

# Zaca Station to Orcutt Drainage Rehabilitation

In Santa Barbara County, California

05-SB-101-PM 65.0/84.1

05-1K510, 0518000215

## Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration



Prepared by the  
State of California Department of Transportation

**May 2022**



## General Information About This Document

### ***What's in this document:***

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has prepared this Initial Study, which examines the potential environmental impacts of alternatives being considered for the proposed project in Santa Barbara County in California. The document explains why the project is being proposed, the alternatives being considered for the project, the existing environment that could be affected by the project, potential impacts of each alternative, and proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

### ***What you should do:***

- Please read the document. Additional copies of the document and the related technical studies are available for review at the Caltrans District 5 Office, 50 South Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, California 93401. This document is also accessible at the following website: <https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-5/district-5-current-projects>.
- Tell us what you think. If you have any comments regarding the proposed project, please send your written comments via U.S. mail to: Jason Wilkinson, California Department of Transportation, 50 South Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, California 93401; contact Jason Wilkinson by phone at 805-542-4663, or submit comments via email to: [jason.wilkinson@dot.ca.gov](mailto:jason.wilkinson@dot.ca.gov).
- Submit comments by the deadline: June 10, 2022.

### ***What happens next:***

After comments are received from the public and the reviewing agencies, Caltrans may 1) give environmental approval to the proposed project, 2) do additional environmental studies, or 3) abandon the project. If the project is given environmental approval and funding is appropriated, Caltrans could design and construct all or part of the project.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document can be made available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please write to or call Caltrans, Attention: Jason Wilkinson, District 5 Environmental, 50 South Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, California 93401; phone number 805-542-4663 (Voice), or use the California Relay Service 1-800-735-2929 (Teletype to Voice), 1-800-735-2922 (Voice to Teletype), 1-800-855-3000 (Spanish Teletype to Voice and Voice to Teletype), 1-800-854-7784 (Spanish and English Speech-to-Speech), or 711.

Rehabilitate drainage culverts, add lighting, and add or replace  
Transportation Management System elements in Santa Barbara  
County on State Route 101, from Zaca Station Road near Los  
Alamos to 0.2 mile south of the Santa Maria undercrossing in Orcutt

**INITIAL STUDY**  
**with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration**

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
Department of Transportation  
Responsible Agencies: California Transportation Commission



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John Luchetta  
Environmental Office Chief  
California Department of Transportation  
CEQA Lead Agency

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March 2, 2022

Date

The following individual can be contacted for more information about this document:

Senior Environmental Planner Jason Wilkinson, 50 South Higuera Street, San Luis  
Obispo, California 93401, phone: 805-542-4663





**DRAFT**

## **Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration**

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

**District-County-Route-Post Mile:** 05-SB-101-65/84.1

**EA/Project Number:** 05-1K510, 0518000215

### **Project Description**

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to replace and modify 13 drainage culverts, 16 lighting elements, and 5 Transportation Management System elements in Santa Barbara County on State Route 101, from Zaca Station Road near Los Alamos to 0.2 mile south of the Santa Maria undercrossing in Orcutt.

### **Determination**

An Initial Study has been prepared by Caltrans, District 5. On the basis of this study, it is determined that the proposed action with the incorporation of the identified mitigation measures will not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

The project would have no effect on agriculture and forest resources, cultural resources, energy, hazards and hazardous materials, land use planning, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation, tribal cultural resources, geology and soils, noise, utilities and service systems, or wildfire.

The project would have no significant effect on aesthetics, hydrology and water quality, air quality, and greenhouse gas emissions.

The project would have no significant effect on biological resources because the following mitigation measures would bring the level of effects to less than significant:

- Mitigation is proposed at a 1 to 1 ratio (acreage) for temporary impacts to stream and riparian habitats and a 3 to 1 ratio (acreage) for permanent impacts to stream and riparian habitats. Caltrans will replace native trees that are removed from the jurisdictional areas at a ratio of 5 to 1.
- To offset habitat impacts to California tiger salamander resulting from the project, a total of up to 18.7 acres of habitat mitigation is proposed and includes a 3 to 1 mitigation ratio for permanent impacts (0.15 acre); and a 1 to 1 mitigation ratio for temporary impacts (18.6 acres).

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John Luchetta  
Environmental Office Chief  
District 5 – California Department of Transportation

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Date



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# **Chapter 1**      Proposed Project

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## **1.1 Introduction**

Caltrans proposes to improve 13 drainage culverts, 16 lighting elements, and 5 Transportation Management System elements at various locations in Santa Barbara County on State Route 101 from Zaca Station Road near Los Alamos to the Santa Maria undercrossing in Orcutt. The proposed improvements are located along State Route 101 from post miles 65.0 to 84.1. Figure 1-1 shows the project vicinity, and Figure 1-2 shows the locations of the proposed improvements.

This project is included in the 2020 State Highway Operational Protection Program – Drainage System Restoration.

## **1.2 Purpose and Need**

### **1.2.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the project is to:

- Improve and restore culverts to their water conveyance purpose, which protects embankments and roadways from potential failure.
- Replace existing lighting elements that are beyond their useful life and install additional lighting elements to enhance lighting conditions at the Los Alamos interchange and the Cat Canyon intersection.
- Replace and add Traffic Management System elements to improve the collection of traffic data and notify the traveling public of traffic conditions.

### **1.2.2 Need**

- As documented in the Drainage System Reports for the culverts within the project limits, many deficiencies were noted. These include corroded or worn pipe inverts, perforated pipe sections, joint offsets, and significant ditch, channel, and slope erosion, which lead to lower water conveyance capacities and costly emergency repairs.
- The District Electrical unit recommended the rehabilitation of lighting elements that have reached the end of their service life within the project limits.
- Without the proposed Transportation Management System improvements, traffic information collected from within the project limits might be unreliable.

Figure 1-1 Project Vicinity Map

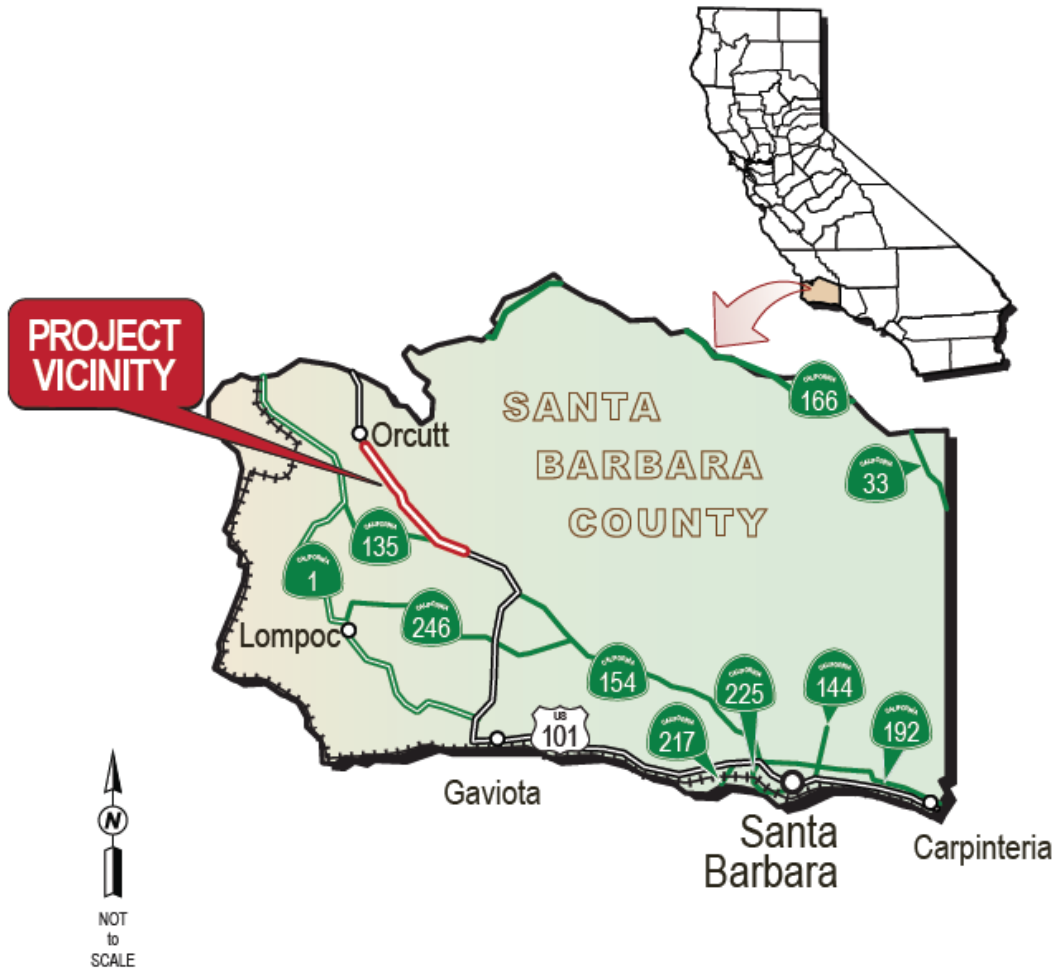
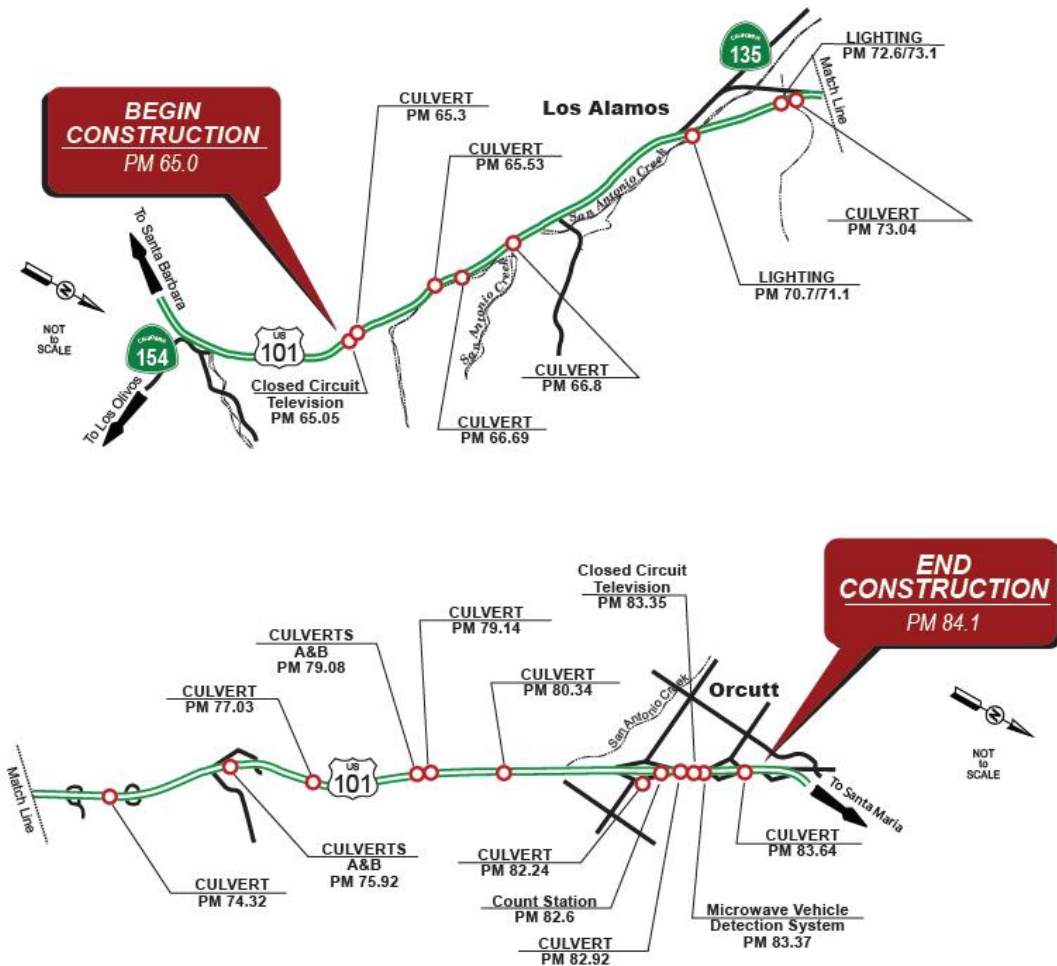


Figure 1-2 Project Location Map



### 1.3 Project Description

The project proposes to replace and/or modify 13 drainage culverts, 16 lighting elements, and 5 Transportation Management System elements. The subsections below describe the proposed improvements for drainage culverts, lighting, and Transportation Management System elements.

The proposed project was included in the State Highway Operational Protection Program for funding from the Drainage System Restoration Program, with an anticipated construction in fiscal year 2024/2025.

#### 1.3.1 Drainage Culverts

As a result of inventory and hydraulic analysis activities performed by the Culvert Inspection Program of the District Hydraulic Branch, 13 drainage

culverts within the project limits were identified to be in need of repair or replacement. Table 1.1 lists the drainage locations, current conditions, and the proposed methods and strategies for rehabilitation. All drainages have varying levels of damage, shape loss, joint separation, and outlet scouring. The proposed strategy for each culvert varies depending on each site condition.

Eight culverts will be repaired via the cut and cover method, usually accomplished by digging a trench with an excavator. The trench width depends on the pipe diameter, and the depth and slope are determined by the engineer. In most cases, the repair work is not anticipated to have a significant impact on traffic flow because it will take place in the center median or beyond the outside shoulder. However, at post mile 74.32, the project proposes cutting across the State Route 101 southbound lanes and will, therefore, require staged construction to ensure that at least one lane of traffic is available at all times. The remaining drainage improvements include other strategies such as: stabilizing the channels and reconstructing ditches, placing new or replacing existing pipes, culvert invert paving, and joint repair.

**Table 1.1 Drainage Culvert Rehabilitation Locations and Proposed Strategies**

Location Number	Post Mile	Drainage Culvert Description	Deficiency	Proposed Strategy
1	65.30	The culvert system conveys water from south to north in a skewed manner across State Route 101. The existing channel in the center median is approximately 7 feet long and connects the culvert segment that runs under State Route 101 southbound to the segment that runs under State Route 101 northbound.	The existing channel in the median has significant signs of erosion. Access to the ditch for maintenance purposes is difficult due to the steep and eroded slopes.	<p>Address the ongoing erosion in the open channel in the median by connecting the outlet and inlet with a 36-inch corrugated steel pipe and backfilling. In addition, a perforated pipe riser with a grate will be installed to provide an easy access point for clean-out and maintenance purposes.</p> <p>Minor tree/bush removal is anticipated.</p> <p>All proposed work is outside of the travel way but standard traffic control for closure of the northbound inside lane is anticipated to help access the culvert with necessary equipment.</p>
2	65.53	The culvert system conveys water from south to north in a transverse manner across State Route 101. The system consists of 2 corrugated steel pipe segments under both the northbound and southbound roadway, which are connected by a 55-foot-long unpaved channel in the center median.	There is significant erosion of the steep and unpaved channel within the center median.	<p>Address the erosion in the steep channel in the median by stacking rock slope protection along the channel limits, as well as placing rock slope protection further upstream in a flatter slope area to initially dissipate hydraulic energy.</p> <p>It is anticipated that 2 trees within the excavation limits will need to be removed, as well as some bush removal and other tree trimmings.</p> <p>All proposed work is in the center median and outside of the travel way but standard traffic control for closure of the northbound inside lane is anticipated.</p>

Location Number	Post Mile	Drainage Culvert Description	Deficiency	Proposed Strategy
3	66.69	The existing culvert system conveys water from south to north in a transverse manner across State Route 101. The system consists of 2 corrugated steel pipe segments connected by a side opening drainage inlet in the center median.	The most significant deficiency in this system is at the culvert system inlet along the southbound State Route 101 outside shoulder. The existing inlet and headwall are too close to the travel way.	<p>The existing headwall will be removed, and a flared end section will be placed at the new inlet location along the southbound State Route 101 outside shoulder. Minor grading will be done to assist in directing the water flow to the adjusted location of the inlet.</p> <p>All proposed work is outside of the travel way but standard traffic control for closure of the southbound outside shoulder is anticipated.</p>
4	66.80	The existing culvert system conveys water from south to north in a transverse manner across State Route 101. The system consists of 2 corrugated steel pipe segments connected by a drainage inlet in the center median.	The most significant deficiency in this system is within the connection in the center median and consists of a hole in the pipe soffit approximately 1 foot from the inlet.	<p>Address the hole in the pipe soffit by replacing a 4-foot section of 24-inch corrugated steel pipe and the inlet, both in the center median.</p> <p>All proposed work is outside of the travel way but standard traffic control for closure of the northbound and southbound inside shoulders is anticipated.</p>
5	73.04	The existing culvert system conveys water from north to south in a skewed manner across State Route 101. The system consists of 3 headwalls and a reinforced concrete pipe connected by a 6-foot concrete ditch to a double-barrel corrugated steel pipe.	The most significant deficiency in this system is a joint offset near the headwall in the center median.	<p>Address the joint offset by replacing a 4-foot section of 24-inch corrugated steel pipe starting at the headwall outlet within the center median.</p> <p>All proposed work is outside of the travel way but standard traffic control for closure of the northbound and southbound inside shoulders is anticipated.</p>

Location Number	Post Mile	Drainage Culvert Description	Deficiency	Proposed Strategy
6	74.32	The existing culvert system conveys water from north to south in a transverse manner across State Route 101. The system consists of a reinforced concrete pipe segment connected to a corrugated steel pipe segment by a drainage inlet in the center median.	The most significant deficiency in this system is the corroded invert of the corrugated steel pipe starting in the center median and crossing under the southbound lanes.	<p>Address the corroded pipe invert by replacing the entire 36-inch corrugated steel pipe starting at the inlet in the center median. The culvert to be replaced crosses the southbound lanes and will be excavated via the cut and cover method. Erosion control and rock slope protection will be placed at the outlet on the outside of the southbound travel way.</p> <p>Standard traffic control for closure of the southbound lanes is anticipated.</p>
7	75.92	The existing culvert system conveys water from north to south in a transverse manner across the northbound lanes into the center median. The system consists of 2 drainage inlets, a flared end section, and 2 reinforced concrete pipe segments.	The most significant deficiency in this system is the 2 joint offsets within the center median in each reinforced concrete pipe segment.	<p>Address the 2 joint offsets in the center median by replacing 2 separate 8-foot sections of 24-inch reinforced concrete pipe.</p> <p>All proposed work is outside of the travel way within the center median but standard traffic control for closure of northbound/southbound inside shoulders, including the median cross over, is anticipated.</p>
8	77.03	The existing culvert system conveys water from north to south in a transverse manner across the southbound lanes. The system consists of a headwall and a corrugated steel pipe segment.	The most significant deficiency in this system is a hole in the pipe soffit near the outlet beyond the outside southbound shoulder.	<p>Address the hole in the pipe soffit near the outlet beyond the outside southbound shoulder by replacing the 18-inch corrugated steel pipe culvert and extending it beyond the clear recovery zone. The end treatment for the outlet will consist of a flared end section, as well as placing rock slope protection to dissipate the hydraulic energy.</p> <p>Minor bush removal anticipated.</p> <p>All proposed work is outside of the travel way but standard traffic control for closure of the southbound shoulders is anticipated.</p>

Location Number	Post Mile	Drainage Culvert Description	Deficiency	Proposed Strategy
9	79.08	The existing culvert system conveys water from north to south in a skewed manner across State Route 101. The system consists of 2 headwalls, a drainage inlet, a reinforced concrete pipe segment, and a reinforced concrete box segment.	The most significant deficiencies in this system are a triangular hole in the invert of the reinforced concrete box at the culvert outlet beyond the outside southbound shoulder, and the corrosion of the invert of the reinforced concrete pipe crossing under both the northbound and southbound lanes.	<p>Address the triangular hole in the invert of the reinforced concrete box and the invert condition of the reinforced concrete pipe. The culvert transitions from a 6-foot by 7-foot concrete box culvert to a 60-inch circular concrete pipe. The strategy is to insert corrugated pipe into the concrete box culvert and fill the annular void with slurry-cement. Removal of the tree that is leaning on the existing headwall is anticipated, as well as bush removal. For the existing reinforced concrete pipe, the scope entails paving the bottom third of the pipe invert under both the northbound and southbound lanes. Work will possibly require bush removal.</p> <p>All proposed work is outside of the travel way but standard traffic control for closures of the northbound shoulders is anticipated.</p>
11	80.34	The existing culvert system conveys water from south to north in an overall transverse manner across State Route 101. The system consists of 2 headwalls, 2 drainage inlets, a reinforced concrete box segment, and 2 reinforced concrete pipe segments.	The most significant deficiency in this system is the reinforced concrete box, which has spalling concrete and exposed rebar.	<p>Address the poor condition of the reinforced concrete box inlet by inserting a 36-inch pipe into the 6-foot by 7-foot reinforced concrete box, extending the culvert beyond the clear recovery zone, and filling the annular void with slurry-cement. The end treatment for the inlet will consist of a headwall, as well as minor grading to assist in directing the water flow to the adjusted location of the inlet. In the center median, the project will replace the drainage inlet, as well as grouting the nearby joint displacement.</p> <p>Standard traffic control will occur for southbound lanes. All anticipated work is outside of the travel way but standard traffic control for closures of southbound shoulders and northbound inside shoulder is anticipated.</p>



Location Number	Post Mile	Drainage Culvert Description	Deficiency	Proposed Strategy
12	82.24	The existing culvert system conveys water from north to south in a transverse manner across State Route 101. The system consists of 2 drainage inlets, a flared end section, 1 reinforced concrete pipe segment, and a corrugated steel pipe segment.	The most significant deficiency in this system is the slope erosion surrounding the flared end section inlet.	<p>Address the slope erosion surrounding the flared end section inlet by reconstructing the concrete channel leading into it, as well as re-grading the side slope and paving the ditch that also conveys water into the culvert system.</p> <p>All anticipated work is outside of the travel way but standard traffic control for closure of the northbound shoulder is anticipated.</p>

Location Number	Post Mile	Drainage Culvert Description	Deficiency	Proposed Strategy
13	82.92	<p>The existing culvert system conveys water from north to south in an overall transverse manner across State Route 101. The system consists of 2 drainage inlets, 4 headwalls, a double reinforced concrete box segment, and 4 reinforced concrete pipe segments. A small portion of this system extends beyond the state right-of-way drainage easement from the County of Santa Barbara.</p>	<p>The most significant deficiency in this system is the joint offset in the 18-inch reinforced concrete pipe.</p>	<p>Address the joint offset in the 18-inch reinforced concrete pipe by installing a new connection to the reinforced concrete box without impacting the existing soundwall. Project will also replace the headwall and do minor grading to assist in directing the water flow to the adjusted location of the inlet.</p> <p>The existing culvert under the southbound lanes consists of a dual 5-foot by 4-foot box culvert that is easily accessible from a neighborhood park on Woodmere Road and is part of a Caltrans right-of-way drainage easement. In addition to the box culvert, there are a couple of smaller pipe culverts that connect to the box culvert. One of these is an 18-inch reinforced concrete pipe culvert that needs to be replaced. The culvert also crosses under a freeway soundwall along the right shoulder of the southbound lanes. The strategy is to remove/abandon a section of the 18-inch reinforced concrete pipe culvert and replace it with an 18-inch alternative pipe culvert at a new connection point to the box culvert without impacting the existing soundwall.</p> <p>All anticipated work is outside of the travel way but standard traffic control for closure of the southbound shoulder is anticipated.</p>

Location Number	Post Mile	Drainage Culvert Description	Deficiency	Proposed Strategy
14	83.64	The existing culvert system conveys water from north to south in a transverse manner across State Route 101. The system consists of 2 drainage inlets, 1 headwall, and 3 reinforced concrete pipe segments.	The most significant deficiency in this system is the joint offset in the 24-inch reinforced concrete pipe located within the center median under approximately 12 feet of cover.	<p>Address the joint offset in the 24-inch reinforced concrete pipe located within the center median under approximately 12 feet of cover by replacing an 8-foot section of 24-inch reinforced concrete pipe. The culvert will be accessed via excavation by open cut and cover method.</p> <p>All anticipated work is outside of the travel way but standard traffic control for closure of the southbound inside shoulder is anticipated.</p>



### 1.3.2 Lighting Improvements

The project proposes 16 lighting improvements at two different interchanges: the Los Alamos interchange and the Cat Canyon intersection. The new installations and replacement of fixtures will include demolition or replacement of fixtures and/or foundations, related excavation for new foundations, installation of service cabinets, and utility trenching. Other existing lights can be found at interchanges throughout project limits. The lighting element improvement locations are listed in Table 1.2.

**Table 1.2 Proposed Lighting Improvements**

Location Number	Post Mile	Location	Strategy	Total Quantity
15	70.7/71.2	Los Alamos Interchange	Multiple areas were identified for installation of new safety lighting. Address the deficiency of safety lighting by installing new lighting elements in multiple areas.	10
16	72.6/73.1	Cat Canyon Intersection	Multiple areas were identified for installation of new safety lighting. Address the deficiency of safety lighting by installing new lighting elements in multiple areas.	6

### 1.3.3 Transportation Management Systems Improvements

Various existing types of Transportation Management System elements occur throughout the project limits. Transportation Management Systems are implemented by Caltrans to improve the flow of vehicle traffic and improve safety. Technologies such as closed-circuit television cameras, microwave vehicle detection systems, and traffic count stations are used to collect and send traffic data to transportation management centers. The project proposes to replace existing closed-circuit television systems at post mile 65.05 and post mile 83.37. Also, the existing microwave vehicle detection system at post mile 83.35 (northbound direction) and post mile 83.37 (southbound direction) will be replaced. A traffic count station will be installed at post mile 82.60 in the northbound and southbound directions. Table 1.3 shows the locations and elements of the proposed work.

**Table 1.3 Proposed Traffic Management System Improvements**

Location Number	Post Mile	Element	Strategy
17	65.05	Closed-Circuit Television	Replace existing
18	82.60	Traffic Count Station	Install new
19	83.35 and 83.37	Three existing Transportation Management System elements were identified for upgrading: Microwave Vehicle Detection System, Closed-Circuit Television, and Microwave Vehicle Detection System	Replace existing

## 1.4 Project Alternatives

There are two alternatives under consideration: the build alternative and the no-build alternative.

### 1.4.1 Build Alternative

The build alternative is described above in Section 1.3.

### 1.4.2 No-Build Alternative

Under the no-build alternative, no improvements would be made. The culverts would continue to deteriorate, and there would be no improvements to Transportation Management System elements or lighting. The no-build alternative would not meet the project's purpose and need. Within the project limits, culverts are severely corroded and perforated and, at some locations, the shape of the culverts has become deformed and the inverts have become damaged. If culverts continue to deteriorate, the roadway could be undermined. Without replacement of the Transportation Management System elements, information collected from the project location might be unreliable or incomplete. Without replacement of the proposed lighting, the existing facilities will continue to deteriorate and would not function as intended.

## 1.5 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices

This project contains a number of standardized project measures that are used on most, if not all, Caltrans projects and were not developed in response to any specific environmental impact resulting from the proposed project. These measures are addressed in more detail in the Environmental Consequences sections found in Chapter 2. The contractor will be required to adhere to standard measures and best management practices used on all Caltrans projects during construction. Some of these include, but are not limited to the following:

1. The project would include a Transportation Management Plan that would reduce delays and related short-term increases in greenhouse gas emissions from disruptions in traffic flow during construction.
2. Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-9, Air Quality, a part of all construction contracts, requires contractors to comply with all federal, state, regional, and local rules, regulations, and ordinances related to air quality. Requirements of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District will apply to this project. Requirements that reduce vehicle emissions, such as limits on idling time, may help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
3. All construction contracts include Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 7-1.02A and 7-1.02C, Emissions Reduction, which require contractors to comply with all laws applicable to the project and to certify they are aware of and will comply with all the California Air Resources Board emission reduction regulations; and Section 14-9.02, Air Pollution Control, which requires contractors to comply with all air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes. Certain common regulations, such as equipment idling restrictions, that reduce construction vehicle emissions also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
4. Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02 requires the contractor to control and monitor noise resulting from work activities and not to exceed 86 dBA  $L_{max}$  at 50 feet from the job site from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. The contractor shall consult the District Noise Specialist if complaints are received during the construction process.
5. During project activities, all trash that may attract predators or scavengers shall be properly contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of at the end of each work week. Following construction, all trash and debris shall be removed from work areas.
6. Construction equipment will be free of excessive dirt that may contain weed seed before entering the construction site. If necessary, wash stations either onsite or offsite will be established for construction equipment under guidance of Caltrans to avoid/minimize the spread of invasive plants and/or seed within the construction area.
7. Water quality-related Best Management Practices include job site management and preparation of a water pollution control plan.
8. Temporary Best Management Practices may include hydraulic mulch, check dams, drainage inlet protection, fiber rolls, concrete washout, and Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing.
9. All project-related hazardous materials spills within the project site will be cleaned up immediately. Readily accessible spill prevention and cleanup materials will be kept by the contractor onsite, at all times during construction.

10. All herbicides, fuels, lubricants, and equipment will be stored, poured, or refilled at least 60 feet from riparian habitat or water bodies in a location where a spill would not drain directly toward aquatic habitat. Prior to the onset of work, Caltrans will ensure that a plan is in place for a prompt and effective response to accidental spills. All workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.

## 1.6 Discussion of the NEPA Categorical Exclusion

This document contains information regarding compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other state laws and regulations. Separate environmental documentation, supporting a Categorical Exclusion determination, will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). When needed for clarity, or as required by the California Environmental Quality Act, this document may contain references to federal laws and/or regulations (the California Environmental Quality Act, for example, requires consideration of adverse effects on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species by the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—that is, species protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act).

## 1.7 Permits and Approvals Needed

The following permits, licenses, agreements, and certifications are required for project construction:

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Formal Section 7 Consultation and a Biological Opinion for the California tiger salamander; Informal Section 7 Consultation and a Letter of Concurrence for the California red-legged frog	To be obtained before construction
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement	To be obtained before construction
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Either a 2080.1 Consistency Determination or a Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit is anticipated	To be obtained before construction
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Section 404 Nationwide Permit for impacts to jurisdictional “other waters”	To be obtained before construction
Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board	Section 401 Water Quality Certification for impacts to “Waters of the State and the U.S.”	To be obtained before construction



# Chapter 2 CEQA Evaluation

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## 2.1 CEQA Environmental Checklist

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. Potential impact determinations include Significant and Unavoidable Impact, Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated, Less Than Significant Impact, and No Impact. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with a project will indicate that there are no impacts to a particular resource. A “No Impact” answer reflects this determination. The questions in this checklist are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

Project features, which can include both design elements of the project and standardized measures that are applied to all or most Caltrans projects such as Best Management Practices and measures included in the Standard Plans and Specifications or as Standard Special Provisions, are considered to be an integral part of the project and have been considered prior to any significance determinations documented below.

“No Impact” determinations in each section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project as well as the appropriate technical report, and no further discussion is included in this document.

### 2.1.1 Aesthetics

Considering the information in the Visual Impact Assessment dated December 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	No Impact
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	No Impact

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics
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 a publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<b>No Impact</b>

***Affected Environment***

State Route 101 is the main north-south transportation corridor in Santa Barbara County. The landform of the region is characterized by gently rolling hills north of the Santa Ynez Valley with coastal mountains as a distant visual backdrop to the east, west, and south. The areas around Los Alamos and Orcutt are more developed, with residential properties visible from the highway. Land uses outside of these areas are open space, vineyards, and ranches. Oak woodland and chaparral are the predominant plant communities, with riparian corridors along the drainages and creeks.

The visual quality of the setting is moderately high due to the rural character, topographic variety, and patterns of native vegetation. Santa Barbara County planning policies emphasize the protection of visual resources along State Route 101 and underscore the concern and sensitivity regarding aesthetic issues along this route.

***Environmental Consequences***

Implementation of the project would result in visual changes as seen from public viewpoints such as State Route 101 and some intersecting local streets. An increased visual scale of the highway facility would be the main result of the introduction of additional drainage structures, Transportation Management System elements, and other roadside elements. While they would not be unexpected elements in the roadway environment, their increased size and contrasting appearance would make these otherwise visually neutral features potentially more noticeable and would contribute somewhat to the increased visual scale of the highway facility. The reduction in roadside trees and vegetation would also result in a somewhat more engineered appearance of the highway facility, but this would be temporary as replacement planting and revegetation would occur.

Although potential visual changes would occur, the same type of elements proposed with this project are seen elsewhere along the highway and are not by themselves

inconsistent with the rural roadway character of the region or throughout the state. As a result, the proposed drainage structures and Transportation Management System elements would be subordinate to the overall experience of traveling along the highway.

During and following construction, the most noticeable aspect of the project would likely be the potential staging areas and a reduction in trees and native vegetation associated with construction access. Although some of these actions may be considered temporary, any associated tree and vegetation removal and/or severe pruning may be noticed after construction, resulting in a loss of visual quality.

### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

With implementation of the following minimization measures, the project would be consistent with the aesthetic and visual resource protection goals along State Route 101, and potential visual impacts would be reduced:

1. Preserve as much existing vegetation as possible. Prescriptive clearing and grubbing and grading techniques which save the most existing vegetation possible should be used.
2. Revegetate all disturbed areas with native plant species appropriate to each specific work location.
3. Replacement planting shall include aesthetic considerations as well as the inherent biological goals. Revegetation shall include native trees and plants as determined by the Caltrans Biologist and Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architecture. Revegetation shall occur at the maximum extent horticulturally viable and be maintained until established.
4. If vegetation control under guardrail is deemed necessary, then a natural material such as shale shall be used. If concrete vegetation control is selected, then it should be colored to blend with the surroundings and reduce reflectivity. The selection of the vegetation control material and/or color shall be determined and approved by District 5 Landscape Architecture.
5. Following construction, re-grade and re-contour all new construction staging areas and other temporary uses as necessary to match the surrounding pre-project topography.

### **2.1.2 Agriculture and Forest Resources**

Land uses within the areas of potential impact for the proposed project are mostly designated as grazing land, with urban and built-up land within Orcutt and Los Alamos. There are four project locations that have areas of potential impact adjacent to or slightly within farmland designated as unique farmland, or under a Williamson Act contract. However, access would be temporary related to construction and would not prevent the continuation of existing farmland activities in the area. This project would not require any acquisition of property, and no farmland (neither directly nor indirectly) would be converted to nonagricultural use. No forest land or timberland is identified in

the project vicinity that would be converted to non-forest use. Considering this information, the following significance determinations have been made:

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<b>No Impact</b>
c) Conflict with existing zoning, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	<b>No Impact</b>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<b>No Impact</b>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.3 Air Quality

Considering the information in the Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, Noise and Water Quality Technical Assessment Memo dated December 2020, the following significance determinations have been made:

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality</b>
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<b>No Impact</b>

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<b>No Impact</b>
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.4 Biological Resources

Considering the information in the Natural Environment Study dated December 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources</b>
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, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration Fisheries?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</b>
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?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</b>
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?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</b>

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

**Affected Environment**

Within the project limits, State Route 101 passes through a rural setting where the dominant land use is agricultural with ranching properties and vineyards located directly adjacent to the highway. This rural setting also contains areas of native habitat with oak woodlands and oak savannahs scattered throughout much of the ranching properties. The ranching properties and vineyards are found mostly south of post mile 81 near the town of Orcutt. Throughout this portion of the project, the highway also crosses several intermittent streams providing riparian habitat of varying quality, although most are outside of the project locations. State Route 101 crosses through the town of Orcutt between post mile 81 and the north end of the project, resulting in more urban development and little to no areas of native habitat. In this area, residential properties border the western (southbound) side of the highway, while various agricultural land uses occur on the eastern (northbound) side of the highway.

To determine potential biological impacts of the project, a desktop review and field surveys were conducted within the Biological Study Area. The Biological Study Area is defined as the area that may be directly, indirectly, temporarily, or permanently impacted by construction and construction-related activities. Because this project has multiple locations, the Biological Study Area is composed of 21 separate polygons around the various project locations, as shown in Figures 2-1 through 2-12.

Queries and official species lists were used to develop a list of special-status species and sensitive natural communities that have the potential to occur within the Biological Study Area. Sensitive species and habitats with potential to be present in the project impact area were further researched and prioritized for identification during field surveys.

Field surveys were conducted between April 2020 and August 2021. Floristic surveys were conducted within a range of months when target special-status species were

flowering and identifiable following the guidelines of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife. General reconnaissance-level wildlife surveys coincided with the botanical surveys and wildlife species and habitats surveys and were documented.

### *Natural Communities and Habitats of Concern*

Based on information obtained from literature review and the results of the field surveys, it was determined that no sensitive natural communities or habitats of concern have the potential to occur within the Biological Study Area.

### *Special-Status Plant Species*

Although several special-status plant species had the potential to occur within the Biological Study Area, it was determined that the urban and agricultural landscape in the Biological Study Area has been altered so that historic natural habitat conditions that support these taxa are either no longer present or too frequently disturbed to currently support the taxa. No special-status plant species were observed during field surveys. None of those species are expected to occur within the Biological Study Area, and no special-status plant species are anticipated to be impacted by the project as proposed. There will be no effect on any federally or state listed plants or their critical habitat.

### *Special-Status Animal Species*

Several special-status animals have the potential to occur within the Biological Study Area. The names and legal status of the special-status animal species are shown in Table 2.1, along with a general description of the habitat requirements for each species and the potential for each to occur within the Biological Study Area.

### *Jurisdictional Wetlands, Other Waters, and Riparian Habitat*

Jurisdictional wetlands, other waters, and riparian habitat are regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board and California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Wetlands function to improve water quality, detain storm water runoff, recharge groundwater, and provide wildlife habitat. Riparian habitat along streams provides wildlife habitat, insects for food for aquatic species, and shade and cover for aquatic species, which helps regulate stream temperature.

Three project locations within the Biological Study Area have jurisdictional resources that include riparian habitats and/or ephemeral drainage streams (temporary water channels formed by water during or immediately after rains):

- Location 9 at post mile 79.08
- Location 13 at post mile 82.92
- Location 16 at post mile 72.6

The ephemeral drainage at Location 9 (post mile 79.08) consists of a stream channel with a sandy bed and low bench with willow riparian habitat downstream of State Route 101. Upstream of State Route 101, the stream has a sandy bed with no woody

vegetation. Although arroyo willow habitat occurs in this drainage, it is outside of the study area. The riparian habitat within the Biological Study Area at this location is classified as coyote bush scrub. While agricultural runoff may result in water quality impairments, the downstream riparian habitat provides good habitat for wildlife.

The drainage feature at Location 13 (post mile 82.92) consists of a concrete-lined 10-foot-wide ephemeral stream channel that drains to a detention pond immediately downstream. The feature is largely devoid of natural habitat due to the concrete lining and urban setting. The stream is in a landscaped park with maintained lawns and large blue gum trees. The water quality is likely degraded by upstream agricultural impacts.

The ephemeral drainage at Location 16 (post mile 72.6) consists of a ditched stream channel crossing perpendicular to State Route 101 through a culvert. It is a highly incised, straightened channel and is a highly modified tributary to San Antonio Creek. It has no adjacent riparian habitat and is composed of sparse upland coyote bush scrub vegetation. There is little habitat value, and agricultural runoff may result in water quality impairments.

The remaining culvert locations within the Biological Study Area were not identified as jurisdictional for the following reasons: 1) they did not have features characteristic of natural water conveyance; 2) they were not vegetated with much upland and invasive plant species; and 3) they did not present signs of natural beds or banks.



Figure 2-1 Biological Study Area Locations 1, 2, and 17



Figure 2-2 Biological Study Area Locations 3 and 4



Figure 2-3 Biological Study Area Locations 5 and 16



Figure 2-4 Biological Study Area Location 6



Figure 2-5 Biological Study Area Location 7



Figure 2-6 Biological Study Area Location 8

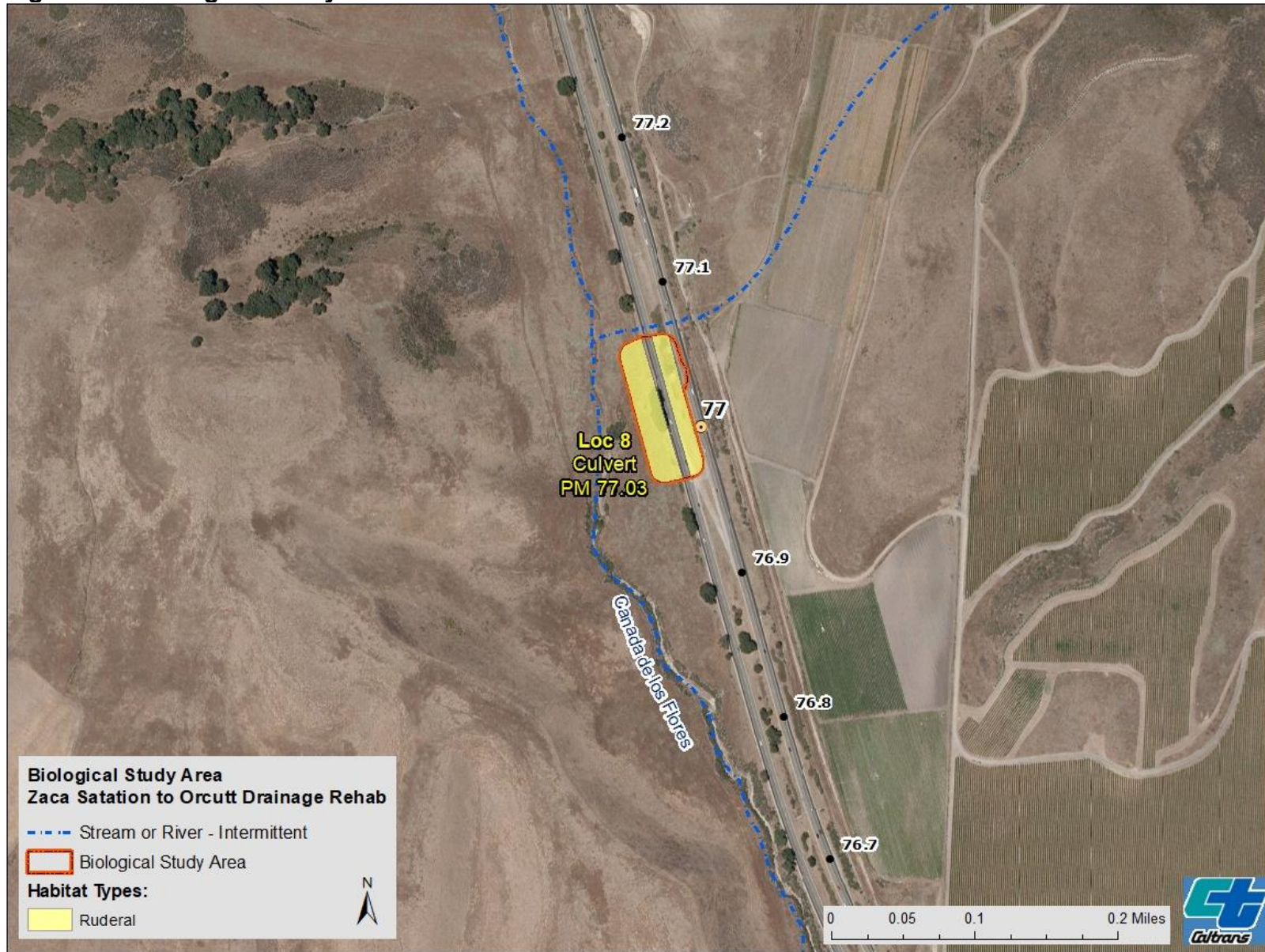


Figure 2-7 Biological Study Area Location 9

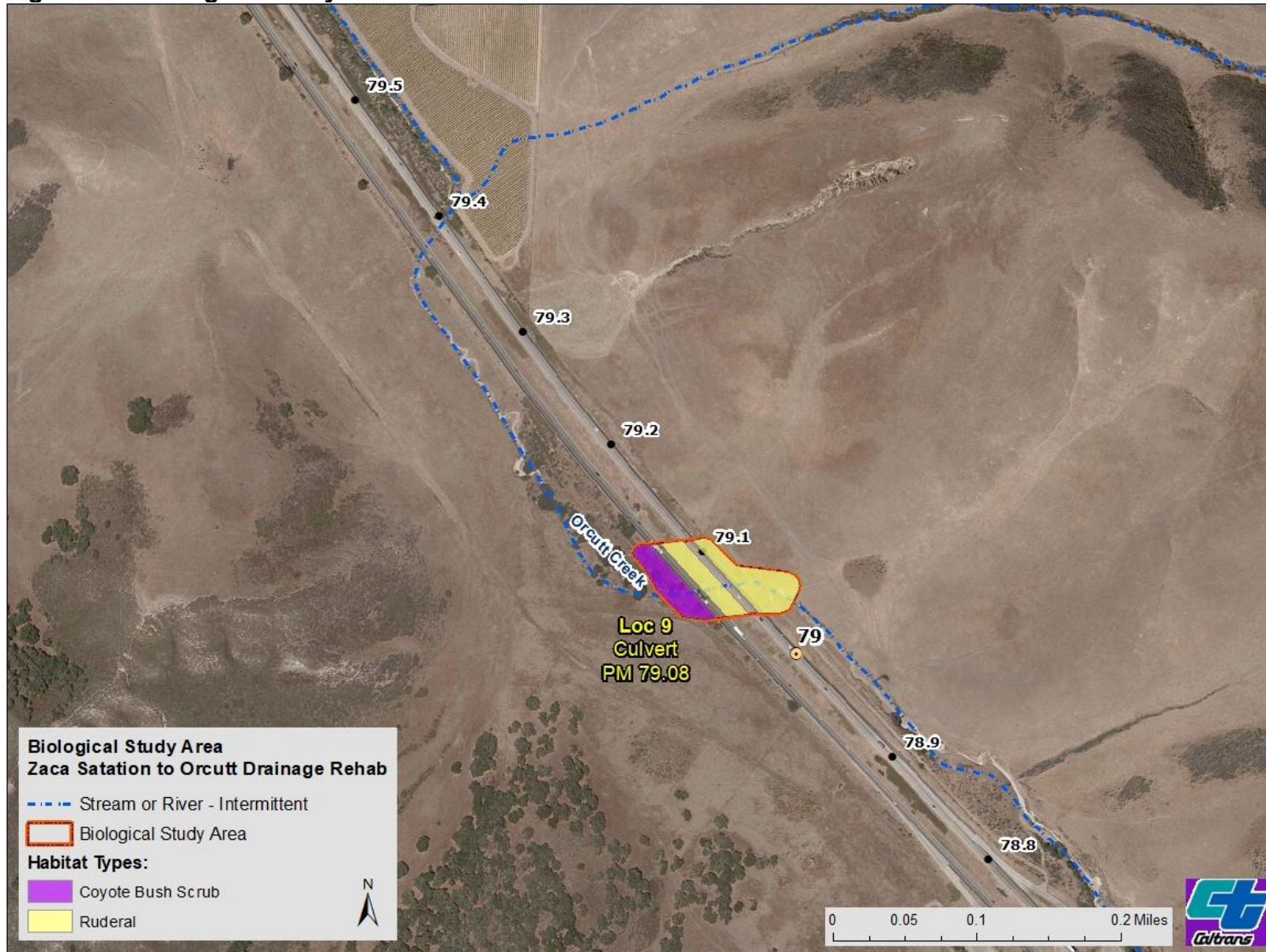


Figure 2-8 Biological Study Area Location 11





Figure 2-9 Biological Study Area Location 12



Figure 2-10 Biological Study Area Locations 13 and 18



Figure 2-11 Biological Study Area Locations 14 and 19



Figure 2-12 Biological Study Area Location 15



**Table 2.1 Special-Status Animal Species Potentially Present in the Biological Study Area**

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>General Habitat Description</b>	<b>Presence Within Biological Study Area</b>
<b>Amphibians</b> <i>Ambystoma californiense</i>	California tiger salamander	Occurs in grasslands or oak woodlands that support natural ephemeral pools or ponds that mimic them. This species requires seasonal water for breeding and small mammal burrows, crevices in logs, piles of lumber, and shrink-swell cracks in the ground for refuges. To be suitable, aquatic sites must retain at least 12 inches of water for a minimum of 10 weeks in the winter.	Suitable breeding habitat is not present within the Biological Study Area, but the Biological Study Area is within dispersal range of known breeding areas. There are several California Natural Diversity Database records and designated critical habitat in the region. Species was not observed during biological surveys, though protocol surveys were not performed. Presence within the Biological Study Area is inferred based on California Natural Diversity Database occurrence records and the presence of suitable habitat being within movement distance to the project locations. Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 determination is may affect, likely to adversely affect the species and no effect to critical habitat. California Endangered Species Act determination is that take of the species may occur. Avoidance and minimization measures recommended.
<b>Amphibians</b> <i>Rana draytonii</i>	California red-legged frog	Aquatic habitat with little or no flow. Presence of surface water to at least early June. Surface water depths to at least 2-3 feet with presence of fairly sturdy underwater supports such as cattails.	Suitable breeding habitat is not present within the Biological Study Area, but some of the locations are within dispersal range of the species. There are California Natural Diversity Database records in the region. Species not observed during biological surveys. Chances are extremely low that California red-legged frogs would be found due to lack of suitable habitat within the Biological Study Area or barriers exist between the breeding habitat and the project location. Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 determination is may affect, not likely to adversely affect the species. Avoidance and minimization measures recommended.
<b>Amphibians</b> <i>Spea hammondi</i>	western spadefoot	Prefers open areas with sandy or gravelly soils, particularly dry washes. Occurs in the Central Valley, Central Coast and Southern California into Baja California, mainly in moderate to high elevation areas. Seeks seasonal pools for breeding grounds following early winter rains.	Suitable low-quality habitat is present within and near the Biological Study Area. There are several California Natural Diversity Database records in the region. Species not observed during biological surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures recommended.

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>General Habitat Description</b>	<b>Presence Within Biological Study Area</b>
<b>Birds</b> <i>Asio otus</i>	long-eared owl	Breeds in central and southern coastal California in dense trees near open country for hunting. Generally avoids large tracts of unbroken forest. Uses other species' nests or builds nests on ledges.	Suitable low-quality nesting habitat occurs in the Biological Study Area. Species not observed during biological surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures recommended for nesting birds.
<b>Birds</b> <i>Athene cunicularia</i>	burrowing owl	Open, dry annual or perennial grasslands, deserts and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation. Subterranean nester, dependent on mammal burrows for nests, especially burrows of the California ground squirrel. Preferred nesting sites have loose soil, some elevation to avoid floods, outlooks, and a high density of burrows.	Suitable low-quality nesting habitat occurs in the Biological Study Area. Species not observed during biological surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures recommended for nesting birds.
<b>Birds</b> <i>Eremophila alpestris actia</i>	California horned lark	Favors bare, dry ground and areas of short, sparse vegetation. Common habitats include prairies, deserts, beaches, dunes, and heavily grazed pastures.	Suitable low-quality nesting habitat occurs in the Biological Study Area. Species not observed during biological surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures recommended for nesting birds.
<b>Birds</b> <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	loggerhead shrike	Prefers open country for hunting, with perches for scanning. Breeds in a variety of semi-open terrain from large clearings in woodlands to open grassland and sparse shrublands, throughout most of central, western and southern California.	Suitable low-quality nesting habitat occurs in the Biological Study Area. Species not observed during biological surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures recommended for nesting birds.
<b>Mammals</b> <i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	pallid bat	Inhabits deserts, grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, and forests. Most common in open, dry habitats with rocky areas for roosting. Roosts in large colonies, typically in crevices and cracks in rocks or secondarily human structures.	Suitable habitat found in the Biological Study Area. Species observed during field surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures recommended.
<b>Mammals</b> <i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	Townsend's big-eared bat	Found throughout California in a wide variety of habitats. Most common in mesic sites. Night roosts in the open, hanging from walls and ceilings. Roosting sites limiting. May use trees for day and night roosts; however, requires caves, mines, rock faces, bridges or buildings for maternity roosts. Maternity roosts are in relatively warm sites. Extremely sensitive to human disturbance.	Suitable habitat found in the Biological Study Area. Species observed during field surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures recommended.

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>General Habitat Description</b>	<b>Presence Within Biological Study Area</b>
<b>Mammals</b> <i>Taxidea taxus</i>	American badger	Most abundant in drier open stages of most shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats, with friable soils. Needs sufficient food, friable soils and open, uncultivated ground. Prefers areas with sandy loam soils.	Suitable habitat found in the Biological Study Area. There are several California Natural Diversity Database records in the region. Species not observed during biological surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures recommended.
<b>Reptiles</b> <i>Anniella pulchra</i>	northern legless lizard	Occurs in sandy soil and sparsely vegetated areas of beach dunes, scrub, woodlands, and sandy washes. Prefers soils with a high moisture content.	Suitable low-quality habitat is present within and near the Biological Study Area. There are several California Natural Diversity Database records in the region. Species not observed during biological surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures recommended.
<b>Reptiles</b> <i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>	coast horned lizard	Found in habitats in coastal mountains and valleys, along the Pacific Coast from Baja California north to the San Francisco Bay area. Inhabits open areas of sandy soil and low vegetation and dry washes.	Suitable low-quality habitat is present within and near the Biological Study Area. There are several California Natural Diversity Database records in the region. Species not observed during biological surveys. Avoidance and minimization measures recommended.





## ***Environmental Consequences***

Most of the Biological Study Area is dominated by ruderal (weedy) habitat that is subject to routine disturbance associated with highway maintenance and operations. Most project impacts would be limited to these ruderal roadside areas that are already highly disturbed. Permanent impacts are associated with the addition of rock slope protection and flared end sections at culvert outlets, new lighting, and Transportation Management System elements and associated features. Replacement of existing features at the same location is not considered a permanent impact. Temporary impacts are associated with vegetation clearing, excavation, staging, and construction access.

### ***Special-Status Animal Species***

#### **California Tiger Salamander**

The project will result in up to 0.05 acre of permanent impacts and up to 18.59 acres of temporary impacts to potential upland dispersal/refuge habitat for the California tiger salamander. The project will not result in impacts to breeding habitat or designated critical habitat because such habitat does not occur in the Biological Study Area. These estimated impacts represent the worst-case scenario based on the assumption that all upland habitat impact areas within dispersal range of the California tiger salamander are suitable migratory and refuge habitat, which will be refined as the regulatory permit applications are completed. If the species is present during construction, construction activity could result in the injury or mortality (via accidental crushing by equipment) of an unknown number of California tiger salamanders residing in small mammal burrows within upland habitat in the Biological Study Area. California tiger salamanders could also be entombed in small mammal burrows collapsed by construction activities, which could result in injury or mortality. Also, the potential need to capture and relocate California tiger salamanders could subject these animals to stresses that could result in adverse effects.

The Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 effects determination is that the project may affect and is likely to adversely affect the California tiger salamander. The project may also result in take under the California Endangered Species Act. The basis for these determinations is that California tiger salamander presence is inferred and there would be a low but possible potential for take of the species because of project work.

#### **California Red-legged Frog**

Potential breeding habitat for the California red-legged frog does not occur within the Biological Study Area, and the project will not appreciably reduce the amount or quality of upland habitat for the California red-legged frog. Four project locations are within the range of and are potentially accessible by the California red-legged frog. Of these, none will involve permanent impacts. Although temporary impacts to upland dispersal habitat may occur, the chances are low that frogs are present in the Biological Study Area due to heavy traffic and poor habitat conditions. Though the project has the low potential to result in minor impacts to California red-legged frogs dispersing through the area, potential impacts are both discountable and insignificant as defined by the Federal Endangered Species Act and are not expected to be adverse. The project will have no effect to designated critical habitat.

The Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 effects determination is that the project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect the California red-legged frog.

*Western Spadefoot, Northern Legless Lizard, and Coast Horned Lizard*

The project has the potential to impact the western spadefoot, northern legless lizard, and coast horned lizard if these species are found burrowing or breeding in the Biological Study Area. However, the chances are low due to poor habitat conditions immediately adjacent to the highway, where most of the work will take place, due to repeated maintenance disturbance. The amount of potential impacts to suitable habitat for these reptiles is similar to the upland habitat for the California tiger salamander. Due to the low amount of permanent impacts dispersed among several sites, the project is not expected to appreciably reduce the quality or amount of suitable habitat for any of these special-status reptiles or amphibians.

*American Badger*

The project has the potential to impact the American badger if the badger is found burrowing or moving through the Biological Study Area during construction. However, the chances for direct impacts are low due to poor habitat conditions immediately adjacent to the highway, where most of the work will take place, due to repeated maintenance disturbance. Due to the low amount of permanent impacts dispersed among several sites, the project is not expected to appreciably reduce the quality or amount of suitable habitat for the American badger.

*Special-Status and Other Nesting Birds*

Vegetation removal and site grading could impact active bird nests and any eggs or young residing in nests. Indirect impacts could also result from noise and disturbance associated with construction, which could alter foraging or nesting behaviors. While temporary loss of vegetation supporting potential nesting habitat could occur, this would be offset by revegetation efforts for the project. Implementation of the proposed avoidance and minimization measures will reduce the potential for negative impacts to nesting bird species.

*Townsend's Big-eared Bat, Pallid Bat, and Other Roosting Bats*

The culvert at Location 9 (post mile 79.08) is used by Townsend's big-eared bats for day roosting and by pallid bats for night roosting. Occupancy is expected to be very low, but consistent, with potentially year-round use. Construction activities at Location 9 would temporarily displace solitary Townsend's big-eared bats and pallid bats, but would not impact breeding or maternal activities. Repair of the culvert and clearing of the sedimentation would require exclusion for an approximate 3- to 6-month period. Roosting habitat would then be restored once the repair was complete. Townsend's big-eared bats are known to be highly sensitive to disturbances and have the potential to abandon roosts, but may eventually return due to limited structures in the area. Pallid bats are relatively common in the region and are likely to return after construction.

There is a potential that oak trees proposed for removal at Locations 1, 2 and 9 could support roosting bats (a variety of species). However, the likelihood is low due to their

immediate proximity to highway disturbance and the extent of less disturbed, higher quality habitat nearby. Tree removal has the potential to impact roosting bats if they are present during the work.

*Jurisdictional Wetlands, Other Waters, and Riparian Habitat*

Estimated permanent and temporary impacts to jurisdictional areas are quantified in Table 2.2 and shown in Figures 2-13 to 2-15. Permanent impacts to jurisdictional resources will occur at one project location, Location 9 (post mile 79.08), where the project would extend the length of the outlet of the culvert by 2 feet and add rock slope protection to the outlet. The permanent impact area is estimated to be 0.003 acre, or 127 square feet. Temporary impacts will occur at Locations 9, 13, and 16 as a result of vegetation clearing, temporary excavation, replacement of existing features (including concrete features), construction access, and equipment staging. In addition, the invert (bottom) of the culvert at Location 9 (post mile 79.08) will be re-paved with concrete, and one coast live oak tree will be removed. All of the impacts are at highly modified and ephemeral streams representing low-quality habitat. Based on observations made during the jurisdictional delineations, the other waters and riparian areas within the Biological Study Area provide low to moderate physical/hydrological functions (flood control, groundwater recharge). Given the ephemeral nature of these drainages, and since work will occur in the dry season, these functions will be largely unaffected by the project.

**Table 2.2 Summary of Impacts to Jurisdictional Areas**

Regulatory Authority/ Habitat Type	Total Area in Biological Study Area (acres)	Temporary Impacts (acres)	Permanent Impacts (acres)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Total)	<b>0.136</b>	<b>0.033</b>	<b>0.003</b>
Stream Habitat (Other Waters)	0.136	0.033	0.003
Regional Water Quality Control Board (Total)	<b>0.243</b>	<b>0.060</b>	<b>0.003</b>
Stream Habitat	0.136	0.033	0.003
Vegetated Riparian Habitat	0.107	0.027	0
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Total)	<b>0.243</b>	<b>0.060</b>	<b>0.003</b>
Stream Habitat	0.136	0.033	0.003
Riparian Habitat	0.107	0.027	0

Figure 2-13 Impacts to Jurisdictional Areas, Location 9

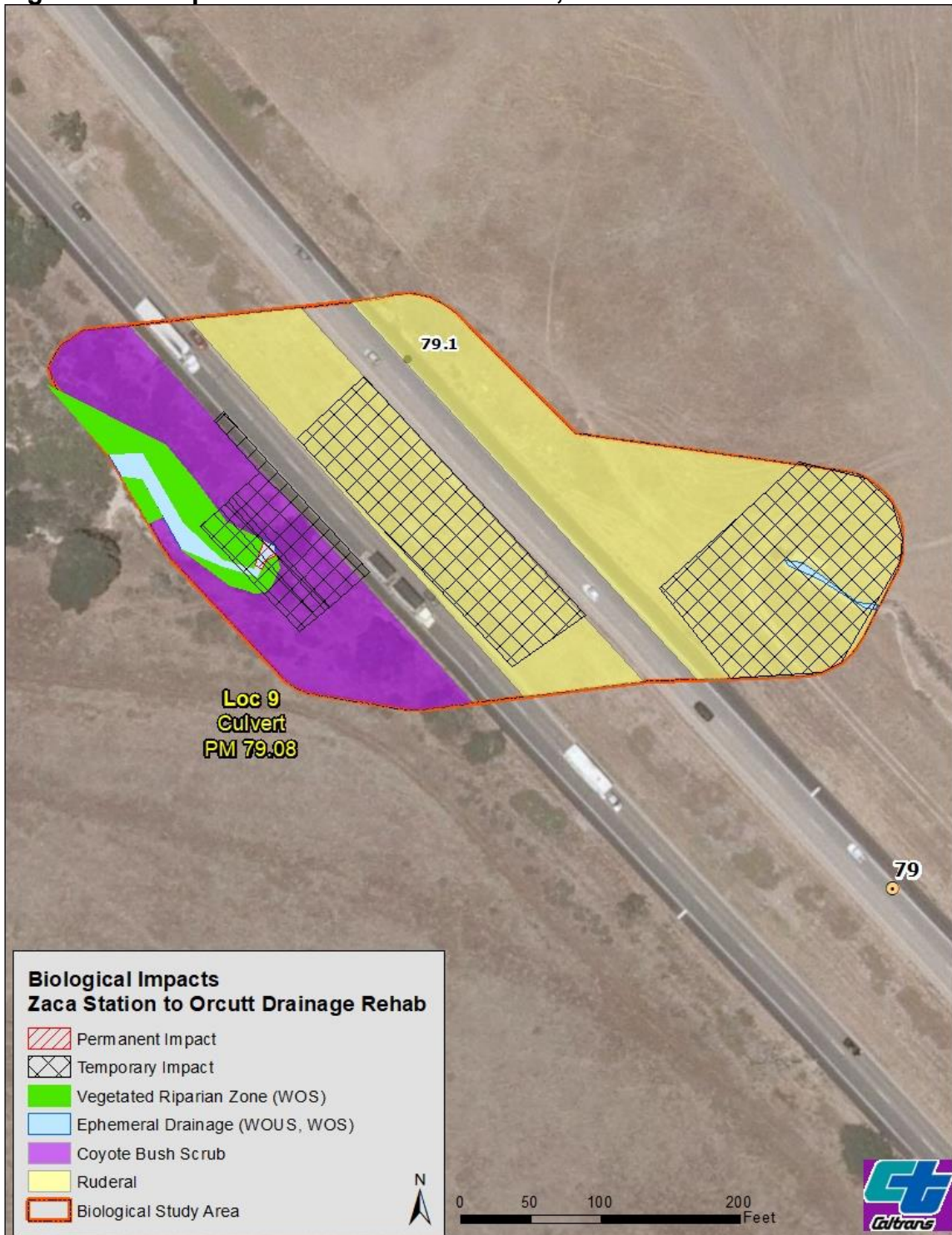
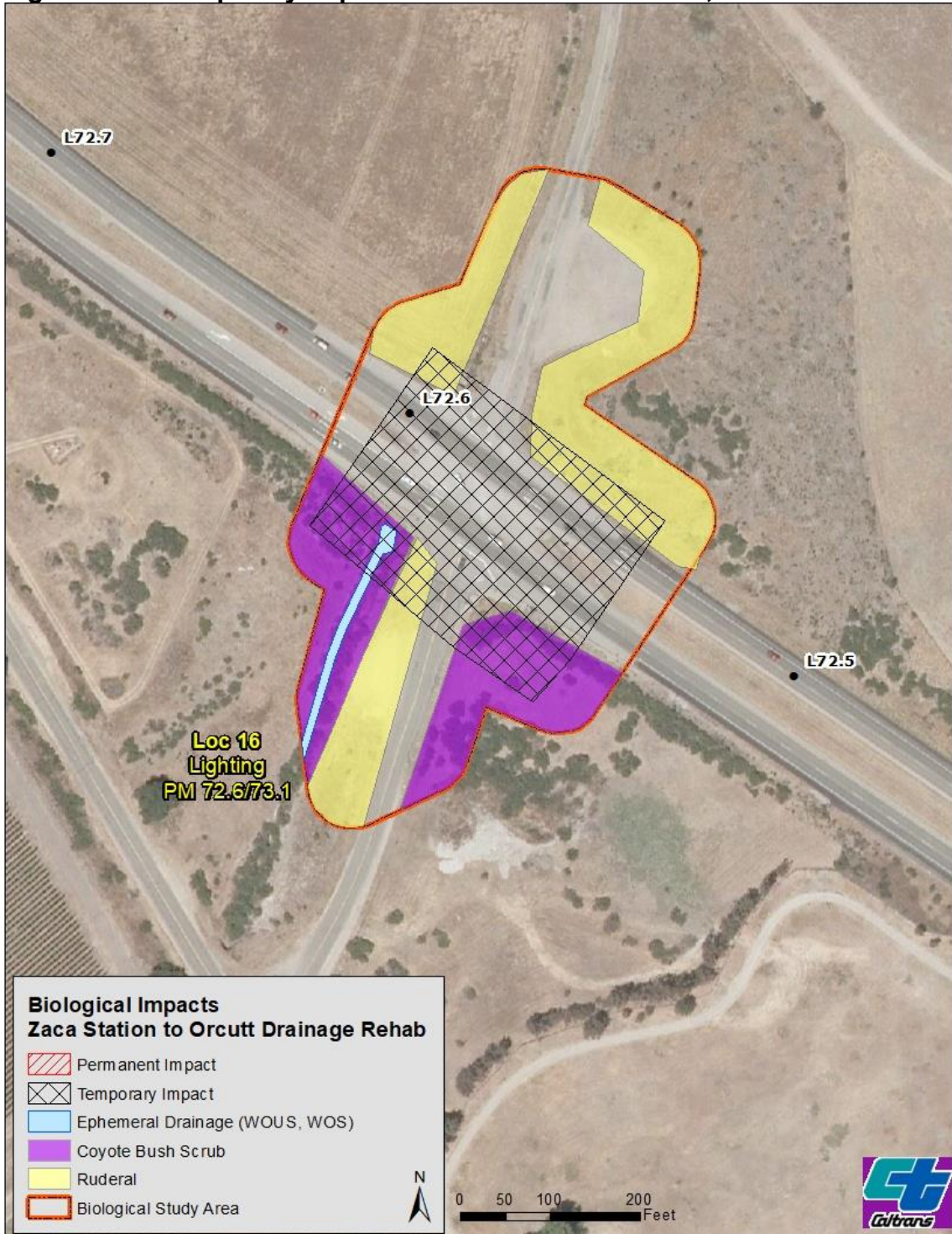


Figure 2-14 Temporary Impacts to Jurisdictional Areas, Location 13



Figure 2-15 Temporary Impacts to Jurisdictional Areas, Location 16



### Oak Trees

Limited tree and shrub trimming or removal may be required for construction. A total of approximately four coast live oak trees may be removed, currently identified at the following locations:

- Location 1 at post mile 65.3 (1 tree)
- Location 2 at post mile 65.53 (2 trees)
- Location 9 at post mile 79.08 (1 tree)

These estimated impacts are based on early design information. Specific tree removal or trimming details will be developed during the design phase of the project.

### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures***

#### ***California Tiger Salamander***

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for potential impacts to the California tiger salamander upland habitat resulting from the project:

1. Caltrans will evaluate and survey all potentially suitable habitat areas within the areas of potential impact to determine suitability for the California tiger salamander, and designate such areas as California tiger salamander special protection areas in project plans and specifications.
2. Caltrans will obtain U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife approval of Designated Biologist(s) and Designated Monitor(s) prior to project-related activities that may result in impacts to the California tiger salamander. The Designated Biologist or Designated Monitor with the appropriate permits will be present to conduct surveys prior to and monitor all initial ground- or vegetation-disturbing activities in California tiger salamander special protection areas to help minimize or avoid impacts. Designated Monitors will monitor project activities after initial ground-disturbing activities have been completed, provided the permitted Designated Biologist is readily available should the need arise to relocate a California tiger salamander.
3. Caltrans will submit a relocation plan to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife for approval prior to construction. The Designated Biologist and/or Designated Monitors who handle the California tiger salamander will ensure that their activities do not transmit diseases or pathogens harmful to amphibians, such as chytrid fungus (*Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*), by following the fieldwork code of practice developed by the Declining Amphibians Task Force.
4. Work activities that could potentially harm the California tiger salamander will be stopped until the Designated Biologist arrives to relocate the California tiger salamander to the pre-approved location. If the Designated Biologist or Designated Monitor recommends that work be stopped, the biologist or monitor will notify the Resident Engineer immediately. The Resident Engineer will resolve the situation by requiring that all actions that are causing these effects be halted.

5. Before any activities begin, the approved biologist will conduct an education program for all persons employed or otherwise working on the project site prior to performing any work onsite. The program will include a discussion of the biology of the California tiger salamander and project-specific avoidance and minimization measures. Upon completion of the program, employees will sign a form stating they attended the program and understand all protection measures.
6. Caltrans will limit all project-related vehicle and pedestrian access to established roads and staging areas. Caltrans will locate staging areas within previously disturbed areas to the extent possible, clearly delineate them, and they will contain all project-related parking and storage needs. Caltrans will limit the number of access routes, size of staging areas, and the total area of activity to the maximum extent feasible to achieve the project.
7. During project activities, all trash that may attract predators will be properly contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and construction debris will be removed from work areas.
8. Before work activities begin, the Designated Biologist will identify and flag all burrow features that the biologist determines may serve as suitable refuge habitat for the California tiger salamander at California tiger salamander species protection areas subject to ground disturbance. The Designated Biologist will excavate the flagged burrows that cannot be avoided using hand tools or via gentle excavation using construction equipment under the biologist's direct supervision.
9. If work will occur in a California tiger salamander special protection area between October 1 and May 31, temporary California tiger salamander exclusionary fencing will be installed during dry conditions prior to work within the California tiger salamander special protection area to protect California tiger salamander habitat outside of the California tiger salamander special protection area and prevent individuals from dispersing into work areas. The Designated Biologist or Monitor will inspect the area regularly when work is scheduled within a California tiger salamander special protection area to ensure the integrity of the fence and that workers avoid entering California tiger salamander habitat outside of the California tiger salamander special protection area.
10. Caltrans will consult the National Weather Service 24-hour forecast daily. If there is over a 70 percent chance of precipitation forecasted, the Designated Biologist will survey the work area to ensure that California tiger salamanders have been cleared.
11. No work will occur in a California tiger salamander special protection area when there is over a 70 percent chance of greater than 0.5-inch precipitation (high rainfall) during a 24-hour period.



12. If an unpredicted rainfall event commences while construction activities are in progress, Caltrans will suspend all work activities in a California tiger salamander special protection area until the Designated Biologist surveys the work area to ensure that California tiger salamanders have been cleared.
13. As part of California Endangered Species Act and Federal Endangered Species Act consultations, Caltrans expects that compensatory mitigation will be required to offset habitat impacts resulting from the project. The following mitigation estimates have been made for this project, according to mitigation ratios required by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for other Caltrans projects with California tiger salamander impacts:
  - 3 to 1 mitigation ratio for permanent impacts = 0.15 acre
  - 1 to 1 mitigation ratio for temporary impacts = 18.6 acres

A total of up to 18.75 acres of compensatory mitigation is proposed. These mitigation values are based on a worst-case scenario of potential impacts to California tiger salamander upland habitat. Caltrans will determine actual mitigation credits based on an evaluation and survey of all potentially suitable habitat areas within the area of potential impact and calculation of the value of impacted California tiger salamander habitat using the methodology outlined in Searcy and Shaffer (2008). Prior to initiating ground- or vegetation-disturbing project activities, Caltrans will satisfy the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife requirement to provide California tiger salamander habitat mitigation by purchasing credits at a California Endangered Species Act-certified and California Department of Fish and Wildlife-approved Conservation Bank (La Purisima Bank) authorized to sell credits for the California tiger salamander. Details regarding the exact amount of mitigation required will be developed during the California Endangered Species Act and Federal Endangered Species Act consultation process.

#### *California Red-Legged Frog*

The following measures will be implemented to avoid and minimize potential adverse impacts to the California red-legged frog from the project (complies with the Caltrans Programmatic Biological Opinion with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service):

1. A biologist with experience in the identification of all life stages of the California red-legged frog and other special-status wildlife that may be in the area will survey the project site no more than 48 hours before the onset of work activities in suitable habitat areas. If any life stage of the California red-legged frog is detected, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be notified prior to the start of construction. If Caltrans and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determine that adverse effects to the California

red-legged frog or its critical habitat cannot be avoided, the proposed project will not commence until the Caltrans completes the appropriate level of consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

2. Work activities will take place in ephemeral stream habitat during the dry season between April 1 and November 1, when water levels are typically at their lowest.
3. Before work begins on any proposed project, a biologist with experience in the identification of all life stages of the California red-legged frog and other special-status wildlife that may be in the area will conduct a training session for all construction personnel, which will include a description of the California red-legged frog and other special-status wildlife that may be in the area, and specific measures that are being implemented to avoid adverse effects to the subspecies during the proposed project.
4. If any life stage of the California red-legged frog is detected in the project area during construction, work will cease immediately and the Resident Engineer, authorized biologist, or biological monitor will notify the Santa Barbara Fish and Wildlife Office. If Caltrans and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determine that adverse effects to California red-legged frogs cannot be avoided, construction activities will remain suspended until Caltrans and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service complete the appropriate level of consultation.
5. During project activities, all trash that may attract predators will be properly contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and construction debris will be removed from work areas.
6. Prior to the onset of work, Caltrans will ensure that a plan is in place for prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. All workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to implement should a spill occur.
7. If a work site is to be temporarily dewatered by pumping, the intake will be screened with wire mesh not larger than 0.2 inch to prevent any California red-legged frogs or other aquatic species not initially detected from entering the pump system. If California red-legged frogs are detected during dewatering, and adverse effects to California red-legged frogs cannot be avoided, construction activities will remain suspended until Caltrans and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service complete the appropriate level of consultation.
8. Unless approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, water will not be impounded in a manner that may attract California red-legged frogs or other special-status wildlife species.
9. A qualified biologist will permanently remove any individuals of exotic species, such as bullfrogs, crayfish, and centrarchid fishes from the project area, to the maximum extent possible. The biologist will be

responsible for ensuring his or her activities are following the California Fish and Game Code.

10. Decontaminate all tools, waders and boots, and other equipment that will enter aquatic habitat prior to entering and exiting the project site and/or between each use in different water bodies to avoid the introduction and transfer of organisms between water bodies. Acceptable decontamination methods include drying for a minimum of 48 hours, removing mud, algae and debris, then cleaning with a 70 percent ethanol or bleach solution (0.5 to 1.0 cup per 1.0 gallon of water), or a hot water soak or pressure wash at 140°Fahrenheit or hotter. Repeat decontamination is required only if the equipment/material is removed from the site, used within a different water body, and returned to the project site. Decontamination shall occur in a location where runoff can be contained and not allowed to pass into waters and other sensitive habitat areas.

*Western Spadefoot, Northern Legless Lizard, and Coast Horned Lizard*

Avoidance and minimization measures for the California tiger salamander apply to the western spadefoot, northern legless lizard, and coast horned lizard. In addition:

1. If western spadefoots, northern legless lizards, or coast horned lizard snakes are detected in the project limits during construction, a qualified biologist or trained designee will move them out of harm's way.

*American Badger*

Avoidance and minimization measures for the California tiger salamander apply to the American badger. In addition:

1. If burrows suitable for the American badger are detected in the project limits during construction, a qualified biologist will evaluate the potential presence of American badgers and coordinate with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife if badgers are present and need to be moved out of harm's way.

*Special-Status and Other Nesting Birds*

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented to minimize impacts to nesting migratory birds:

1. Caltrans will schedule vegetation removal from September 1 to February 14, outside of the typical nesting bird season, as feasible. If construction activities are proposed to occur within 100 feet of potential habitat during the nesting season (February 15 to August 31), a nesting bird survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than three days prior to construction. The contractor may only remove partially built nests if they have been monitored by a qualified biologist and determined to be inactive. If an active nest is found, the Caltrans biologist will determine an appropriate buffer based on the habits and needs of the species. The

buffer area will be avoided until a qualified biologist has determined that juveniles have fledged and are no longer dependent on the nest.

2. Active bird nests must not be disturbed, and eggs or young of birds covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code must not be killed, destroyed, injured, or harassed at any time.

*Townsend's Big-eared Bat, Pallid Bat, and Other Roosting Bats*

The following avoidance and minimization measures are recommended for roosting bats:

1. Caltrans will require that the contractor develop a "bat exclusion" plan detailing the methods and technique intended to exclude bats from Location 9 (post mile 79.08) with the least possible level of disturbance. At a minimum, this plan should include installation of bat exclusion devices after the fall migration (mid-November) and be designed to last until the work is complete.
2. Exclusion materials and the installation of exclusion devices must not inadvertently trap bats or birds. Exclusion devices must be monitored regularly and repaired as soon as an issue arises.
3. A qualified biologist will conduct roost entry surveys prior to tree removal to determine the status of bat roosting. The biologist(s) conducting the preconstruction surveys will also identify the nature of the bat utilization (i.e., no roosting, night roost, day roost, maternity roost) and determine if passive bat exclusion will be necessary and feasible.
4. A qualified biologist will be present during any bat exclusion processes to confirm the absence of bats, approve the quality of the work, and prevent any direct harm to bats. If an active day roost is found, a qualified Caltrans biologist will determine an appropriate buffer based on the habits and needs of the species. The buffer area shall be avoided until a qualified biologist has determined that roosting activity has ceased, or exclusionary methods have successfully excluded roosting bats. Active bat maternity roosts will not be disturbed or destroyed at any time.
5. A Caltrans-approved biologist with knowledge of Townsend's big-eared bat roost requirements shall provide recommendations to Design Engineers during the project design phase to preserve roosting features within the culvert at Location 9 (post mile 79.08). Measures for jurisdictional wetlands, other waters, and riparian habitat will replace potential tree roosting habitat.

*Jurisdictional Wetlands, Other Waters, and Riparian Habitat*

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented for potential impacts to jurisdictional areas resulting from the project:

1. Prior to construction, Caltrans shall obtain a Section 404 Nationwide Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a Section 401 Water

Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. All permit terms and conditions will be incorporated into construction plans and implemented.

2. Prior to construction, Caltrans will prepare a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan to offset impacts to vegetation and natural habitats. The plan will be consistent with federal and state regulatory requirements and will be amended with any regulatory permit conditions, as required. Caltrans will implement the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan as necessary during construction and following project completion. During construction, work within jurisdictional areas will be limited to the low-flow period from May 1 to October 31 in any given year, when the surface water is likely to be dry to seasonally minimal. Deviations from this work window will be made only with concurrence from relevant regulatory/resource agencies.
3. Prior to any ground-disturbing activities, Environmentally Sensitive Area boundary markers or fencing will be installed around jurisdictional resources and the dripline of trees to be protected within the project limits. Caltrans-defined Environmentally Sensitive Areas will be noted on design plans and delineated in the field prior to the start of construction activities.
4. Removal of native vegetation in riparian habitats will be minimized by trimming above the ground surface rather than grubbing out roots wherever feasible.
5. Prior to construction, the contractor will prepare and sign a Water Pollution Control Plan or a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan that complies with the Caltrans Stormwater Quality Handbook. Provisions of this plan will be implemented during and after construction as necessary to avoid and minimize erosion and stormwater pollution in and near the work area.
6. During construction, all project-related hazardous materials spills within the project site will be cleaned up immediately. Readily accessible spill prevention and cleanup materials will be kept by the contractor onsite at all times during construction. During construction, pollution and erosion control measures will be implemented. Silt fencing, fiber rolls, or barriers will be installed, as needed, between the project construction features and any stream, water body or riparian habitat. The discharge of wet concrete, concrete dust, sediment, construction debris or other pollutants into any stream or waterbody will be prevented.
7. Staging areas for equipment and vehicle fueling and storage will be located at least 100 feet away from the top of the bank of any stream or aquatic area, or otherwise protected to prevent accidental discharge of fluids and other pollutants into the stream.
8. Minimize impacts to native trees wherever feasible by minimizing native tree removal, limiting temporary impact areas, and replanting trees that must be removed.

9. During construction, avoid spreading invasive species and pathogens by requiring that weeds designated for removal will be removed prior to disturbing surface soils and disposed of the same day they are removed, that all nursery stock be certified free of weeds, Phytophthora, or other plant diseases, and that imported soil is certified weed-free from a Caltrans-approved source with protocols in place for minimizing the spread of Phytophthora and other plant diseases.
10. After construction has been completed, natural contours and vegetation will be restored as close as possible to their original condition following landscaping plans.
11. To prevent a net loss of wetlands or other aquatic resource acreage, functions, and values, compensatory mitigation is proposed at a 1 to 1 ratio (acreage) for temporary impacts to stream and riparian habitats and a 3 to 1 ratio (acreage) for permanent impacts to stream and riparian habitats. Caltrans will replace native trees that are removed from the jurisdictional areas at a ratio of 5 to 1. Mitigation for permanent impacts to riparian and stream habitats is expected to be completed onsite by replacing non-native and invasive species with native riparian species.

### *Oak Trees*

The following measures will be implemented for potential impacts to oak trees resulting from the project:

1. Prior to any ground-disturbing activities, Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) boundary markers or fencing will be installed around the dripline of trees to be protected within the project limits.
2. Oak trees will be replanted within the Caltrans right-of-way within the project area as part of the project's landscaping.

### **2.1.5 Cultural Resources**

Considering the information in the Cultural Resources Screened Undertaking Memo dated November 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Cultural Resources
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<b>No Impact</b>

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Cultural Resources
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.6 Energy

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the short-term use of fossil fuels, electricity, and natural gas by construction vehicles and equipment to replace and repair infrastructure such as drainage culverts, lighting, and Transportation Management System elements. The use of these resources would be temporary and would not result in a significant demand on resources.

No direct or indirect effects related to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary energy consumption will occur. The project will not conflict with or obstruct any state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Considering the information included in the Climate Change Technical Memo dated August 15, 2021 and the Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, Noise and Water Quality Assessment Memo dated December 2020, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Energy
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.7 Geology and Soils

The project site is not located in an area that is designated by the California Department of Conservation as an Earthquake Fault Zone within the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map. The Los Alamos Fault runs parallel to State Route 101 and is closest to the highway between post miles 65.4 and 65.1. The culvert at post mile 65.3 is an individual project element that falls close to the fault, but the project does not add any new structures. According to Santa Barbara County’s 2011 Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan, the site is not mapped in an area of potential for high severity liquefaction or in an area of high potential for ground shaking.

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service Web Soil Survey, the soils at the various study areas have a variety of soil substrates, including Betteravia loamy sand, Botella loam, Chamise sandy loam, Corralitos sand,

Elder sandy loam, Garey sandy loam, Gaviota sandy loam, Marina sand, Oceano sand, San Andreas-Tierra complex, and Tierra loamy sand. Most soils in the study area have a high percentage of sand and generally are not considered expansive soils. In addition, the plasticity index for the mapped soils do not plot as expansive soils.

The project does not include the installation of a septic tank or the requirement for wastewater disposal. A construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan will be prepared, and Best Management Practices will be implemented during construction to ensure water quality is protected.

The Paleontological Identification Report dated September 2021 did not identify any potential for encountering paleontological resources as a result of the project. Considering this information, no impacts to geology and soils are anticipated as a result of the project, and the following significance determinations have been made:

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils</b>
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>	<b>No Impact</b>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<b>No Impact</b>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<b>No Impact</b>
iv) Landslides?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<b>No Impact</b>
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 onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>



Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Considering the information in the Climate Change Technical Memo dated August 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Greenhouse Gas Emissions
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<b>No Impact</b>

### ***Affected Environment***

The project lies along a 20-mile segment of State Route 101 in Santa Barbara County and runs north-south between Orcutt and south of Los Alamos. The project consists of land designated mostly as grazing with some areas designated as farmland. Within Los Alamos and Orcutt, the land use is designated as urban and built-up land. Agriculture, open space, recreation, larger-lot residences, and varied industry make up much of the land use in the project area. The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments' Regional Transportation Plan guides transportation development in the area.

The California Air Resources Board sets regional targets for California's 18 Metropolitan Planning Organizations to use in their Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy to plan future projects that will cumulatively achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals. Targets are set at a percentage reduction of passenger vehicle greenhouse gas emissions per person from 2005 levels. The regional reduction target for the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments is 13 percent by 2020 and 17 percent by 2035.

The County of Santa Barbara adopted the Energy and Climate Action Plan in May 2015 with a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the unincorporated parts of the county by 15 percent below 2007 levels by 2020. Transportation measures were anticipated to contribute 12 percent of the projected greenhouse gas reductions.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

#### ***Operational Emissions***

The purpose of the project is to repair and/or replace existing culverts, lighting, and Transportation Management System elements, and would not increase the capacity of State Route 101. This type of project generally causes minimal or no increase in operational greenhouse gas emissions. Because the project would not increase the number of travel lanes on State Route 101, no increase in vehicle miles traveled would occur as a result of project implementation. While some greenhouse gas emissions during the construction period would be unavoidable, no increase in operational greenhouse gas emissions is expected.

#### ***Construction Emissions***

Construction greenhouse gas emissions would result from material processing, onsite construction equipment, and traffic delays due to construction. These emissions will be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence can be reduced through innovations in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases.

In addition, with innovations such as longer pavement lives, improved traffic management plans, and changes in materials, the greenhouse gas emissions produced during construction can be offset to some degree by longer intervals between maintenance and rehabilitation activities.

Construction greenhouse gas emissions were estimated using Caltrans' Construction Emissions Tool and default settings for a storm water and drainage project. The estimated carbon dioxide emissions would total 145 tons generated over a period of about 100 days for project construction.

#### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

The following measures will be implemented in the project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and potential climate change impacts from the project:

1. The project will revegetate at a ratio of at least 3 to 1, where applicable, following construction completion. Landscaping reduces surface warming and, through photosynthesis, removes carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
2. The project will use appropriately sized equipment for project activities.

3. The project will maintain equipment in proper tune and working condition.
4. The project will limit idling to 5 minutes for delivery and dump trucks and other diesel-powered equipment.

**2.1.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

Hazardous materials are not proposed to be used, transported, or disposed of as a result of the project, and no hazardous emissions or hazardous materials will be emitted or handled during construction. There are no hazardous waste sites or businesses commonly associated with hazardous waste generation nearby that would impact the project site. The project location is not included on the Cortese List pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 accessed January 3, 2022. Encountering hazardous waste issues/materials is not anticipated for the project. All waste and debris from construction will be disposed of properly. None of the project locations are within a quarter mile of any schools, or within 2 miles of an airport. Considering the information in the Initial Site Assessment dated September 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials</b>
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<b>No Impact</b>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<b>No Impact</b>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

The project does not involve substantial excavation or earthwork activities that would cause or exacerbate existing sedimentation conditions of Orcutt Creek. Further, the replacement of drainage should prevent future drainage damage caused by corrosion, deformation, perforation, damaged inverts, shape loss, joint separation, undermined backfill, and overall deterioration. By incorporating appropriate engineering design and robust storm water Best Management Practices during construction, minimal short-term water quality impacts are anticipated. The project would not result in significant long-term impacts to water quality. Considering the information from the Water Quality Technical Assessment Memo dated December 2020, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water or groundwater quality?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<b>No Impact</b>

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality
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:  (i) result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite;	<b>No Impact</b>
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding onsite or offsite;	<b>No Impact</b>
(iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	<b>No Impact</b>
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	<b>No Impact</b>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<b>No Impact</b>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.11 Land Use and Planning

Considering the information in the Project Report dated March 2022, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Land Use and Planning
a) Physically divide an established community?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.12 Mineral Resources

Considering information from the Caltrans Division of Environmental Analysis Geographical Information Systems Library, there are no mineral resources such as mine locations, mining districts, oil and gas seeps, or mining disturbed areas located within the project limits. Therefore, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Mineral Resources
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.13 Noise

Considering the information in the Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, Noise and Water Quality Technical Assessment Memo dated December 2020, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project result in:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Noise
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?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

### ***Affected Environment***

The overall project setting is mostly rural with agricultural land, open space, vineyards, and ranches. Within the project limits, State Route 101 passes through the towns of Orcutt and Los Alamos where there are commercial and residential properties near the highway.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

#### ***Permanent (Long-term) Impacts***

Since no capacity will be added to the highway and the vertical and horizontal profile of the highway will be the same after construction, it is assumed that local noise levels will be the same after completion of the project as they were before. Long-term noise abatement measures are not anticipated with this project.

#### ***Temporary (Construction) Impacts***

It is inevitable that local noise levels in the vicinity of any given location will experience a short-term increase due to construction activities. The amount of construction noise will vary with the particular activities associated with each location and the models and types of equipment used by the contractor. Caltrans policy states that normal construction equipment should not emit noise levels greater than 86-dBA at 50 feet from the source from the job site from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Adverse noise impacts from construction are not anticipated because construction would be temporary and intermittent, conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications, and because local noise levels are significantly influenced by local traffic noise.

### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Noise Abatement Measures***

To minimize impacts on residents' normal nighttime sleep schedules, it is recommended that, whenever possible, construction work be done during the day. If nighttime construction is necessary, the noisiest construction activities should be done as early in the evening as possible.

Include the following general measures in the Resident Engineer binder, and implement as appropriate to further minimize temporary construction-noise impacts:

1. Notify the public in advance of the construction schedule when construction noise and upcoming construction activities likely to produce an adverse noise environment are expected. This notice shall be given two weeks in advance. Notice should be published in local news media of the dates and duration of proposed construction activity. The District 5 Public Information Office posts notice of the proposed construction and potential community impacts after receiving notice from the Resident Engineer.

2. Shield loud pieces of stationary construction equipment if complaints are received.
3. Locate portable generators, air compressors, etc. away from sensitive noise receptors as feasible.
4. Limit grouping major pieces of equipment operating in one area to the greatest extent feasible.
5. Use newer equipment that is quieter and ensure that all equipment items have the manufacturers' recommended noise abatement measures, such as mufflers, engine covers, and engine vibration isolators intact and operational. Internal combustion engines used for any purpose on or related to the job shall be equipped with a muffler or baffle of a type recommended by the manufacturer.
6. Consult District noise staff if complaints are received during the construction process.

**2.1.14 Population and Housing**

The project will not have an impact on population and housing. No additional housing or development is proposed, nor does the project remove or displace any existing housing.

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Population and Housing
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)?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<b>No Impact</b>



**2.1.15 Public Services**

<b>Question:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Public Services</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
Police protection?	<b>No Impact</b>
Schools?	<b>No Impact</b>
Parks?	<b>No Impact</b>
Other public facilities?	<b>No Impact</b>

**2.1.16 Recreation**

<b>Question—Would the project:</b>	<b>CEQA Significance Determinations for Recreation</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.17 Transportation

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Transportation
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<b>No Impact</b>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<b>No Impact</b>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

Considering the information in the Cultural Resources Screened Undertaking Memo, the following significance determinations have been made:

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

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Tribal Cultural Resources
a) 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	<b>No Impact</b>
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.	<b>No Impact</b>

**2.1.19 Utilities and Service Systems**

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<b>No Impact</b>

**2.1.20 Wildfire**

Considering the information in the Caltrans Division of Environmental Analysis Geographical Information Systems Library, the project location is in an area of moderate to high fire hazard severity zone but is not in an area of very high fire hazard severity zone. The following significance determinations have been made:

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

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Wildfire
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<b>No Impact</b>

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Wildfire
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>
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?	<b>No Impact</b>

### 2.1.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Mandatory Findings of Significance
a) Does the project 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?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</b>
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.)	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Mandatory Findings of Significance
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>

The project will result in temporary and permanent impacts to jurisdictional wetlands, other waters, and riparian habitat as a result of ground disturbance and vegetation and tree removal necessary to repair the drainage culverts. With the proposed avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, the level of impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

The project would result in permanent and temporary impacts to upland California tiger salamander habitat. With the proposed avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, the level of impacts would be reduced to less than significant. In addition, the proposed measures would reduce the level of impacts to less than significant to other animal species, including the California red-legged frog, western spadefoot, northern legless lizard and coast horned lizard.

There may be temporary impacts on visual and aesthetics resources due to oak tree removal and vegetation trimming that may be required during project construction. However, vegetation is proposed to be preserved at the maximum extent possible and will be replaced at ratios determined by the project biologist and landscape architect.

Overall, with the implementation of appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, the project would not substantially degrade the quality of the environment.

**Cumulative Impacts**

To analyze potential cumulative impacts that the project would have on each resource, other projects were identified within the resource study areas, and a determination was made as to whether the proposed project would contribute to cumulative impacts. Other projects within the resource study areas include a 20-acre solar development near Location 11 (post mile 80.34), two residential development projects between Locations 11 and 12 (post mile 82.24), and two residential development projects in the urban limits of Los Alamos. In addition, Caltrans has four highway development projects within the resource study areas, including the North Buellton paving project near Location 17 (post mile 65.05), the Solomon Summit Rehabilitation project near Location 9, and three projects near Location 15 (post miles 70.7 to 71.2) that are either within or near Los Alamos.

Because impacts to nesting birds will be avoided, the proposed project will not contribute to cumulative impacts to nesting birds.

For the California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, western spadefoot, northern legless lizard and coast horned lizard, some of the other projects could result in similar direct and indirect impacts to upland habitat as the proposed project, including possible disturbance to burrow and refugia habitat and potential harm or mortality. However, each project will be required to comply with the state and federal Endangered Species Acts and California Environmental Quality Act and are expected to propose measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate project impacts. Each project is expected to offset its contribution to cumulative impacts. Due to the avoidance, minimization, and mitigation that this project proposes, it is anticipated that the proposed project will not result in a substantial contribution to the cumulative impacts to the California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, western spadefoot, northern legless lizard and coast horned lizard or upland dispersal habitat.

For the American badger, due to the small scale of project impacts compared with the potential habitat in the resource study area, and with the implementation of impact minimization and mitigation measures, the proposed project is not expected to contribute to cumulative impacts to the American badger and badger habitat in the region.

For the Townsend's big eared bat and pallid bat, due to the small scale of impacts to bats and bat roosting habitat for the proposed project, and with the implementation of the avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures listed above, the proposed project will not contribute to cumulative impacts to bats or bat roosting habitat.

For jurisdictional wetlands, other waters, and riparian habitat, due to the small scale of project impacts to highly disturbed jurisdictional resources, and with the implementation of the avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures listed above, the proposed project will not contribute cumulative impacts to jurisdictional wetlands, waters, or riparian habitats in the region.

# Appendix A Title VI Policy Statement

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
P.O. BOX 942873, MS-49  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94273-0001  
PHONE (916) 654-6130  
FAX (916) 653-5776  
TTY 711  
[www.dot.ca.gov](http://www.dot.ca.gov)



Making Conservation  
a California Way of Life.

September 2021

### NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The California Department of Transportation, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ensures *"No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."*

Caltrans will make every effort to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its services, programs and activities, whether they are federally funded or not, and that services and benefits are fairly distributed to all people, regardless of race, color, or national origin. In addition, Caltrans will facilitate meaningful participation in the transportation planning process in a nondiscriminatory manner.

Related federal statutes, remedies, and state law further those protections to include sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and age.

For information or guidance on how to file a complaint, or obtain more information regarding Title VI, please contact the Title VI Branch Manager at (916) 324-8379 or visit the following web page:  
<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/title-vi>.

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille or in a language other than English, please contact the California Department of Transportation, Office of Civil Rights, at 1823 14<sup>th</sup> Street, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 95811; PO Box 942874, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 94274-0001; (916) 324-8379 (TTY 711); or at [Title.VI@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Title.VI@dot.ca.gov).

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Toks Omishakin'.

Toks Omishakin  
Director

*"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment."*





## **List of Technical Studies Bound Separately**

- Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, Noise and Water Quality Technical Assessment Memo
- Cultural Resources Screened Undertaking Memo
- Climate Change Technical Memo
- Initial Site Assessment
- Location Hydraulic Study
- Natural Environment Study
- Paleontological Investigation Report
- Visual Impact Assessment

To obtain a copy of one or more of these technical studies/reports or the Initial Study, please send your request to:

Jason Wilkinson  
District 5 Environmental Division  
California Department of Transportation  
50 South Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Or send your request via email to: [jason.wilkinson@dot.ca.gov](mailto:jason.wilkinson@dot.ca.gov)  
Or call: 805-540-9165

Please provide the following information in your request:

Project title: Zaca Station to Orcutt Drainage Rehabilitation  
General location information: In Santa Barbara County on State Route 101 from Zaca Station Road near Los Alamos, to 0.2 mile south of Santa Maria undercrossing in Orcutt  
District number-county code-route-post mile: 05-SB-101-PM 65/84.1  
Project ID number: 05-1K510, 0518000215