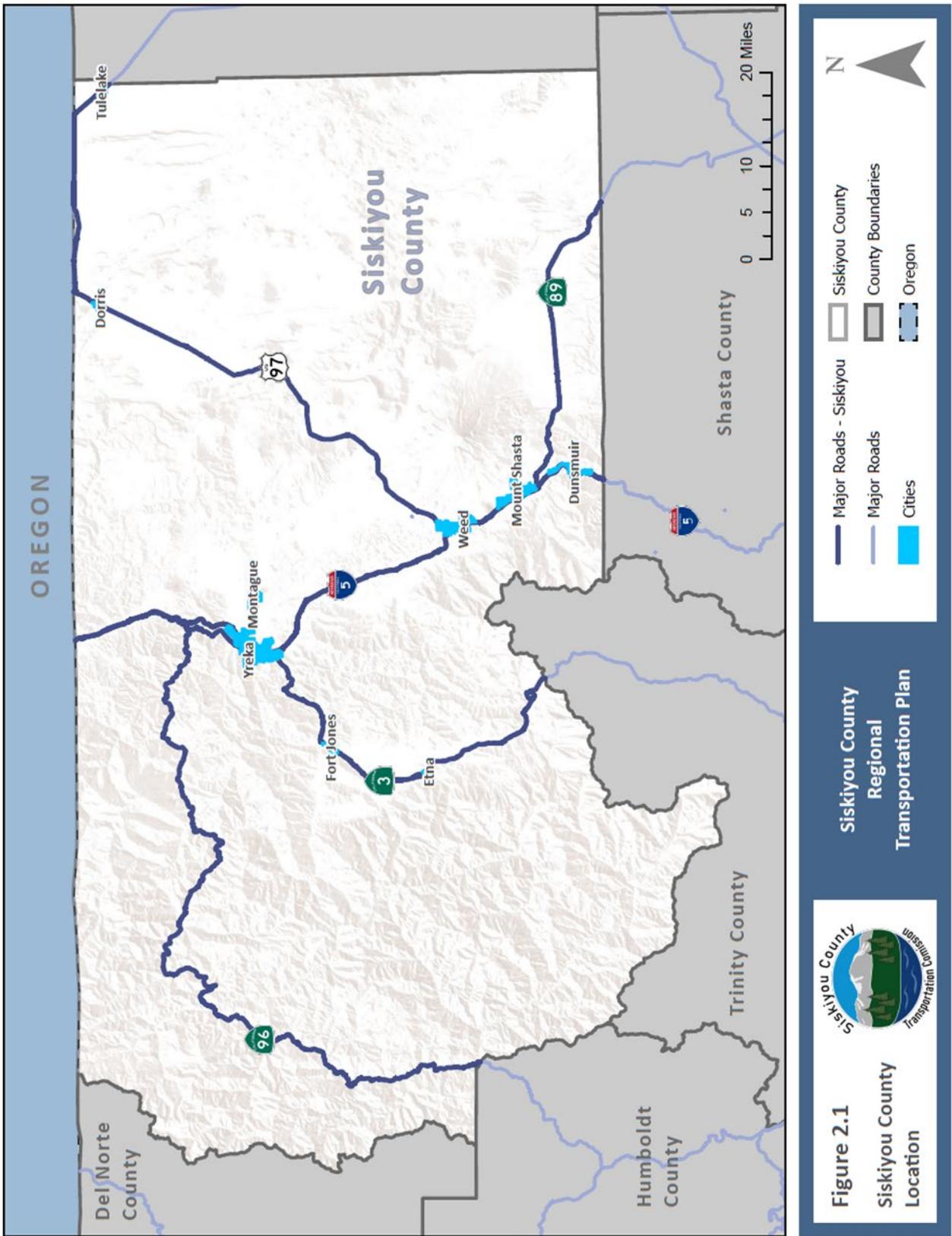


Figure 1: Location Map

## Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

None of the environmental factors listed below would be potentially affected by this project, as described on the following pages.

	Aesthetics		Agriculture Resources		Air Quality
	Biological Resources		Cultural Resources		Geology /Soils
	Greenhouse Gas Emissions		Hazards & Hazardous Materials		Hydrology / Water Quality
	Land Use / Planning		Mineral Resources		Noise
	Population / Housing		Public Services		Recreation
	Transportation/Traffic		Utilities / Service Systems		Tribal Cultural Resources
	Mandatory Findings of Significance				

## Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

X	I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

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Jeff Schwein, Executive Director Date

## Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

In each area of potential impact listed in this section, there are one or more questions which assess the degree of potential environmental effect. A response is provided to each question using one of the four impact evaluation criteria described below. A discussion of the response is also included.

- **Potentially Significant Impact.** This response is appropriate when there is substantial evidence that an effect is significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries, upon completion of the Initial Study, an EIR is required.
- **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** This response applies when the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact". The Lead Agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
- **Less than Significant Impact.** A less than significant impact is one which is deemed to have little or no adverse effect on the environment. Mitigation measures are, therefore, not necessary, although they may be recommended to further reduce a minor impact.
- **No Impact.** These issues were either identified as having no impact on the environment, or they are not relevant to the Project.

## **Environmental Checklist**

This section of the Initial Study incorporates the most current Environmental Checklist Form, contained in the CEQA Guidelines. Impact questions and responses are included in both tabular and narrative formats for each of the 17 environmental topic areas.

**I. AESTHETICS – WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			X	
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?			X	
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?			X	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	

**SETTING**

Siskiyou County is located near the southern end of the Cascade Range at the southern end of the Shasta Valley. Shasta Valley is characterized by rolling hills with vast expanses of ranches, agricultural fields, and open space filled with meadows, streams, wetlands, and lakes. The Valley is surrounded by the abrupt, hilly, and mountainous topography of the Cascade Mountains.

Within the county, Mt. Shasta rises from the valley floor to an elevation of over 14,000 feet above mean sea level. This dormant volcano dominates views in the southeastern areas of the county and can be seen from over 100 miles away on a clear day. Black Butte is another prominent landform and dominates southward views. The Shasta River, a tributary of the Klamath River, winds northward through the Shasta Valley. In addition to numerous smaller streams, the valley is interspersed with a variety of unconnected depressions that form seasonal lakes and wetlands.

Two major roadways, Interstate 5 (I-5) and U.S. Highway 97 (US 97), transect the region. Interstate 5 is the primary vehicular route between northern California and Oregon. US 97 connects the study area with the eastside of the Cascades. Additionally, a system of local, rural roadways traverses the study area. Views of scenic natural landscapes, including Mt. Shasta, Black Butte, Cascade Range, scenic water resources, and other scenic resources in the county are available from highways and roadways throughout the county.

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Response a-d): Less than Significant.** The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise require the construction of new roadways. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. There are no new roadways proposed as part of the 2021 RTP update, and as such, the proposed project would not lead to indirect population growth as a result of access improvements into areas that are currently undeveloped.

The proposed project identifies roadway and multimodal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in significant or adverse changes to the visual quality of the county and would not result in the

introduction of increased nighttime lighting or daytime glare. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES --WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non- agricultural use?				X

**SETTING**

Agriculture and livestock production are major contributors to the county’s economic base. Approximately 1,153,246 acres, or 28.5% of the total area of the county, is agricultural land. According to the US Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service, 142,873 acres were utilized as crop land in 2017, the most recent year on record. The 2019 Siskiyou County Annual Crop and Livestock Report reported a gross production of agricultural commodities at \$392,128,759. This is an increase of \$14,450,792 from the 2018 gross production value. Major agricultural commodities in Siskiyou County include potatoes, onions, strawberries, raspberries, livestock, wheat, alfalfa hay and timber resources.

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Response a): No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project would allow for roadway and multimodal transportation improvements throughout the county over the next 20 years. The proposed project would not result in the conversion of any agricultural lands to non- agricultural uses, and as such, would have no impact on any Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide importance. There is no impact and no mitigation is required.

**Response b): No Impact.** The proposed project does not propose any changes to General Plan land use designations or zoning districts, and would have no impact on zoning for agricultural use. The proposed project would not result in conflicts with any Williamson Act contracts, nor would it result in the cancellation of any Williamson Act contracts. Implementation of the proposed project will have no impact on a Williamson Act contract, and no mitigation is required.

**Response c): No Impact.** See responses a) and b) above. The proposed project will have no impact on agricultural lands or operations.

## II. AIR QUALITY -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			X	
c) 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 (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			X	
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?			X	

### SETTING

Siskiyou County lies within the Northeast Plateau Air Basin (NEPAB). The NEPAB extends from the Nevada border in the east to the Siskiyou Mountains in the west; and from the Oregon border in the north to the southern border of Lassen County. It includes all of Lassen, Modoc, and Siskiyou Counties. The NEPAB encompasses a total area of 14,920 square miles and is the fourth largest air basin in California.

The climate of Siskiyou County varies greatly under the influences of elevation, topography and proximity to the Pacific Ocean. The low valleys have hot summer days, cool summer nights and mild winters with little snow. The higher elevations have cool summers and severe winters. The humidity and precipitation drop rapidly from west to east. In the City of Weed near the center of the county, the average January temperature is 23 degrees, the average July temperature is 84 degrees and the average annual precipitation is 26 inches. Weed also receives about 19 inches of snowfall annually.

Winds in Siskiyou County predominantly blow from the south. The prevailing wind directions are up- and down-valley (southerly and northerly) with up-valley (southerly) winds dominating during the daytime hours and down-valley (northerly) wind dominating during the evening hours.

Siskiyou County is currently in attainment for state PM10 standards. Primary sources of PM10 include wood burning stoves, wildfires, open and prescribed burning and wind-blow dust generated from agriculture and unpaved roads. Siskiyou County is also in attainment for California ozone standards, and federal 8-hour ozone standards.

#### *Siskiyou County Air Pollution Control District*

The administration of air quality regulations in Siskiyou County is handled by the Siskiyou County Air Pollution Control District (SCAPCD), a division of the County's Agriculture, Animal Control, and Weights and Measures Department. The SCAPCD is responsible for the preparation of plans for the attainment and maintenance of Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS), adoption and enforcement of rules and regulations for sources of air pollution, and issuance of permits for stationary sources of air pollution.

The SCAPCD also inspects stationary sources of air pollution, regulates agricultural burning, responds to citizen complaints, monitors ambient air quality and meteorological conditions, and implements programs and regulations required by federal and state air quality regulations. The SCAPCD works to ensure a coordinated approach in the development and implementation of transportation plans throughout the county. This coordination ensures compliance with pertinent provisions of the federal and state Clean Air Acts, as well as related transportation legislation (such as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, Transportation Conformity, and Transportation Improvement Plans).

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-e): Less Than Significant.** It is the intention of the RTP to rehabilitate the current road base and improve existing and future circulation within the county wherever possible. With this focus, improvements in the RTP may benefit regional air quality by reducing congestion on major roads within the county. Some of the route improvements contemplated in the RTP could have direct impacts on air quality, sensitive receptors, or create objectionable odors on a project-specific basis during construction. The Clean Air Act sets national ambient air quality standards for various air pollutants, including carbon monoxide, ozone, oxides of nitrogen, sulfur dioxide and particulate matter.

Individual projects contemplated in the RTP will be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction. Measures, such as construction best management practices (BMPS), may be required for individual projects to reduce temporary short-term construction related impacts to air quality. The project would not result in any indirect or cumulatively adverse impacts on air quality, as the project would not result in increased vehicle trips within the county or an overall increase in vehicle miles travelled as a result of implementation of the RTP.

In 2006, the California State Legislature adopted Assembly Bill (AB) 32 known as the California Global Warming Solutions Act (Section 38560.5 of the Health and Safety Code). The bill, and subsequent legislation (SB 375) establishes a cap on statewide greenhouse gas emissions and sets forth the regulatory framework to achieve the corresponding reduction in statewide emissions levels.

In January 2007, the Legislature asked the CTC to review the RTP guidelines to incorporate climate change emission reduction measures. The request emphasized that RTPs should utilize models that accurately measure the benefits of land use strategies aimed at reducing vehicle trips and/or trip length. The CTC staff established an RTP guidelines work group to assist in the development of “best practices” for inclusion in the RTP Guidelines. The newest 2017 RTP Guidelines provides several recommendations for consideration by rural RTPAs to address GHG reductions. The following strategies from the 2017 RTP guidelines have specific application to Siskiyou County.

- For purposes of allocating transportation investments, recognize the rural contribution towards GHG reduction for counties that have policies that support development within their cities, and protect agriculture and resource lands. Consideration should be given to jurisdictions that contribute towards these goals for projects that reduce GHG or are GHG neutral, such as safety, rehabilitation, connectivity and for alternative modes.
- In setting priorities, consider transportation projects that increase efficiency, connectivity and/or accessibility or provide other means to reduce GHG.
- In setting priorities, consider transportation projects that provide public health co-benefits.
- Emphasize transportation investments in areas where desired land uses as indicated in the County General Plan may result in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction or other lower impact use.
- Employ “Fix It First” policies to ensure that preventive maintenance and repair of existing transit and roads are the highest priority for spending, to reduce overall maintenance costs,

and to support development in existing centers and corridors.

The transportation planning literature recognizes three interrelated components that contribute to transportation emissions reductions. Those components include changes in vehicle technology (cleaner burning engines), alternative fuel sources, and vehicle use. The first two components are typically the responsibility of industry and national governmental interests. RTPAs and local governments have the ability to affect vehicle use by promoting transportation alternatives to the automobile, and by managing the demand for transportation. These efforts typically involve goals and policies and/or projects and programs focused on getting people out of their cars and into non-auto modes of travel (mode shifting).

RTPAs which are not located within the boundaries of a metropolitan planning organization (which SCLTC is not) are not subject to the provisions of SB 375 which require addressing regional greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) targets in the RTP and preparation of a sustainable community strategy. Future improvements to the transit system and a commitment to a future rideshare program could provide residents another alternative to driving a car.

The following RTP goals are established for Siskiyou County to increase safety while reducing dependence on the automobile and to promote mode shifting to other forms of transportation.

5. Provide a safe, convenient and efficient multimodal transportation system that is part of a balanced overall transportation system and provides amenities to provide safe travel for bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians on existing and proposed facilities.
6. Enhance Opportunities for Safe Pedestrian and Bicycle Travel on and across State Highways.
7. Promote alternative transportation.
8. Maintain affordable, safe and effective public and private transit that is a viable option for Siskiyou County residents, especially disabled residents and others with specialized transportation needs.
13. Plan and coordinate for Tribal residents within the Siskiyou region to have safe, effective, functional transportation systems, including streets, roads pedestrian and bicycle facilities and transit.
14. Improve safety and efficiency by using Transportation System Management (TSM), Transportation Demand Management (TDM), and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to reduce the demand for travel by single-occupant vehicles and improve traffic operations.
17. Include climate change strategies in transportation investment decisions.
18. Maintain air quality standards established by the State Air Resources Board (ARB).
19. Improve livability in the county through land use and transportation decisions that encourage walking, transit and bicycling.

The effectiveness of efforts by the RTPA to provide transportation alternatives and to implement TDM and TSM policies and strategies can be measured in terms of reductions in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) or the expected growth in VMT. VMT reductions correlates directly with reductions in GHG emissions.

Caltrans reports VMT by county on an annual basis (see Figure 2). Estimates of countywide VMT for Siskiyou County from 2015 to 2018 are provided in Table 2.19. VMT is displayed both as a total figure and as a per-capita figure for the jurisdiction it is measured in. As shown in Table 2.19, some roadway jurisdictions such as the Cities of Dorris, Etna, Fort Jones, Mount Shasta, Tulelake, Weed and Yreka have minor changes between 2015 and 2018. However, other jurisdictions such as U.S. Fish and Wildlife roads and Bureau of Indian Affairs have had much more significant changes. Dramatic changes in VMT within these jurisdictions can be attributed to roadway mile inventory changes (e.g., new or abandoned roadways).

Table 2.19 Historic and Existing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)													
Jurisdiction	2015 VMT			2016 VMT			2017 VMT			2018 VMT			Average Annual Change in VMT per Capita, 2015-2018
	Daily VMT	Pop.	VMT Per Capita	Daily VMT	Pop.	VMT Per Capita	Daily VMT	Pop.	VMT Per Capita	Daily VMT	Pop.	VMT Per Capita	
<b>Cities</b>													
City of Dorris	3,390	969	3.50	3,120	984	3.17	3,060	987	3.10	3,640	994	3.66	1.6%
City of Dunsmuir	6,510	1,650	3.95	5,890	1,651	3.57	5,850	1,641	3.56	5,940	1,640	3.62	-2.7%
City of Etna	2,890	748	3.86	2,900	750	3.87	2,860	748	3.82	2,870	747	3.84	-0.2%
City of Fort Jones	1,890	697	2.71	1,890	689	2.74	1,860	686	2.71	1,870	679	2.75	0.5%
City of Montague	8,240	1,406	5.86	9,590	1,397	6.86	9,610	1,388	6.92	9,620	1,375	7.00	6.5%
City of Mount Shasta	29,030	3,395	8.55	29,320	3,392	8.64	29,010	3,393	8.55	29,780	3,386	8.80	1.0%
City of Tulelake	3,420	966	3.54	3,290	950	3.46	3,330	939	3.55	3,330	924	3.60	0.6%
City of Weed	52,720	2,655	19.86	53,010	2,703	19.61	53,120	2,742	19.37	52,820	2,736	19.31	-0.9%
City of Yreka	44,190	7,816	5.65	44,500	7,828	5.68	44,720	7,789	5.74	44,730	7,825	5.72	0.4%
<b>Other</b>													
Bureau of Indian Affairs	290	44,721	0.01	150	44,704	0.00	150	44,621	0.00	140	44,595	0.00	-17.2%
Siskiyou County	812,270	44,721	18.16	694,710	44,704	15.54	691,800	44,621	15.50	603,570	44,595	13.53	-8.5%
State Highways	1,564,620	44,721	34.99	1,609,880	44,704	36.01	1,609,840	44,621	36.08	1,724,220	44,595	38.66	3.5%
State Park Service	190	44,721	0.00	80	44,704	0.00	80	44,621	0.00	80	44,595	0.00	-19.3%
U.S. Fish and Wildlife	710	44,721	0.02	140	44,704	0.00	140	44,621	0.00	140	44,595	0.00	-26.7%
U.S. Forest Service	71,170	44,721	1.59	90,050	44,704	2.01	89,890	44,621	2.01	82,240	44,595	1.84	5.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,601,530</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>58.17</b>	<b>2,548,520</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>57.01</b>	<b>2,545,320</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>57.04</b>	<b>2,564,990</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>57.52</b>	<b>-0.4%</b>

Source: 2010 - 2018 California Public Road Data

Figure 2: Historic and Existing Vehicle Miles Traveled

Table 2.20 Forecasted Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Per Capita					
Jurisdiction	2021 VMT Per Capita	2026 VMT Per Capita	2031 VMT Per Capita	2036 VMT Per Capita	2041 VMT Per Capita
<b>Cities</b>					
City of Dorris	3.86	4.10	4.34	4.62	4.95
City of Dunsmuir	3.51	3.20	2.91	2.67	2.46
City of Etna	3.93	3.92	3.90	3.91	3.94
City of Fort Jones	2.82	2.80	2.77	2.76	2.76
City of Montague	7.92	9.26	10.81	12.71	15.01
City of Mount Shasta	9.29	9.79	10.28	10.89	11.58
City of Tulelake	3.66	3.53	3.40	3.30	3.22
City of Weed	19.77	20.02	20.20	20.56	21.01
City of Yreka	5.97	6.15	6.32	6.54	6.80
<b>Other</b>					
Bureau of Indian Affairs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Siskiyou County	12.33	10.15	8.33	6.89	5.72
State Highways	42.24	47.07	52.31	58.60	65.90
State Park Service	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
U.S. Fish and Wildlife	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
U.S. Forest Service	2.07	2.43	2.83	3.33	3.93

Figure 3: Projected Vehicle Miles Traveled

In recent years (2015-2020), Siskiyou County has experienced decreasing growth (approximately 0.1 percent change per year) in population. Due to the minimal decrease, however, future trends of population decrease could easily change. A variable formula was used to forecast average daily VMT based on the average annual change from 2015-2018. Roadway segments with minor increases or decreases in this time period were projected at a matching constant rate of increase or decrease. Roadways with significant average VMT increases were projected at a higher rate of increase in proportion to VMT increases experienced between 2015 and 2018. Road segments that experienced no change between 2015 and 2018 have been projected to remain constant. Based on this trend and the guidelines established in the 2017 RTP guidelines, the county is not required to run a network travel demand model to estimate VMT. The guidelines cite the lack of road congestion and the fact that emission changes from higher mile-per-gallon vehicles will continue to help the county comply with future emission caps established by the California Air Resources Board as part of AB 32. Increases in VMT in the region are mainly due to interregional freight moving within and through Siskiyou County. The Siskiyou County region will rapidly need to prepare for vehicle electrification. In addition to personal vehicles and the transit fleet, Siskiyou County Regional Transportation Plan sets forth goals and objectives to prepare roadways to address sustainable freight transition. It is recommended that further planning efforts are needed to prepare for and implement Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) infrastructure readiness, electric vehicle plug-in stations, and other planned improvements that would benefit economic outcomes while reducing the impacts of climate change on the region.

The Siskiyou County RTP recognizes that TDM and other non-auto mobility options, including walking, biking and transit, require coordinated land use decisions and improved infrastructure. To this degree, the goals and policies in the RTP are consistent with the County's proposed general plan revisions to

provide a balanced multimodal transportation system that includes non-auto choices for access and mobility.

The SCLTC is committed to implementing these types of policies and strategies that reduce reliance on the automobile and contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions. Although the RTP mentions projects that will enhance the countywide transportation system, the proposed improvements would not influence VMT or population levels, nor would it significantly alter current air quality levels. As such, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to air quality, and no mitigation is required.

**III. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?			X	
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			X	
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?			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
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?			X	

**SETTING**

The elevation of Siskiyou County ranges from 520 feet in the valley floors to 14,162 feet atop Mt. Shasta. As a result of such major changes in elevation, Siskiyou County includes a great variety of climatic, soil and geographic conditions which, in turn, influence the distribution, variety, and abundance of the plant and animal species within the county.

The county encompasses parts of five National Forests, six scenic rivers (Klamath, Sacramento, Salmon, Scott, Shasta and McCloud) as well as numerous lakes, streams and creeks. The county also includes the Butte Valley State Wildlife Area, Lower Klamath Refuge and Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

Siskiyou County's land-cover types can be divided into the following general classifications, which support a diverse array of plant and animal species.

- Forest Land
- Grassland
- Urban, barren
- Chaparral

- Sagebrush
- Marsh, Riverine

Forest lands constitute approximately 80% of the county’s land area. Grassland is the prevailing habitat type in the Shasta Valley, while the Scott Valley is dominated by chaparral and cultivated lands. The Butte and Tulelake basins range from cultivated lands to sagebrush, marsh and barren lands.

The variety of vegetative cover types in the county provide habitat for many different types of wildlife. Of particular significance are the large expanses of deer, elk and antelope ranges located in Siskiyou County, and the winter waterfowl habitat located within and surrounding the Butte Valley State Wildlife Area, Lower Klamath Refuge and Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

### *State Wildlife Action Plan*

The goals identified in the Policy Element (Chapter 3) of this Plan consider stressors identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan. Siskiyou County straddles two separate conservation management provinces, as identified by the California State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP): the North Coast & Klamath Province and the Cascade & Modoc Plateau Province. The SWAP identifies sensitive species, habitat stressors and suggested conservation goals and actions for each of the sub-ecoregions within the provinces. Siskiyou County contains ten sub-ecoregions (referred to as “conservation units” in the SWAP), ranging from alpine vegetation to wet meadows. According to the SWAP, the major stressors within these ten conservation units are as follows:

- Annual and Perennial Non-timber Crops
- Livestock, Farming and Ranching
- Climate Change
- Logging and Wood Harvesting
- Commercial and Industrial Areas
- Parasites/Pathogens/Diseases
- Fire and Fire Suppression
- Recreational Activities
- Housing and Urban Areas
- Renewable Energy
- Invasive Plants/Species
- Utility and Service Lines

A large proportion of threatened and endangered species in the county are dependent on the aquatic ecosystems that have been disrupted by the system of dams blocking waterways throughout Siskiyou County. For a complete list of sensitive species, habitat stressors and actions suggested for wildlife management in Siskiyou County and the North Coast/Cascade Regions, see Attachment C of the Regional Transportation Plan.

### *California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)*

According to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), there are 109 focal species that have been identified for conservation strategies in order to meet conservation targets in the North Coast and Klamath Provinces. The CDFW identifies key pressures on these species and conservation targets to maintain species populations. A complete list of focal species, key pressures and conservation targets can be found in Attachment C of the RTP.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a-f): Less than Significant.** The proposed project does not propose the construction of new roadways in areas of the county that have previously been undisturbed. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways and would not have the potential to impact any special status species or habitat. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening of a particular roadway would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any special status species, habitat, or wetlands. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not directly or indirectly impact any biological resources, wetland resources, or conflict with any habitat conservation plan or local ordinance protecting natural and biological resources. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**IV. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?			X	
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?			X	
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	

**SETTING**

Siskiyou County, California, has a uniquely rich historic and prehistoric heritage. The county lies within the traditional Shasta, Karuk, Modoc, Wintu, Achomawi, and Klamath aboriginal lands. The mountains and valleys of Siskiyou County have provided subsistence and spiritual sustenance to the aboriginal communities for millennia. Euro-American travel through the county and its later settlement are equally of interest and importance to the people of Siskiyou County, for the county’s identity is closely related to these historic events.

Prehistoric and historic resources are valuable to the people of Siskiyou County in many different ways: recreation opportunities, community identity, aesthetic beauty, spiritual importance, and historic interest. Prehistoric, historic, and contemporary cultural resources could be located anywhere within the county. No comprehensive inventory of cultural resource sites within Siskiyou County exists.

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Response a-d): Less than Significant.** The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise require the construction of new roadways. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. The proposed project identifies roadway and multimodal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways and would not have the potential to impact any known or previously undiscovered cultural resources. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening or a particular roadway would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any cultural, historical, paleontological or archaeological resources. A project level environmental review is required under CEQA for each project identified in the Regional Transportation Plan and will be evaluated at that time for cultural resources. This Plan as a Project has a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**V. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:			X	
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.			X	
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) Landslides?			X	
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			X	
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?			X	
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?			X	
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?			X	

**SETTING**

Siskiyou County is located in the southern portion of the Cascade Range geomorphic province, near the intersection of the Cascade Range geomorphic province with the Klamath Mountains, Modoc Plateau, Sierra Nevada, and Great Valley provinces. The Cascade Range geomorphic province extends from southern British Columbia to Lassen Peak and is characterized by, and named for, a north–south trending chain of large volcanoes. It also includes relatively flat lava plateaus, lava and cinder cones, plug domes, ash beds, and glacial deposits. Mt. Shasta lies within the eastern portion of the county and claims the county’s greatest elevation at 14,162 feet above sea level.

The Klamath Mountains geomorphic province lies to the west of the Cascade Range geomorphic province. The Klamath Mountains are characterized by rugged topography and prominent peaks and are considered a northern extension of the Sierra Nevada Range. To the east, the Cascade Range province grades into the Modoc Plateau province, a volcanic table land consisting of thick accumulations of lava flows and tuff

beds. To the southeast, the northern end of the Sierra Nevada geomorphic province disappears under the Cenozoic volcanic rocks of the Cascade Range. To the southwest, the Cascade Range province borders the Great Valley, a long alluvial plain in which sediment has been deposited continuously for nearly 160 million years. The Cascade Range is subdivided into the Western Cascades and the High Cascades. The Western Cascades are older than the High Cascades and record the initiation of volcanism in the Pacific Northwest. The rocks of the Western Cascades series are Early Tertiary intrusions and flows, ranging in composition from basalt to rhyolite, while the High Cascades are composed of volcanic deposits of Quaternary age; Mount Shasta belongs to the High Cascades.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-e): Less than Significant.** Seismicity is directly related to the distribution of fault systems within a region. Depending on activity patterns, faults and fault-related geologic features may be classified as active, potentially active, or inactive. The entire State of California is considered seismically active and is susceptible to seismic ground shaking, however, the most highly active fault zones are along the coastal areas.

*Fault Rupture.* A fault rupture occurs when the surface of the earth breaks as a result of an earthquake, although this does not happen with all earthquakes. These ruptures generally occur in a weak area of an existing fault. Ruptures can be sudden (i.e. earthquake) or slow (i.e. fault creep). The Alquist-Priolo Fault Zoning Act requires active earthquake fault zones to be mapped and it provides special development considerations within these zones. While it is possible for a fault rupture throughout seismically active areas of California, there are no Alquist-Priolo Fault zones within Siskiyou County.

*Seismic Ground Shaking.* The potential for seismic ground shaking in California is expected. As a result of the foreseeable seismicity in California, the State requires special design considerations for all structural improvements in accordance with the seismic design provisions in the California Building Code. These seismic design provisions require enhanced structural integrity based on several risk parameters. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from seismic ground shaking.

*Liquefaction.* Liquefaction typically requires a significant sudden decrease of shearing resistance in cohesionless soils and a sudden increase in water pressure, which is typically associated with an earthquake of high magnitude. The potential for liquefaction is highest when groundwater levels are high, and loose, fine, sandy soils occur at depths of less than 50 feet. Most areas of Siskiyou County are considered to be at a low risk of hazards from liquefaction. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from liquefaction.

*Landslides.* Landslides include rockfalls, deep slope failure, and shallow slope failure. Factors such as the geological conditions, drainage, slope, vegetation, and others directly affect the potential for landslides. One of the most common causes of landslides is construction activity that is associated with road building (i.e. cut and fill). The projects identified in the RTP consist primarily of roadway maintenance and improvement projects, and would occur within the existing right of way of the county's roadway system. As such, the potential for impacts related to landslides is considered less than significant.

*Lateral Spreading.* Lateral spreading typically results when ground shaking moves soil toward an area

where the soil integrity is weak or unsupported, and it typically occurs on the surface of a slope, although it does not occur strictly on steep slopes. Oftentimes, lateral spreading is directly associated with areas of liquefaction. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from lateral spreading.

*Erosion.* Erosion naturally occurs on the surface of the earth as surface materials (i.e. rock, soil, debris, etc.) is loosened, dissolved, or worn away, and transported from one place to another by gravity. Two common types of soil erosion include wind erosion and water erosion. The steepness of a slope is an important factor that affects soil erosion. Erosion potential in soils is influenced primarily by loose soil texture and steep slopes. Loose soils can be eroded by water or wind forces, whereas soils with high clay content are generally susceptible only to water erosion. The potential for erosion generally increases as a result of human activity, primarily through the development of facilities and impervious surfaces and the removal of vegetative cover. Future roadway improvement projects would be required to implement measures during construction, including various BMPs, that would reduce potential impacts related to erosion. This is considered a less than significant impact.

*Expansive Soils.* Expansive soils are those that shrink or swell with the change in moisture content. The volume of change is influenced by the quantity of moisture, by the kind and amount of clay in the soil, and by the original porosity of the soil. Shrinking and swelling can damage roads and structures unless special engineering design is incorporated into the project plans.

*Septic Tanks.* Implementation of the RTP would not result in the use or expansion of any septic systems. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic, and no mitigation is required.

**VI. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	

**SETTING**

The RTP includes goals, policies, and strategies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Siskiyou County. RTP projects such as roadway and bridge repairs are necessary to maintain a safe regional transportation system and to prevent deterioration of roadways and bridges which may require costlier repairs in the future. These projects will not result in greater traffic volumes along State highways or County roads. To the degree that keeping an existing travel route open avoids travel via longer alternative routes that would accompany a closure, maintaining existing roadways and bridges can help to avoid increases in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

The RTP should be consistent with any County General Plan updates or County land use guidelines and will encourage new developments to be placed adjacent to existing development in order to assist in VMT reduction and shorter travel distances. The RTP also includes long-term bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects which will create more bicycle and pedestrian friendly communities and potentially further reduce VMT. The RTP also includes public transit elements. By expanding alternative forms of transportation, Siskiyou County is in-line with statewide climate change goals. As the RTP is a programmatic document and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, there is currently no potential for significant impact. The potential impacts of the entirety will be considered with further impacts and details to be refined in each project specific environmental document completed for those projects.

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Response a) and b): Less than Significant.** The population has decreased slightly in Siskiyou County over the past decade, and this trend is anticipated to continue through 2040. As a result of the county’s historic and projected population decrease, increases in VMT are anticipated to remain low as well. The RTP includes numerous goals related to the increase in multimodal transportation options, which reduce dependence on the automobile, and may subsequently result in decreases in total VMT throughout the county.

**VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
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?				X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
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?				X
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 for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?			X	

**SETTING**

The State of California has adopted U.S. DOT regulations for the intrastate movement of hazardous materials; State regulations are contained in 26 CCR. In addition, the State of California regulates the transportation of hazardous waste originating in the state and passing through the state (26 CCR). Both regulatory programs apply in California. The two State agencies with primary responsibility for enforcing federal and State regulations and responding to hazardous materials transportation emergencies are the CHP and Caltrans. The CHP enforces hazardous material and hazardous waste labeling and packing regulations to prevent leakage and spills of material in transit. Caltrans has emergency chemical spill identification teams at as many as 72 locations throughout the State that can respond quickly in the event of a spill. Additionally, the Siskiyou County Public Health Department, Environmental Health Services

Division serves the public in an effort to protect the health and welfare of the general public and environment through prevention and control of disease and pollutants.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-c): No Impact.** A “hazardous material” is a substance or combination of substances that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may pose a potential hazard to human health or the environment when handled improperly. The proposed project does not propose new development or any use that would result in the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Furthermore, the proposed project would not result in a foreseeable upset, accident, or emission of hazardous materials. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

**Responses d): Less than Significant.** There are two locations in Siskiyou County that are registered with the Department of Toxic Substances Control and included on the Cortese List. The first site (Blue Ledge Mine) is located on Road 1060. None of the proposed improvements in the RTP would occur within the vicinity of this site.

The second site is the 33-acre J. H. Baxter wood treating facility (J.H. Baxter), which is located on the northwestern flank Mt. Shasta in Siskiyou County near the City of Weed. This site is not proposed for disturbance or improvement as part of the RTP. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

**Response e-f): Less than Significant.** The Action Element of the RTP includes a list of proposed improvement projects related to aviation facilities in the county. The proposed aviation facility improvements consist primarily of rehabilitation efforts, and the implementation of other ancillary improvements such as fencing, lighting, etc. All improvements to aviation facilities within the county identified in the RTP are consistent with the applicable airport land use plans (ALUPs) and would not result in changes to the aviation and flight patterns surrounding County aviation facilities. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

**Response g): Less than Significant.** The proposed project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The improvements identified in the RTP would improve the transportation network in Siskiyou County, which would serve to improve emergency response times countywide. Construction activities associated with projects identified within the RTP may result in temporary lane closures that may temporarily impede emergency access to certain areas within the county during construction. However, each improvement project, when undertaken, will include measures to ensure that emergency access is not adversely impeded. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

**Response h): Less than Significant.** Wildfires are a major hazard in the State of California. Wildfires burn natural vegetation on developed and undeveloped lands and include timber, brush, woodland, and grass fires. While low intensity wildfires have an important role in the ecosystem, modern wildfires are exacerbated due to fire suppression, extreme drought and climate change. These higher intensity fires put human health and safety, structures (e.g., homes, schools, businesses, etc.), air quality, recreation areas, water quality, wildlife habitat and ecosystem health, and forest resources at risk.

The proposed project consists primarily of projects that will improve and rehabilitate roadways throughout the county. Roadway rehabilitation is necessary for improving emergency response and

evacuation efficiency. There are no new homes, businesses or habitable structures proposed as part of the RTP. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in increased risks associated with wildfires. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?			X	
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?			X	
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			X	
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			X	
e) 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?			X	
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			X	
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?			X	
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?			X	
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?			X	

**SETTING**

Siskiyou County’s climate is classified as Mediterranean by the Koppen climate classification system. The climate is generally warm and temperate with warm dry summers and temperate winters. Siskiyou County’s varying elevations lead to vast differences in snow received during the winter. Siskiyou County received approximately 16.5 inches of rainfall in the 2019 water year and 9.8 inches of rainfall in 2020 (California Data Exchange Center 2019-2020).

Siskiyou County's hydrologic sources are largely come from the Klamath River, according to the US Geological Survey. The Klamath River is a major river that spills into the Pacific Ocean with many tributaries feeding into it, including the Shasta River. The major sources of groundwater in Siskiyou County include rainfall, infiltration from nearby rivers and streams, Klamath River flow, and subsurface inflow.

Siskiyou County's population and economy is dependent upon adequate water supplies. Water is a necessity for agricultural production and economic development and is vitally important to maintaining many of the county's wildlife resources and recreation attractions. Additionally, many reservoirs are located within the county such as Greenhorn Reservoir, Copco Reservoir, Lake Siskiyou, Ukonom Lake and Iron Gate Reservoir.

Siskiyou County experiences periodic winter snow and thunderstorms that can lead to heavy levels within the county. Heavy rain from storms occasionally leads to flash flooding. Flooding has had impacts in various portions of the county. In 2016, Governor Brown declared a State of Emergency in Siskiyou County due to severe storming and flooding, which left substantial damage.

#### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a-j): Less than Significant.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in the improvement and rehabilitation of roadways and transportation infrastructure throughout Siskiyou County. The project would not result in the development or construction of housing or other habitable structures that would be at risk from flooding events. There are a small number of projects identified within the RTP that may increase the area of impervious surfaces within the county. Such improvements consist primarily of roadway widening to address safety and operational concerns. The amount of impervious surfaces that may be added to the county as a result of project implementation is negligible, and would not result in impacts to groundwater recharge rates. The improvements identified in the RTP would not result in increased uses of ground or surface water, and would not directly or indirectly lead to population growth. As such, the project would not result in an increased demand for ground or surface water resources, and would have no impact on these environmental topics.

There is potential for water quality impacts to occur during construction activities associated with the various projects identified in the RTP. Each project is subject to further project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction. During subsequent environmental review, potential project-specific construction impacts to water quality would be identified, and mitigation measures, in the form of BMPs would be identified and implemented to ensure that impacts to water quality are reduced or avoided. Since the RTP is a planning document that outlines recommended projects, impacts to these environmental topics are considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

**IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING - *Would the project:***

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X

**SETTING**

Siskiyou County contains a wide variety of existing land uses. Most of the residential development in the county is low-density single-family housing. Siskiyou County has a General Plan containing policies to guide growth and land use changes.

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Responses a-c): No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in improvements to the county’s transportation network. There are no changes to land uses or land use designations proposed as part of the RTP. The County General Plan was reviewed during preparation of the RTP, and the RTP is consistent with these documents. No housing would be removed as part of the proposed project, and there are no new roadways proposed that would divide an established community. Implementation of the RTP would not conflict with a habitat conservation plan. There are no impacts to land use associated with the proposed project and no mitigation is required.

**X. MINERAL RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?				X
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?				X

**SETTING**

The Office of Mine Reclamation periodically publishes a list of mines regulated under SMARA that is generally referred to as the AB 3098 List. The Public Contract Code precludes mining operations that are not on the AB 3098 List from selling sand, gravel, aggregates, or other mined materials to state or local agencies. The current AB 3098 list indicates that there are 19 mines regulated under SMARA in Siskiyou County, one mine regulated under the City of Mount Shasta, and one regulated under the City of Montague.

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Response a-b): No Impact.** There are no active mines located within the areas proposed for improvement in the RTP. The proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or mineral resource recovery site. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic, therefore no mitigation is required.

**XI. NOISE -- WOULD THE PROJECT RESULT IN:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			X	
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	

**SETTING**

Major noise sources in Siskiyou County come from vehicular traffic on Interstate 5, US 97, and State Routes 3, 96 and 89. Other sources of noise may include plane traffic, railroad activities, agricultural operations and commercial and industrial uses.

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Responses a-f): Less than Significant.** Implementation of the proposed project consists primarily of improvements to the existing transportation network in Siskiyou County. There are no new roadways proposed that would introduce new vehicle trips into areas not currently exposed to mobile noise sources from the existing transportation network. The improvements identified in the RTP would not directly result in increased vehicle trips on the county roadway network and would therefore not result in increased noise levels from vehicles travelling on existing roadways and transportation facilities in the county. The improvements to aviation facilities identified in the RTP would not result in increased or expanded flight operations and would not result in increased noise from aviation sources.

Construction activities associated with the various improvements identified in the RTP could result in short-term temporary noise impacts in the immediate vicinity of the improvements. These noise increases would be temporary in nature, and construction activities in the vicinity of residences and other sensitive noise receptors would usually be limited to the daytime hours. However, as described throughout this initial study, subsequent environmental review of project-specific impacts would be required prior to approval and implementation of future improvements. This future environmental

review would identify the potential for short-term construction noise impacts to sensitive receptors and assign mitigation measures as needed to reduce noise impacts. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING – WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial 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)?			X	
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	

**SETTING**

According to the 2019 American Community Survey estimates, the total number of housing units in Siskiyou County was estimated at 24,118, of which an estimated 19,240 were occupied. An estimated 63% of the housing units were owner-occupied and 37% were renter-occupied. The vacancy rate in Siskiyou County (21%) is much higher than the state rate (8.4%). The median home value in the county is \$198,900. The median home value in Siskiyou County is approximately 39% of the statewide median value of \$505,400. According to the US Census, the population of Siskiyou County started to slowly decline around the year 2010. Growth has decreased, but the margin is so small that the trend could easily reverse in the future.

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Responses a-c): Less than Significant.** The Siskiyou County region is not undergoing any major development or construction that would significantly contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. The proposed project consists primarily of the rehabilitation of the existing transportation network in the county. There are no new roadways proposed that would extend vehicular access into areas of the county that are not currently accessible by area roadways. The project would not result in the direct or indirect inducement of population growth. The proposed RTP includes projects that would occur primarily within the right-of-way of the existing transportation network, and would not displace any persons or housing units. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

### XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES

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

#### SETTING

Siskiyou County is served by 4 municipal fire departments and CAL FIRE. Law enforcement for the county is provided by the Siskiyou County Sheriff’s Office, located in Yreka. Additionally, the California Highway Patrol enforces traffic laws throughout the county.

Siskiyou County is served by 6 school districts. There are 25 elementary schools, 2 middle schools and 11 high schools. The county also contains a community college named College of the Siskiyou.

Siskiyou County contains multiple recreation and parks districts: Dunsmuir Recreation and Parks District, Mt. Shastina Recreation and Parks District, and Weed Recreation and Parks District. Federal lands are of great importance to the county and include the Klamath, Shasta-Trinity, Modoc, SixRivers, and Rogue-Siskiyou National Forests. These areas make popular recreation sites for residents and visitors.

#### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a): Less than Significant.** As described throughout this initial study, the proposed project (adoption of the RTP) consists primarily of the rehabilitation and improvement of the existing transportation network in Siskiyou County. The projects included in the RTP would not extend roadway infrastructure into areas not currently served and would not result in the direct or indirect growth of the county’s population. As such, the demand for increased public services, including police protection, fire protection, schools, parks and other public facilities would not increase as a result of implementation of the proposed project. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

#### XIV. RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			X	
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			X	

#### SETTING

Siskiyou County parks are operated and maintained by the Dunsmuir Recreation and Parks District, Mt. Shastina Recreation and Parks District, and Weed Recreation and Parks District. National forest lands also make popular recreation areas. The parks system contains a variety of municipal parks and facilities; however, the abundance of recreation occurs within the Federal lands within the county.

#### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-b): Less than Significant.** As described throughout this initial study, the proposed project (adoption of the RTP) consists primarily of the rehabilitation and improvement of the existing transportation network in Siskiyou County. The projects included in the RTP would not extend roadway infrastructure into areas not currently served, and would not result in the direct or indirect growth of the county’s population. As such, the demand for increased recreational facilities would not increase as a result of implementation of the proposed project. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?			X	
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			X	
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?			X	
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?			X	
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?			X	

**SETTING**

Siskiyou County is served by one interstate highway, one US highway, three state highways and numerous local roadways. The roadway network provides the regional transportation routes for automobiles and trucks. The roadway network includes the interstate, US and state highways.

There are a total of 2,460.34 miles of maintained roads in Siskiyou County. The County of Siskiyou maintains and operates a total of 1,331.67 miles of roadway, while Caltrans maintains 353.36 miles of highways and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, State Park Service and U.S. Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife own and maintain 2.37, 1.44, 6.37, and 783.55 miles, respectively. The nine incorporated Cities in Siskiyou County maintain and operate a combined a total of 176.44 miles of roadway.

*Arterials*

Arterials provide the highest level of service at the greatest speed for the longest uninterrupted distance, with some degree of access control. The principle and minor arterials identified in Siskiyou County are integrated inter-county roads connecting Siskiyou County to surrounding counties and cities, including cities and communities in the Central Valley and in Oregon. SR 3, SR 96, SR 161, SR 263,

SR 265, as well as other streets located in Weed and Mt Shasta are classified as minor arterials in Siskiyou County. I-5, SR 139, US 97, and SR 89 are classified as principal arterials.

### *Collectors*

Collectors provide a less highly developed level of service at a lower speed for shorter distances by collecting traffic from local roads and connecting them with arterials. The FHWA further delineates collectors into major and minor collectors. Major collectors connect to arterials or regional destinations, and minor collectors generally connect local roadways to major collectors. Major collectors in Siskiyou County serve primarily intra-county travel serving smaller communities and countywide trip generators, such as consolidated school, shopping and recreational destinations. Trip lengths may be comparable to those of minor arterials in low density areas. Examples of major collectors in Siskiyou County include Scott River Road, Siskiyou Lake Boulevard and Cecilville Road. Examples of minor collectors in Siskiyou County include Indian Creek Road, Ishi Pishi Road and Old Stage Road (Mt Shasta).

### *Local Roads*

Local roads provide access to adjoining properties and primary residences. There is virtually no through traffic as they serve to primarily provide access to adjacent arterials and collectors. Local roads constitute the remaining roadway mileage not classified as arterial or collector in Siskiyou County.

In 2017, the California Transportation Commission adopted guidelines for Regional Transportation Planning Agencies for RTP analysis and modeling. This was the first time separate guidelines had been developed for RTPAs and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), recognizing the inherent differences. The 2017 RTP Guidelines for RTPAs formally recognizes that RTPAs are not required to develop Sustainable Communities Strategies as MPOs are. As such, air quality conformity analysis and travel demand models are not required either. Air quality conformity analysis on regionally significant, federally funded projects is performed by the California Department of Transportation in isolated rural nonattainment and maintenance areas.

The 2017 RTP guidelines incorporate California's Senate Bill 743 (SB 743), which requires a change in transportation impact metrics used in the CEQA process from Level of Service (LOS) to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Environmental review consistent with the new CEQA guidelines will be conducted for individual projects as they advance to the implementation stage of development.

Estimates of countywide VMT for the four most recent years available, 2015 through 2018 are provided in Table 2.19 of the RTP. VMT is displayed both as a total figure and as a per-capita figure for the jurisdiction it is measured in. As shown in Table 2.19, some roadway jurisdictions such as the Cities of Dorris, Etna, Fort Jones, Mount Shasta, Tulelake, Weed and Yreka have minor changes between 2015 and 2018. However, other jurisdictions such as U.S. Fish and Wildlife roads and Bureau of Indian Affairs have had much more significant changes. Dramatic changes in VMT within these jurisdictions can be attributed to roadway mile inventory changes (e.g., new or abandoned roadways).

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-b): Less than Significant.** Implementation of the proposed RTP would result in improvements and rehabilitation to the existing transportation and roadway network in Siskiyou County.

In some areas of the county, slight increases in VMT are likely to occur throughout the lifetime of this RTP, and some areas may see slight declines. However, VMT per capita is forecasted to increase on State Highways by over 30% by 2041.

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in population growth within Siskiyou County

and would not directly result in increases of VMT. The proposed project would improve traffic flows and operations throughout the county and would not result in VMT that exceeds applicable standards or thresholds. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**Responses c-f): Less than Significant.** As described throughout this initial study, implementation of the proposed project would assist in the improvement of the county's transportation network across all modes of transit and transportation. The improvements proposed to aviation facilities in the county would not result in an increase in flights or a change in flight patterns. There are policies and programs included in the RTP that would improve public access to transit systems and alternative modes of transit, such as improved bicycle facilities. The various roadways improvements identified in the RTP would assist in the delivery of emergency services by improving the local and regional roadway network and eliminating existing design and safety hazards. The RTP and the projects included within were developed after careful review of the General Plan of the County. The RTP is consistent with the circulation element of the General Plan and would not result in conflicts or inconsistencies with the above referenced plan. This is considered a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**XVI. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES – WOULD THE PROJECT**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of the Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or			X	
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.			X	

**SETTING**

There are three federally recognized tribal entities in Siskiyou County: the Karuk Tribe, the Shasta Indian Nation and the Quartz Valley Indian reservation. All Tribal entities were contacted to discuss transportation deficiencies, system improvements ideas, and for correspondence regarding tribal project lists and Long Range Transportation Plans. Table 1.1 in the Regional Transportation Plan lists the contact information for Tribes in Siskiyou County. Tribal cultural resources could be located anywhere within the county. No comprehensive inventory of Tribal cultural resource sites within Siskiyou County exists.

CEQA requires lead agencies to determine if a proposed project would have a significant effect on Tribal cultural resources. The CEQA Guidelines define Tribal cultural resources as: (1) a site, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe that is listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, or on 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 according to the historical register criteria in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c), and considering the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe. The county provides notices of projects under AB52 to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American Tribes that have requested notice.

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Responses a-b): Less than Significant.** The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise require the construction of new roadways. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. The proposed project identifies roadway and multimodal transportation improvement

funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways, and would not have the potential to impact any known or previously undiscovered cultural resources. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening of a roadway would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any cultural resources. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?			X	
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?			X	
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the projects projected demand in addition to the providers existing commitments?			X	
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the projects solid waste disposal needs?			X	
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

**SETTING**

Siskiyou County’s population and economy is dependent upon adequate water supplies. Water is a necessity for economic development and is vitally important to maintaining many of the county's wildlife resources, recreation attractions and agricultural resources.

Siskiyou County’s hydrologic sources largely come from the Klamath River, according to the US Geological Survey. The Klamath River is a major river that spills into the Pacific Ocean with many tributaries feeding into it, including the Shasta River. The major sources of groundwater in Siskiyou County include rainfall, infiltration from nearby rivers and streams, Klamath River flow, and subsurface inflow. Many reservoirs are located within the county such as Greenhorn Reservoir, Copco Reservoir, Lake Siskiyou, Ukonom Lake and Iron Gate Reservoir.

The Siskiyou County Environmental Health Department regulates public water systems, as well as private water supplies permitted by food facilities and Cottage Food Operations. Quarterly bacteriological samples are obtained, and annual inspections are conducted.

The Siskiyou County Division of Environmental Health is the designated Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) for Siskiyou County by the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). LEA responsibilities include the inspection of closed landfills and Siskiyou transfer stations. The LEA is also an educational resource for businesses and individuals for the proper methods of handling and

disposing of solid waste.

#### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-g): Less than Significant.** The project consists of various roadway and transportation network improvement projects throughout the county. The project would not result in direct or indirect population growth, and as such, would not increase the demand for water supplies or the treatment and/or conveyance of wastewater. The various roadway and infrastructure improvements may require modifications or expansions to existing and future stormwater conveyance infrastructure adjacent to roadways proposed for rehabilitation or modification. As described throughout this initial study, projects identified in the RTP would be subject to project-level environmental review to determine if potential impacts to the county's stormwater detention and conveyance infrastructure may occur. This future project-specific environmental review may include mitigation measures, as appropriate, to avoid or lessen potential impacts to the stormwater infrastructure adjacent to roadway and other improvement projects. Implementation of the projects identified in the RTP would not generate significant amounts of solid waste, and would not result in an exceedance of any landfill's capacity or violate any state, federal or local statutes related to the disposal of solid waste. This is considered a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to 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, 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?			X	
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?			X	
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Responses a) - c): Less than Significant.** As described throughout the analysis above, the proposed project will not result in any changes to General Plan land use designations or zoning districts, would not result in annexation of land, and would not allow development in areas that are not already planned for development in the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The proposed project would not result in new adverse environmental impacts. The project would not threaten a significant biological resource, nor would it eliminate important examples California history or prehistory. The proposed project does not have impacts that are cumulatively considerable, nor would it have substantial adverse effects on human beings. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on these environmental topics.

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