



County of Fresno

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

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- APPLICANT: Jacob Redelfs – Blair Church & Flynn
- APPLICATION NOS.: Initial Study No. 8044 and Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3708
- DESCRIPTION: The project proposes to amend CUP 3639 and allow the expansion of the existing Southern California Edison, Shaver Lake Service Center laydown yard with the construction of a new gated access road connecting to Dinkey Creek Road. The project will also include the installation of a 1,440 Square-foot mobile office/transmission trailer, within the existing laydown yard, on the existing 357.80-acre subject parcel, in the RC-40 (Recreational, 40-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District.
- LOCATION: The project site is located on the north side of Dinkey Creek Road, approximately one-quarter mile east of State Route 168/Tollhouse Road, within the unincorporated community of Shaver Lake (41694 Dinkey Creek Road) (APN 120-260-10U) (SUP. DIST. 5).

I. AESTHETICS

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

- A. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; or
- B. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The proposed paved access driveway to the existing laydown yard required the removal of some mature trees during construction. However, the project site is located in a densely forested area and only those trees that are within the path of the 145 foot long by 21-foot-wide driveway have been removed. No rock outcroppings or any other scenic resources or historic buildings were identified.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project proposes a new driveway onto Dinkey Creek Road from the existing laydown storage yard. Dinkey Creek Road is designated as a scenic drive in the County's General Plan; however, no public view points were identified. Existing trees adjacent to the driveway will be preserved to the extent feasible. Based upon photos of the project site provided by the applicant, the proposed driveway path has previously been cleared of any trees from the existing laydown yard to the nearest right-of-way of Dinkey Creek Road.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The Applicant's operational statement indicates that there will be approximately 8-10 new pole mounted lighting fixtures on the laydown yard site. The light fixtures will not be allowed to be directed toward roads or adjacent property. The following mitigation measure has been included to reduce any impacts from additional area lighting to a less than significant level.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *All outdoor lighting shall be hooded and directed downward and away from adjacent properties and public streets.*

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

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

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

- B. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract; or
- C. Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production; or
- D. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or
- E. Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forestland to non-forest use?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The subject property is Zoned R-E (Recreational District) which is intended for such uses as Forest stations and lookout stations, and in some areas grazing and other agricultural uses. Although the property is located in a forested area, it is not zoned forest land or timberland. The property does not contain prime or unique farmland and is not restricted under Williamson Act contract.

III. AIR QUALITY

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

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project entails of a new driveway for access to an existing laydown yard from Dinkey Creek Road. The project is not anticipated to create any conflicts with or obstruct implementation of any applicable air quality plan.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not anticipated to result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in any criteria pollutants for which the region is in non-attainment. It is anticipated that construction will result in the generation of temporary emissions of some criteria pollutants including PM10 and

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

There is a residential development adjacent to the project site, and as such the potential exists that fugitive dust, particulate matter, and other emissions, which could result in odors that could affect people residing in the vicinity however, based on the limited scope of construction activities, and a reasonable distance of the construction on the project site from residential dwellings, it is unlikely to affect a substantial number of people. Additionally, because of the limited size of the project, once construction is complete, the project site will resume its existing permitted operations, and given the distance from the nearest receptors (approximately 200 feet, impacts to sensitive receptors would be less than significant.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife reviewed the proposal and expressed concern that the project area has the potential to support habitat for the State endangered Great Gray Owl. In order to reduce the potential for impacts to the Great Gray Owl

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *If project work will be conducted during the breeding season of March 15 to September 15, Great Gray Owl (GGO) surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine if there are nests that may be impacted by project activities. The surveys shall include areas within one-quarter mile of the project area where ground disturbing activities will occur. Prior to the conduct of any surveys for Great Gray Owl, the project proponent (Southern California Edison) shall consult with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), to provide survey guidance.*

Note: The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) conducted GGO protocol level surveys for the Shaver South Vegetation Management Project, which included the meadow the south of the project site; It is anticipated that CALFIRE will conduct additional GGO surveys in 2021. GGO surveys for this project shall be coordinated when feasible, and results shared with CALFIRE to minimize potential owl disturbance from multiple surveyors visiting the same site.

2. *If active Great Gray Owl nests are found during surveys or at any time during project related activities, a one-quarter mile no disturbance buffer shall be established around the nest until a qualified biologist has determined that the chicks have fledged and are no longer reliant on parental care for survival.*

If project related ground disturbing activities occur during the nesting (February through mid-September), the project proponent (Southern California Edison) is responsible for ensuring that implementation of the project does not result in violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act or relevant Fish and Game Code.

3. *Pre-activity surveys for nesting birds shall be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than ten (10) days prior to the start of ground or vegetation disturbing activities. The surveys shall cover any area potentially affected by the project. Prior to initiation of construction activities, the qualified biologist shall conduct a survey of all identified nests, to establish a behavior baseline. The qualified biologist shall continuously monitor nests to detect behavioral changes resulting from the project. If behavioral changes occur, work shall be halted, and the project proponent (Southern California Edison) shall consult with CDFW for additional avoidance and minimization measures. If continuous monitoring of identified nests by a qualified biologist is not feasible; a minimum no-disturbance buffer of 250 feet shall be established around active nests of non-listed bird species, and a 500-hundred-foot buffer around non-listed raptor species. The buffer(s) shall remain in place until the breeding season has ended or until a qualified biologist has determined that the birds have fledged and are no longer reliant upon the nest or parental care for survival. Variance from these no-disturbance buffers is possible when there is a compelling biological or ecological reason to do so, such as when the construction area would be concealed from a nest site by topography. The qualified biologist shall advise and support any variance from these buffers and notify CDFW in advance of implementing a variance.*

- B. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No riparian habitat or sensitive natural communities were identified in the analysis or by any reviewing agencies.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No federally protected wetlands were identified on the subject property. A review of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), Wetlands Mapper shows no identified wetlands features on the project area.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife reviewed the project and did not express concerns with the project interfering with the movement of any native residence or migratory fish or wildlife species. No established wildlife corridors or native wildlife nursery sites were identified within the project site or in the vicinity of the project site.

- E. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or
- F. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, nor conflict with any provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or state Habitat Conservation Plan, with which the project would conflict.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

Because the project site is in an area of moderate archaeological sensitivity; the applicant was required to provide an Archaeological Survey for the previously approved project, for which this amended application is being considered. A Cultural Historical Records Search and a pedestrian survey was conducted to determine the presence of

any known cultural resources or previous cultural resource surveys on or near the subject parcel. Material Culture Consulting provided an archaeological survey dated June 10, 2019, which found that there had been fifteen (15) previous cultural resource surveys done within one-quarter mile of the project area and four (4) which encompassed portions of the project area; two (2) previously recorded cultural resources were identified within a one quarter-mile radius of the project area. One of the identified resources is historical and the other is prehistoric. To address the possibility that previously unknown subsurface cultural materials may be discovered during ground-disturbing activities, the following Mitigation Measure has been included, which will reduce potential impacts to cultural or historical resources to a less than significant level.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

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

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

- A. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation; or
- B. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

It is expected that during the approximately three-month construction time frame, energy resources, electricity for lighting and fuel for vehicles and construction equipment will be utilized; however, it is not expected to be wasteful or unnecessary with adherence to standard construction practices. The project will not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

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

1. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?
2. Strong seismic ground shaking?
3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
4. Landslides?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The subject parcel is not located in an area designated as being prone to seismic activity in the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR).

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Development of the proposed access road would involve grading which could result in some erosion given the natural topography of the parcel; however, any such development will be required to obtain grading permits prior to work being done, and such work is subject to the requirements of the Grading and Drainage Sections of the Fresno County Ordinance Code.

- C. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?
- D. Be located on expansive soil as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located within an area of known risk of landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, collapse, or within an area of expansive soils.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project proposes to connect to an existing onsite septic system. This project was reviewed by the Fresno County Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division, which did not express any concerns with the existing septic system.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No paleontological resources or unique geologic features were identified in the analysis.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

- A. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or
- B. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will generate greenhouse gas emissions during construction, and during operation; however, once construction is complete, additional vehicle traffic associated with the proposed storage yard is not anticipated to result in a substantial increase in long-term greenhouse gas emissions. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) published Guidance for Valley Land Use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects Under CEQA December 17, 2009.

The Guidance proposes the use of performance-based standards or Best Performance Standards (BPS) as a means of determining the significance of project specific GHG emission impacts by utilizing established design specification or project design elements, which would assist in identifying feasible GHG emission reduction or minimization measures. Emission reduction via implementation of BPS would be pre-quantified, eliminating the need for project-specific quantification of GHG emissions. Under these standards, this project will have a less than significant impact on Greenhouse Gas generation.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

- A. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; or
- B. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The proposed facility will be required to handle all hazardous waste in accordance with the provisions of California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 22, Division 4.5.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The subject parcel is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The subject property is not located on a hazardous materials site as identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, NEPAAssist mapping tool. The SCE Shaver Lake Service center is classified as a Hazardous Waste Generator under the guidelines of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). The proposed new access driveway will serve a previously approved material storage yard, which will contain electrical infrastructure materials such as power poles, wire and cable reels, insulators, new transformers, material crates, hardware, other palletized material, roll-off bins and two Conex storage boxes.

If any additional storage of hazardous materials is proposed, the applicant will be required to update its Hazardous Materials Business Plan within 30 days if there is a 100 percent increase in quantities of a previously disclosed material, or the facility begins handling a previously-undisclosed material at or above the HMBP thresholds. All hazardous waste is required to be handled in accordance the provisions of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 22, Division 4.5.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The subject property is not located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes a new access road to an existing materials storage yard, and the construction and use of the proposed access road is not anticipated to impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The proposed facility is in a State Responsibility Area (SRA) and is subject to all applicable SRA Fire Safe Regulations, which address such things as setbacks for structures, emergency access and vegetation management. The project was reviewed by CalFire, which did not express concerns that the project would result in an increased risk of human or structural exposure to wildfire that may result in loss, injury or death.

Because the subject parcel is located in area that is prone to wildfire risk, the potential remains for such an occurrence; however, the project does not entail a substantial increase in new structures or the addition of a substantial number of additional personnel over that of the existing facility, and with adherence to all applicable fire safe regulations and building and fire codes, such risks would be less than significant.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

- A. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality; or
- B. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is located approximately one-third mile southwest of the nearest extent of Shaver Lake and is not anticipated to violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, impacting surface or groundwater. Additionally, The proposed access road serving the existing materials and equipment storage yard does not propose to use substantial quantities of groundwater in its construction.

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

2. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site?
3. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or
4. Impede or redirect flood flows?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will involve the removal of vegetation (no trees), grading, and surfacing of the approximately 3,200 square-foot area of the proposed paved access road, which will alter the drainage pattern of the access drive area from its previously natural state by adding some impervious surface; However, the alteration will involve a relatively small area of land being converted to impervious surface. The project will not alter the course of a stream or river, nor is it anticipated to result in substantial offsite erosion or siltation. Any additional runoff is not anticipated to exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems and must be retained on site in compliance with County standards.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located in a flood hazard area or an area at risk of tsunami or seiche.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not anticipated to increase the use of groundwater in excess of the existing facility's current water use.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not physically divide an established community or conflict with any land use plan. The project is consistent with the requirements and development standards of the applicable land use plans.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state; or
- B. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local General Plan, Specific Plan or other land use plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The subject parcel is not located in an area of known mineral resources as identified by Figures 7-7 and 7-8 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR).

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Project construction activities may generate temporary ambient noise levels including ground-borne vibration; however, as construction activity will be limited to a small area (approximately 3,200 square feet) comprising the proposed access road adjacent to the Dinkey Creek Road, no substantial temporary or permanent increase in noise is anticipated. Project construction and operation will be subject to the requirements of the Fresno County Noise Ordinance.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip or within the review area of an airport land use plan.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

- A. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?; or
- B. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposal is not anticipated to induce population growth, and no new infrastructure other than the proposed access driveway for the storage yard is proposed. No housing or people will be displaced as a result of this project.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

- A. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the following public services:
 - 1. Fire protection;
 - 2. Police protection;
 - 3. Schools;
 - 4. Parks; or
 - 5. Other public facilities?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not result in adverse impacts associated with the provision of any government facilities, or result in the need for new governmental facilities, the construction of which would cause adverse impacts to the provision of public services. No reviewing agencies expressed concerns that the project would adversely impact public services.

XVI. RECREATION

Would the project:

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes the expansion of an existing Southern California Service Center, with the addition of an approximately 2.62-acre outdoor storage yard to be constructed adjacent the Service Center. This proposal is not anticipated to increase the use of existing parks or recreational facilities, nor will it involve the construction or expansion of such facilities.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not anticipated to conflict with any policies or plans related to the circulation system.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not anticipated to have a significant impact on VMT. No new trips will be added as a result of the project, only a new point of access. Any additional trips during construction will be temporary increases. The project would not exceed the 110 daily trip significance threshold established by the State.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed project entails the construction of a new access road, connecting to Dinkey Creek Road. The access drive will be required to verify that there is adequate

site distance for vehicle traffic entering Dinkey Creek Road. Any proposed access gate(s) must be set back a minimum of 20 feet from the road right-of-way, or the length of the longest vehicle entering the site, to eliminate vehicles from idling in the road when stopped at the gate.

D. Result in inadequate emergency access?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed access drive will be subject to all applicable County development standards and State Responsibility Area Fire Safe Regulations as they pertain to emergency access standards. An encroachment permit will be required for any work done within the County right-of-way.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

1. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k); or
2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? (In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.)

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

Under the provisions of Assembly Bill 52, the County of Fresno was required to provide notice that this Initial Study was being prepared to Native American Tribes who had previously indicated interest in reviewing CEQA projects. Notices were sent on September 14, 2021, to Tribes that has previously requested such notice. None of the Tribal Governments responded to the notice. However, because the project site is in an area of moderate archeological sensitivity, the following Mitigation Measure is proposed to ensure that potential impacts to previously unknown tribal cultural resources can be reduced to less than significant.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. See Mitigation Measure No. 1, under Section V above.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed project will not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities.

The proposed laydown storage yard will be constructed and operated by Southern California Edison, a public utility. There is new electrical service proposed to supply the storage yard lighting and portable office/utility trailers with electrical power.

Additionally, the project proposes a new above ground onsite septic system to serve the proposed transmission trailer.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not anticipated to have a significant impact on water supply. No increase in current water use is proposed.

- C. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No increased generation of wastewater is anticipated with this project. The service center site is served by an existing septic system and the proposed office/transmission trailer will be served by an above ground septic system at the point of use.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not anticipated to generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of local infrastructure capacity; additionally, the project will be subject to the provisions of the Fresno County Ordinance Code, Title 8.20, pertaining to Solid Waste Disposal.

XX. WILDFIRE

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

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not impair an adopted emergency response or emergency evacuation plan, or impair any existing or planned telecommunication facilities. The project involves the expansion of an existing facility which will take access from a private road which serves the existing facility. The proposal will be subject to all applicable SRA Fire Safe Regulations, Title 15.60 Fresno County Ordinance Code, including design of emergency access, and California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24-Fire Code.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The subject parcel is in a forested area where there is substantial risk of wildfire occurrence. The project site is situated in an area of gently to moderately sloping terrain, and adjacent to the intersection of two roads, Dinkey Creek Road and the private road serving the existing facility. The project was reviewed by CalFire, which did not express any specific concerns related to increased wildfire risks due to slope or prevailing winds.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will be required to comply with all applicable State Responsibility Area (SRA) fire safe regulations, including, but not limited to, setbacks for structures, road improvements, emergency access, flammable vegetation management, and water supply.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project site is in an area where slopes may exceed thirty percent, according to Figure 7-2 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report; however, the project site and immediate vicinity appear from site photos in an aerial imagery to be gently to moderately sloping. The project site is not in an area at risk of flood inundation due to dam failure, and according to FEMA, FIRM Panel 0725H the project site is in an area of minimal flood hazard. The project will be required to obtain grading permits for any grading proposed with the project, and may require an engineered grading and drainage plan. Additionally, the proposed access road will be asphalt paved, and parking areas will be paved with concrete.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The project entails the expansion of an existing Southern California Edison Service Center, which entails the construction of new access road connecting the existing laydown storage yard directly with Dinkey Creek Road, a public right-of-way and County maintained road. The proposal will add some outdoor security lighting, and as such, Mitigation has been included requiring all outdoor lighting to be hooded and directed so as not to affect adjacent property or the roadway. To address the potential for impacts to wildlife species Mitigation has been included under Section IV; To address the possibility that previously undiscovered subsurface paleontological, cultural/historical or tribal/cultural resources are present within the project area, additional Mitigation has been included under Section V, which implements avoidance and reporting measures, which will reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. Mitigation has also been included under Section XVIII address the potential for impacts to tribal cultural resources.

* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. See Section I.
2. See Section IV.

3. See Section V.

4. See Section XVIII.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No cumulatively considerable impacts were identified in the analysis that would result from the project.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No environmental effects that would result in substantial adverse impacts to people were identified.

CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

Based upon the Initial Study prepared for Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3708, staff has concluded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment. It has been determined that there would be no impacts to Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems.

Potential impacts related to Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Energy, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Geology and Soils, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Transportation, and Wildfire have been determined to be less than significant.

Potential impacts relating to Aesthetics, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, and Tribal Cultural Resources have been determined to be less than significant with compliance with noted Mitigation Measures.

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

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

JS

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