State Route 120 Tuolumne Drainage System

In Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties along State Routes 12, 26, 108, and 120

10-CAL/TUO-12, 26,108, 120-PM Various

Project ID Number 1017000179

State Clearinghouse Number 2022060223

Initial Study
with Mitigated Negative Declaration

Volume 1 of 2

Prepared by the

State of California Department of Transportation

August 2022

Caltrans

General Information About This Document

Document prepared by: Divine Yang, Environmental Scientist

The Initial Study circulated to the public for 32 days between June 16, 2022, and July 18, 2022. Comments received during this period are included in Appendix B. Elsewhere, language has been added throughout the document to indicate where a change has been made since the circulation of the draft environmental document. Minor editorial changes and clarifications have not been so indicated.

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 Jaycee Azevedo, District 10 Environmental Division, California Department of Transportation, 1976 East Doctor Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard, Stockton, California 95205; phone number 209-992-9824 (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.

State Clearinghouse Number 2022060223
10-CAL/TUO-12, 26, 108, 120-PM Various
Project ID Number 1017000179

Drainage system restoration on State Routes 12, 26, 108, and 120 in Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties

INITIAL STUDY
with Mitigated Negative Declaration

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

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation
and
Responsible Agency: California Transportation Commission

James P. Henke

James P. Henke
Environmental Office Chief, District 10
California Department of Transportation
CEQA Lead Agency

8/25/2022

Date

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

Jaycee Azevedo, California Department of Transportation, 1976 East Doctor Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard, Stockton, California 95205; 209-992-9824; jaycee.azevedo@dot.ca.gov

Mitigated Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

State Clearinghouse Number: 2022060223

District-County-Route-Post Mile: 10-CAL/TUO-12, 26, 108, 120-PM Various

EA/Project Number: EA 10-1F250 and Project ID Number 1017000179

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to install or rehabilitate existing culverts and storm drains in various locations on State Routes 26 and 12 in Calaveras County and State Routes 108 and 120 in Tuolumne County.

Determination

An Initial Study has been prepared by Caltrans District 10. 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:

- Compensate for permanent impacts to Waters of the U.S. and Waters of the State at a minimum 1-to-1 ratio.
- Compensate for loss of riparian habitat at a minimum 1-to-1 ratio.

James P. Henke

James P. Henke
Environmental Office Chief, District 10
California Department of Transportation

8/25/2022

Date

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 Proposed Project

1.1 Introduction

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to install or rehabilitate existing culverts and storm drains that have either exceeded their design life or lost their serviceability due to age, wear, or degradation. The program advisor for drainage system restoration has established that projects that meet the qualification for the 201.151 State Highway Operation and Protection Program be identified. The Maintenance Engineering Culvert Inspection Team has identified culvert locations on various state routes, including post miles 4.59 and 37.52 on State Route 26 and post miles 2.44 and 9.65 on State Route 12 in Calaveras County, and post miles 15.23 and 64.0 on State Route 108 and post miles 3.39 and 39.8 on State Route 120 in Tuolumne County.

The existing cross drainage culverts primarily convey the flow of surface water and streamflow across or from the highway right-of-way. These drainage systems also protect against flooding. Most of these culverts have exceeded their design life expectancy, have deteriorated and corroded, have damaged inverts, shape loss, and joint separations.

The project is in rural areas characterized by a population generally dispersed throughout small-town communities of mixed-use development surrounded by large areas of open expanses consisting of native vegetation and low-density development. State Route 108 is a minor arterial through Tuolumne County and is an important farm-to-market route. It also serves as an important trans-Sierra route, connecting to the eastern Sierra Nevada region of the state and with the Central Valley and other parts of California. State Route 120 provides access from the Central Valley communities to Interstates 5 and 580, which access the San Francisco Bay Area. State Routes 12 and 26 primarily serve interregional traffic.

The project is listed in the 2021 Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program Rural Nonmetropolitan Areas and grouped under Pavement Resurfacing and/or Rehabilitation State Highway Operation and Protection Program Roadway Preservation Program. The Tuolumne County Transportation Council and the Calaveras Council of Governments' Regional Transportation Plan guide transportation development in the project areas.

1.2 Purpose and Need

1.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the project is to install or rehabilitate corroded and deteriorated culverts and storm drains to good condition.

1.2.2 Need

The project is needed because the existing culverts have corroded and deteriorated. If these culverts are not repaired, the roadway will eventually settle and be susceptible to washout due to erosion of the soil below the pavement.

1.3 Project Description

This section describes the project and work developed to meet the purpose and need of the project while avoiding or minimizing environmental impacts.

Caltrans proposes to replace and repair various culverts along State Routes 12, 26, 108, and 120 in Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties to maintain existing water flow capacity. Culverts with a 12-inch diameter and culverts with hydraulic records that have a history of being prone to flooding will be replaced with culverts that have a diameter that is at least 6 inches greater than existing culvert diameters. Reinforced concrete pipe is proposed at most locations for ease of maintenance access to clean the culverts. Rock slope protection at the outlet of the pipe is also proposed.

In addition, work will include excavation up to 8 feet, jacking and boring for deeper culverts, backfill, concrete casing, paving, placing rock slope protection at outlets, repairing or replacing headwalls, and restriping pavement. Work off the paved roadway is also expected. One new culvert will be built on State Route 26 at post mile 5.24 in Calaveras County. Culverts are listed in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 in Section 1.4.1. The project vicinity map and the project location map are shown below in Figures 1-1 and 1-2, respectively. Improving the drainage system is necessary to protect against flooding.

Figure 1-1 Project Vicinity Map

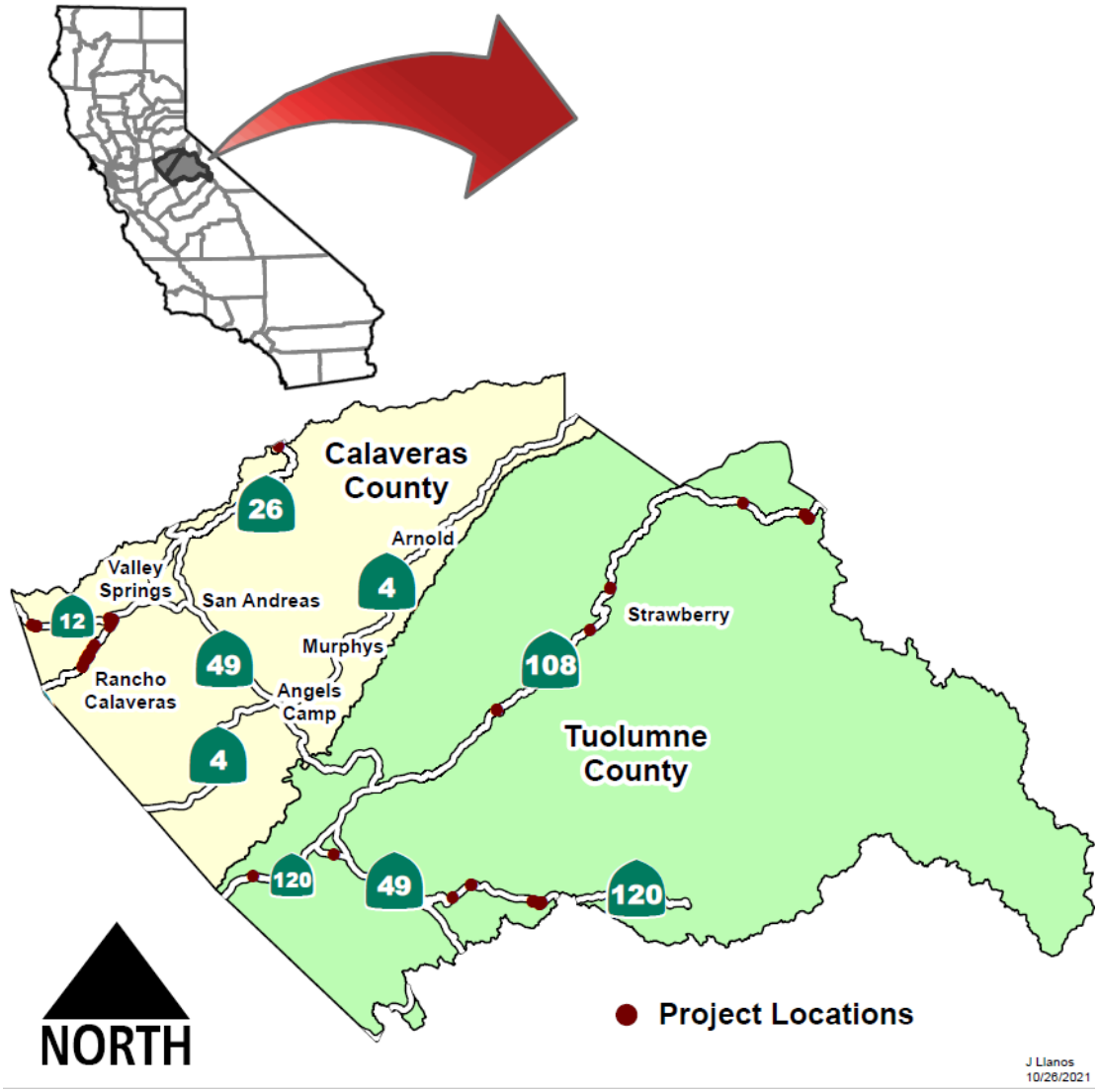
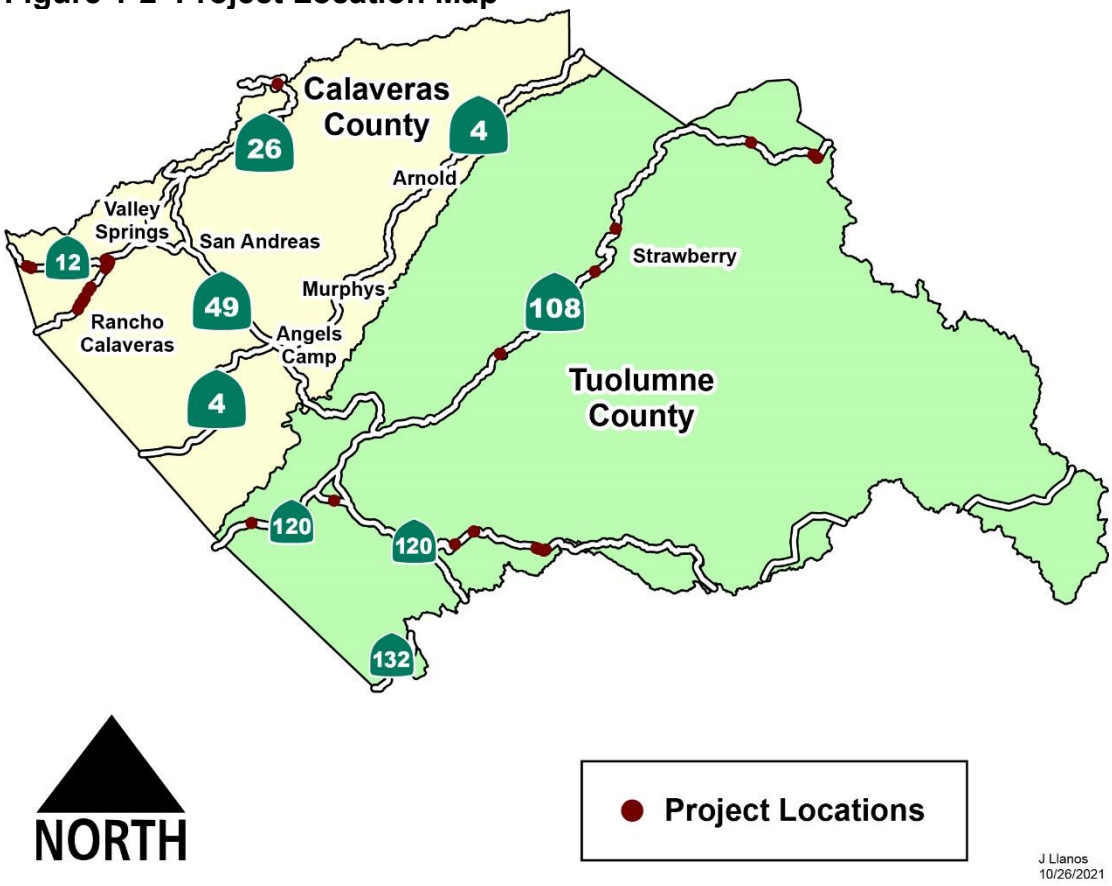


Figure 1-2 Project Location Map



1.4 Project Alternatives

[Section 1.4 Project Alternatives has been revised since the draft environmental document was circulated.] The project initially considered a Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative. The No-Build Alternative was dropped after the circulation of the draft environmental document because it did not meet the purpose and need of the project.

1.4.1 Build Alternatives

The Build Alternative will rehabilitate existing culverts and build new ones to meet the current hydraulics requirements or recommendations. Existing corrugated metal pipe and corrugated steel pipe culverts will be replaced with reinforced concrete pipe. If replacement is not an option and lining does not degrade the hydraulics' capacity, cured-in-place lining will be installed. If there is no right-of-way issue, rock slope protection at the outlet of the pipes will be installed. In addition, some locations will require replacing existing headwalls and/or extending the outlets and flared end sections. Temporary construction easements will be required. The proposed work for each culvert is shown in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 below.

Table 1.1 Culverts in Tuolumne County

Number	County	State Route	Post Mile	Proposed Work
1	TUO	108	15.23	Replace with 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
2	TUO	108	28.46	Replace with 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
3	TUO	108	35.6	Replace with 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
4	TUO	108	63.49	Replace with 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
5	TUO	108	64	Replace with 18-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
6	TUO	120	3.39	Replace with 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
7	TUO	120	14.14	Replace with 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
8	TUO	120	14.14	Replace with 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
9	TUO	120	30.05	Replace with 18-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
10	TUO	120	30.77	Replace with 18-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
11	TUO	120	30.77	Replace with 18-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
12	TUO	120	32.19	Replace with 18-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
13	TUO	120	32.19	Replace with 18-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
14	TUO	120	32.19	Replace with 18-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
15	TUO	120	32.19	Replace with 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
16	TUO	120	32.26	Replace with 18-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
17	TUO	120	32.26	Replace with 18-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
18	TUO	120	38.92	Replace with 42-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
19	TUO	120	39.07	Replace with invert paving 36-inch Cementitious Pipe Liner
20	TUO	120	39.63	Replace with 42-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
21	TUO	120	39.8	Replace with 30-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe

Table 1.2 Culverts in Calaveras County

Number	County	State Route	Post Mile	Proposed Work
1	CAL	12	2.44	Replace with a 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
2	CAL	12	2.8	Replace with a 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
3	CAL	12	9.65	Replace with an 18-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
4	CAL	26	4.59	Replace with two 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipes
5	CAL	26	4.75	Replace with a 48-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
6	CAL	26	5.24	Replace with a 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
7	CAL	26	5.46	Replace with a 36-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
8	CAL	26	5.59	Pave the invert of the box culvert
9	CAL	26	5.63	Replace with a 24-inch Elliptical Reinforced Concrete Pipe
10	CAL	26	5.86	Replace with a 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
11	CAL	26	6.50	Replace with a 12-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
12	CAL	26	6.68	Replace with a 24-inch Elliptical Reinforced Concrete Pipe
13	CAL	26	6.95	Replace with a 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
14	CAL	26	9.22	Replace with a 30-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
15	CAL	26	9.44	Replace with a 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
16	CAL	26	9.54	Replace with a 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
17	CAL	26	9.55	Replace with a 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
18	CAL	26	9.91	Replace with a 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe
19	CAL	26	37.52	Replace with a 24-inch Reinforced Concrete Pipe

This project contains numerous 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 listed later in this chapter under “Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Build Alternatives.”

1.4.2 No-Build (No-Action) Alternative

The No-Build Alternative will allow the existing culverts to continue to deteriorate, which will require more extensive and costly repairs in the future. The existing culverts identified for repair, replacement, or construction by this project will also continue to deteriorate, which will cause potential flood damage. The No-Build Alternative will not meet the purpose and need of the project.

1.5 Identification of a Preferred Alternative

[Section 1.5 Identification of a Preferred Alternative has been added since the draft environmental document was circulated.] After comparing and weighing the benefits and impacts of all feasible alternatives, Caltrans has identified a single Build Alternative. Following public review, the Build Alternative was identified as the preferred alternative.

1.6 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Build Alternatives

The project may include, but will not be limited to, the following Standard Special Provisions:

BIO-1: Conduct Worker Environmental Awareness Training for construction personnel.

BIO-2: Install fencing and/or flagging to protect sensitive biological resources.

BIO-3: Retain an agency-approved biologist to conduct periodic monitoring during construction in sensitive habitats.

BIO-4: Restrict in-stream work to low-flow period.

BIO-5: Dewater the construction site and provide a clean water diversion through the project work limits to maintain flows.

BIO-6: Protect water quality and prevent erosion and sedimentation in aquatic habitats.

BIO-7: Recontour and revegetate disturbed areas.

BIO-8: Compensate for permanent impacts to Waters of the U.S. and Waters of the State.

BIO-9: Avoid and minimize potential disturbance of woody vegetation.

BIO-10: Compensate for loss of riparian habitat.

BIO-11: Conduct preconstruction special-status plant surveys and minimize impacts on special-status plants.

BIO-12: Avoid potential indirect impacts on habitat for vernal pool branchiopods and other vernal pool species.

BIO-13: Retain a qualified biologist to conduct preconstruction surveys for California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, and western spadefoot toad.

BIO-14: Install exclusion fencing between the work area and suitable habitat for California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, and western spadefoot toad.

BIO-15: Check for animals under construction equipment and vehicles prior to moving.

BIO-16: Install escape ramps in holes or trenches measuring more than 6 feet deep.

BIO-17: Limit the use of artificial lighting.

BIO-18: Properly dispose of food-related trash and remove it from the project site daily.

BIO-19: Prohibit pets and firearms from being brought to the project site.

BIO-20: Retain a qualified biologist to conduct preconstruction surveys for Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs and monitor ground-disturbing activities in suitable habitats.

BIO-21: Install exclusion fencing between the work area and suitable habitat for the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog.

BIO-22: Conduct preconstruction surveys for nesting migratory birds and raptors, including special-status species, and establish protective buffers.

BIO-23: Retain a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction mammal survey and monitor ground-disturbing activities in suitable habitats.

BIO-24: Avoid and minimize the spread of invasive plant species during project construction.

CUL-1: If previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction, it is Caltrans' policy that work be stopped in that area until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find. Additional archaeological surveys will be needed if the project limits extend beyond the present survey limits.

CUL-2: Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing will be in place to minimize and avoid impacts to Hotel Charlotte.

AQ-1: Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-9.02, Air Pollution Control, requires contractors to comply with all air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes.

AQ-2: Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 10-5 for a Dust Control Plan.

GHG-1: Idling will be limited to five minutes for delivery and dump trucks and other diesel-powered equipment.

GHG-2: The contractor will seek to operate construction equipment with improved fuel efficiency by:

- Properly tuning and maintaining equipment

- Using the right sized equipment for the job
- Using equipment with new technologies

HW-1: Caltrans Standard Special Provisions Section 7-1.02K(6)(j)(iii), which pertains to Earth Material Containing Lead, will be added to the construction contract. A lead compliance plan prepared by a certified industrial hygienist will be required.

NOI: Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02 “Noise Control.”

1.7 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, has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. When needed for clarity, or as required by CEQA, this document may contain references to federal laws and/or regulations (CEQA, 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).

1.8 Permits and Approvals Needed

[The following table has been revised since the draft environmental document was circulated.] The following permits, licenses, agreements, and certifications are required for project construction:

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board	Clean Water Act Section 401: Water Quality Certification	To be obtained in the design phase
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board	Clean Water Act Section 402: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit	To be obtained in the design phase
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District	Clean Water Act Section 404: placement of fill	To be obtained in the design phase
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	California Fish and Game Code Section 1602: Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement	To be obtained in the design phase
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Endangered Species Act Section 7: Biological Opinion or Letter of Concurrence	Letter of Concurrence obtained on June 23, 2022
U.S. Forest Service, Stanislaus National Forest	Special Use Permit	To be obtained in the design phase

Chapter 2 CEQA Evaluation

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 (bound separately in Volume 2), and no further discussion is included in this document.

2.1.1 Aesthetics

Considering the information in the Scenic Resource Evaluation dated January 2022, the following significance determinations have been made.

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099:

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 nonurbanized 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?	**No Impact**
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	**No Impact**

2.1.2 Agriculture and Forest Resources

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

Considering the information in the project location and scope of work, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources
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 nonagricultural use?	**No Impact**
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	**No Impact**

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources
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))?	**No Impact**
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	**No Impact**
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	**No Impact**

2.1.3 Air Quality

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

Considering the information in the Air Quality Memorandum dated December 2021, the following significance determinations have been made.

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	**No Impact**
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	**No Impact**

2.1.4 Biological Resources

Considering the information in the Natural Environment Study dated January 2022, the Aquatic Resources Delineation Report dated January 2022, and the Biological Assessment dated March 2022, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources
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 and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
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?	**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated**
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?	**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated**
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?	**No Impact**
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**

Affected Environment

The following discussion is based on the Natural Environment Study, Aquatic Resources Delineation Report, and Biological Assessment. Species lists were pulled in November 2021. Instructions on how to obtain copies of the studies are at the end of this document.

The Biological Study Area encompasses the project's limits of disturbance. It consists of the developed (paved) road and unpaved road shoulder within the Caltrans right-of-way where most of the culvert replacement activities will occur. The Biological Study Area varies in size for each culvert location, depending on the location of the culvert inlet and outlet.

Available information pertaining to the natural resources of the Biological Study Area was reviewed. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Consultation, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's California Natural Diversity Database, and California Native Plant Society's Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants databases were all queried for species information.

The existing biological environment in the Biological Study Area includes natural communities of special concern, common natural communities, and unnatural communities. The natural communities of special concern in the Biological Study Area consist of Waters of the U.S., Waters of the State, and sensitive natural communities. There are also existing natural communities of special concern combined with unnatural communities, such as mixed hardwood forest, seasonal wetland, vernal pool, emergent marsh, scrub-shrub wetland, and riverine (which is further divided into an ephemeral stream, intermittent stream, and roadside ditch).

Aquatic Resources

Five seasonal wetland features (scrub-shrub wetland), one within Calaveras County and four within Tuolumne County, were identified in the Biological Study Area. A portion of one vernal pool is within Calaveras County at about 40 feet north of the inlet of the culvert CAL-26-9.54. One intermittent stream is at the same culvert location as the vernal pool described above (CAL-26-9.54); however, it does not appear to be hydrologically connected to the vernal pool and flows away from that feature.

A second intermittent stream was delineated at CAL-26-5.46, which is on the west side of State Route 26 and receives flow from the scrub-shrub wetland feature across the road. One emergent marsh occurs on the south side of TUO-120-39.07. Twenty-four ephemeral streams were identified in the Biological Study Area within Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties; 19 roadside ditches were identified.

Riparian Habitat

One type of riparian habitat (scrub-shrub wetland riparian) occurs within the Biological Study Area at two locations: an ephemeral stream that flows to Deadman Creek near culvert location TUO-108-63.49 and an area near culvert location CAL-26-5.46. Both areas of scrub-shrub wetland riparian had positive indicators of hydrology and hydric vegetation and soil, which meets the criteria to be considered Waters of the U.S. and Waters of the State.

Special-Status Plant Species

There is a potential for special-status plant species to occur within the Biological Study Area. Forty-five special-status plant species were identified to occur, 35 of which have natural communities within the Biological Study Area. Due to the November 2021 surveys taking place outside of the identification periods for most plant species, special-status plants were not seen, but instead, only the suitability for these plants was evaluated.

Special-Status Wildlife Species

Forty special-status wildlife species were identified to have the potential to occur or are known to occur within the Biological Study Area based on reviews of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's California Natural Diversity Database. However, a field survey determined that 28 of the 40 species will not occur within the Biological Study Area because the area lacks suitable habitat or is outside the species' current range. The 12 species that could be affected by project activities include the vernal pool fairy shrimp, vernal pool tadpole shrimp, California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, western spadefoot toad, northern goshawk, great gray owl, California spotted owl, western red bat, Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare, and Sierra Nevada red fox.

Migratory Birds

Special-status and non-special-status migratory nesting bird species have the potential to nest in trees and shrubs or under bridges and culverts in the Biological Study Area. No swallows were seen within culverts in or next to the Biological Study Area.

Invasive Plants

A total of 31 plant species identified as invasive plant species were found within the Biological Study Area, and four of those have been rated as highly invasive.

Environmental Consequences

Habitat types within the Biological Study Area were assessed for their potential to impact special-status plant and wildlife species. Project activities may affect but are not likely to adversely affect the vernal pool fairy shrimp, the vernal pool tadpole shrimp, the California tiger salamander, the California

red-legged frog, the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, and Sierra Nevada red fox. The potential impacts are detailed below.

Aquatic Resources

The project will result in the placement of temporary and permanent fill within Waters of the U.S. and Waters of the State. Project activities could affect up to 0.030 acre of Waters of the U.S. and Waters of the State, which could consist of 0.019 acre of temporary impacts and 0.011 acre of permanent impacts. Within the Biological Study Area, there is 0.086 acre of non-wetland waters; permanent impacts to this will amount to 0.005 acre, which will require compensation and 0.019 acre for temporary impacts. The wetland acreage within the Biological Study Area, in comparison, is 0.151 acre with no permanent impacts and only 0.006 acre of temporary impacts.

Direct impacts will result during construction activities, such as excavation, dewatering, vegetation removal, and installation of new culverts, headwalls, end sections, and rock slope protection. Indirect effects could result from earth-moving activities next to streams during culvert construction, and accidental introduction of wash water, solvents, oil, cement, or other pollutants during construction could also harm the aquatic environment in streams. Caltrans Best Management Practices and Measures BIO-1 through BIO-8 will be implemented to minimize impacts to Waters of the U.S. and Waters of the State and return temporarily affected areas to pre-project conditions. Clean Water Act Section 401: Water Quality Certification, 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit, and a 404 permit for placement of fill will be required before the start of construction.

Riparian Habitat

A total of 0.072 acre of riparian habitat is within the Biological Study Area, 0.004 acre of which will be permanently impacted, which will result in the loss or disturbance of riparian forest vegetation. Due to the important ecological functions and values of this riparian habitat, a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement for construction activities will be required for impacts on the banks of a stream or riparian habitat associated with the stream.

To minimize impacts on riparian habitat, Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3, BIO-7, BIO-9, and BIO-10 for compensatory mitigation for the loss of scrub-shrub riparian habitat will be implemented.

Special-Status Plant Species

The project will not adversely affect special-status plant species because the proposed work will be generally confined to the existing inlet and outlet and will typically be less than 500 square feet. Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3 and BIO-11 will be implemented to minimize impacts.

Special-Status Wildlife Species

The 12 species that have suitable habitat present in the Biological Study Area that could be affected by project activities include the vernal pool fairy shrimp, vernal pool tadpole shrimp, California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, western spadefoot toad, northern goshawk, great gray owl, California spotted owl, western red bat, Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare, and Sierra Nevada red fox. In addition, there is no suitable habitat for the foothill yellow-legged frog in the Biological Study Area, but there is potential habitat present downslope from the project locations.

Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp

Project activities may affect but are not likely to adversely affect the vernal pool fairy shrimp. The vernal pool fairy shrimp is listed as a federally threatened species. Potential aquatic habitat for the vernal pool fairy shrimp within the Biological Study Area is within a vernal pool, about 35 feet north of the inlet at CAL-26-9.54. This vernal pool is upslope from the culvert and is separate from the roadside ditch that drains into the culvert along the fence line. Vernal pool habitat is also present within 250 feet of culvert location CAL-26-9.91, with the closest vernal pool occurring about 60 feet to the west and separated from the culvert by a 2-foot berm between the culvert and the nearby grassland. The Biological Study Area is not within critical habitat for the vernal pool fairy shrimp, and the project will not result in impacts with the implementation of Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3, BIO-6, and BIO-12.

Vernal Pool Tadpole Shrimp

Project activities may affect but are not likely to adversely affect the vernal pool tadpole shrimp. The vernal pool tadpole shrimp is listed as federally endangered. Potential aquatic habitat for the vernal pool tadpole shrimp within the Biological Study Area is within a vernal pool, about 35 feet north of the inlet at CAL-26-9.54; however, this feature is shallow and not likely to pond for a sufficient duration (54 days) to support the species' life cycle. This vernal pool is upslope from the culvert and is separate from the roadside ditch that drains into the culvert along the fence line.

Vernal pool habitat is also present within 250 feet of culvert location CAL-26-9.91, with the closest vernal pool occurring about 60 feet to the west and separated from the culvert by a 2-foot berm between the culvert and the nearby grassland. This pool is also shallow and unlikely to pond water for sufficient duration for vernal pool tadpole shrimp to breed.

Seasonal wetland, densely vegetated with curly dock *(Rumex crispus),* is present within the Biological Study Area, about 15 feet northeast of culvert CAL-26-9.44. This feature is within a drainage that conveys intermittent flows and is unlikely to support vernal pool tadpole shrimp. The species is presumed to be existing within all nearby suitable habitats.

No direct impacts on vernal pool tadpole shrimp habitat are expected. Therefore, impacts from the project that could adversely affect vernal pool tadpole shrimp are limited to indirect effects associated with the potential runoff of hazardous materials into suitable nearby aquatic habitats.

Exposure of vernal pool tadpole shrimp to chemical contaminants that result from construction runoff into occupied aquatic habitats could be harmful to the species, resulting in their death or reduced reproductive success. Implementation of Construction Best Management Practices and Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3, BIO-6, and BIO-12 will minimize and avoid impacts to vernal pool tadpole shrimp.

California Tiger Salamander

Project activities may affect but are not likely to adversely affect the California tiger salamander. The California tiger salamander is federally listed as threatened and state listed as threatened. One vernal pool with the potential to support California tiger salamander breeding was seen about 115 feet northwest and upslope of culvert CAL-26-9.54. Additional potential breeding ponds are present between 0.15 mile and 0.9 mile from culverts along State Route 12 (CAL-12-2.44, CAL-12-2.80, CAL12-9.65), along State Route 26 (CAL-26-9.91, CAL-26-9.54, CAL-26-9.44, CAL-26-9.22, CAL-26-6.95, CAL-26-6.68, CAL-26-5.86, CAL-26-5.63, CAL-26-5.59, CAL-26-5.46, CAL-26-5.24, CAL-26-4.75, and CAL-26-4.59), and along State Route 120 (TUO-120-3.39 and TUO-120-14.14).

The project will not impact suitable upland habitat for the California tiger salamander. Ephemeral streams that run through the Biological Study Area and annual grasslands in the temporary impact areas have the potential to provide upland dispersal habitat and movement corridors for California tiger salamanders if they are breeding in the vicinity of the Biological Study Area. Construction Best Management Practices and Measures BIO-1 through BIO-7, BIO-12, and BIO-13 through BIO-19 will be implemented.

California Red-Legged Frog

Project activities may affect but are not likely to adversely affect the California red-legged frog. The California red-legged frog is listed as federally threatened. Grassland and ruderal habitats within the culvert impact areas are unlikely to provide suitable upland habitat for California red-legged frogs because these areas are within heavily disturbed habitats next to existing highways and lack small mammal burrows that could provide subterranean refuge for California red-legged frogs.

The only rodent burrows seen within the vicinity of the Biological Study Area were at culvert locations TUO-120-39.63 and TUO-120-39.80, which are outside the range of the California red-legged frog. California red-legged frogs could disperse through grassland habitats in the vicinity of project culverts near suitable breeding habitat along State Route 12 (CAL-12-2.44, CAL-12-

2.80, CAL12-9.65), along State Route 26 (CAL-26-9.91, CAL-26-9.54, CAL-26-9.44, CAL-26-9.22, CAL-26-6.95, CAL-26-6.68, CAL-26-5.86, CAL-26-5.63, CAL-26-5.59, CAL-26-5.46, CAL-26-5.24, CAL-26-4.75, and CAL-26-4.59), and State Route 120 (TUO-120-3.39 and TUO-120-14.14).

The project will not impact suitable upland habitat for the California red-legged frog because proposed project activities will occur within disturbed roadside grassland and ruderal areas that do not contain mammal burrows suitable for California red-legged frog habitation and because there are no known and presumed existing populations of California red-legged frogs within 1 mile of the Biological Study Area.

Ephemeral streams and annual grasslands in the temporary impact areas have the potential to provide upland dispersal habitat and movement corridors for California red-legged frogs if they are breeding in the vicinity of the Biological Study Area. Measures BIO-1 through BIO-7 and BIO-12 through BIO-19 will be implemented to avoid impacts to California red-legged frogs.

Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog

Project activities may affect but are not likely to adversely affect foothill yellow-legged frog. Foothill yellow-legged frog populations are listed as federally and state endangered species. The closest suitable aquatic dispersal habitat and breeding habitat for foothill yellow-legged frogs occur in the vicinity of the following culverts:

- CAL-26-37.52: 0.25 mile to the west within the North Fork Mokelumne River
- TUO-108-15.23: 1.1 miles to the north in the South Fork Stanislaus River
- TUO-120-14.14: 0.5 mile to the east in Six-bit Gulch
- TUO-120-30.05: 100 feet to the south in Rattlesnake Creek
- TUO-120-38.92 and TUO-120-39.07: 0.5 mile to the south in Big Creek
- TUO-120-39.63 and TUO-120-39.80: 0.2 mile to the south in Big Creek

The project will not directly impact suitable aquatic or upland habitats for foothill yellow-legged frogs. Project activities within the range of the species will only impact ephemeral streams that drain stormwater flows and do not support suitable habitat conditions for foothill yellow-legged frogs. Best Management Practices and Measures BIO 1 and BIO 3 through BIO 6 will be implemented to avoid and minimize impacts on foothill yellow-legged frog habitat downstream from proposed construction activities.

Sierra Nevada Yellow-Legged Frog

Project activities may affect but are not likely to adversely affect the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog. The Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog is listed as a federally and state endangered species. Culverts TUO-108-63.49 and TUO-108-64.00 are within designated critical habitat. At location TUO-108-63.49, suitable aquatic nonbreeding and upland habitat is present within the Biological Study Area. At location TUO-108-64.00, suitable upland primary constituent elements are present. Of the three culvert locations within the species' range, TUO-108-35.60 does not support suitable aquatic habitats for the species.

The closest potential habitat for the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog is more than 0.7-mile downslope from TUO-108-35.60. Therefore, no impacts on Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs are expected at this location. Based on the amount of permanent habitat impacts (less than 0.0001 acre) and because all temporarily disturbed habitat will be restored to pre-project conditions, the project activities may affect but are not likely to adversely affect critical habitat for the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog. Measures BIO-1, BIO-3 through BIO-7, and BIO-15 through BIO-21 will be implemented to avoid and minimize impacts on Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs and their habitat, including designated critical habitat.

Western Spadefoot Toad

The western spadefoot toad is a California species of special concern. No construction activities will occur within suitable aquatic breeding habitat for the western spadefoot toad; however, the species could disperse through the work area if they occupy nearby habitats and are active above ground during construction. Indirect and direct impacts will be minimized by the implementation of Best Management Practices and Measures BIO-1 through BIO-7 and BIO-12 through BIO-19.

Northern Goshawk, Great Gray Owl, and California Spotted Owl

The northern goshawk is a California species of special concern, the great gray owl is state listed as endangered, and the California spotted owl is a California species of special concern. If an active nest is within 0.5 mile of the Biological Study Area, the species could be affected by construction noise and visual disturbances. Noise and visual disturbances associated with project construction during the nesting season may disrupt northern goshawk nesting behavior to the point of nest abandonment or forced fledging, resulting in young mortality. To avoid and minimize effects on nesting birds and raptors, Measures BIO-1, BIO-3, and BIO-22 will be implemented.

Sierra Nevada Snowshoe Hare

The Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare is a California species of special concern. The project will not permanently change suitable habitat for the Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare. Implementation of Measures BIO-1, BIO-3, BIO-7, BIO-15

through BIO-19, and BIO-23 will ensure that construction activities avoid adverse impacts on the Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare.

Sierra Nevada Red Fox

Project activities may affect but are not likely to adversely affect Sierra Nevada red foxes. The Sierra Nevada red fox is state listed as state threatened and federally listed as endangered. The project will not permanently change suitable habitat for the Sierra Nevada red fox. Most project activities will occur within the existing roadway and disturbed road shoulder, which is not expected to provide suitable denning habitat for Sierra Nevada red foxes. However, culvert rehabilitation activities within scrub-shrub habitat at culvert locations TUO-108-63.49 and TUO-108-64.00 will occur within the current range of Sierra Nevada red foxes and could temporarily disturb dispersal and foraging habitat for the species. Measures BIO-1, BIO-3, BIO-7, BIO-15 through BIO-19, and BIO-23 will be implemented to avoid and minimize impacts on Sierra Nevada red foxes and their habitat.

Migratory Birds

The project has the potential to affect nesting migratory birds and raptors either through direct injury or mortality during ground-disturbing activities or by disrupting normal behaviors, including nesting. Measures BIO-1, BIO-3, and BIO-22 will be implemented to avoid and minimize effects on nesting birds and raptors.

Invasive Plants

The project has the potential to introduce and spread invasive plant species to uninfected areas within and next to the Biological Study Area during construction. Measures BIO-1, BIO-7, and BIO-24 will be implemented to minimize effects on nearby communities of special concern due to the introduction and spread of invasive plants.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures, which are based on the Natural Environment Study, will be implemented. For more information on the following measures, please refer to the Natural Environment Study.

BIO-1: Conduct Worker Environmental Awareness Training for construction personnel.

BIO-2: Install fencing and/or flagging to protect sensitive biological resources.

BIO-3: Retain an agency-approved biologist to conduct periodic monitoring during construction in sensitive habitats.

BIO-4: Restrict in-stream work to low-flow period.

BIO-5: Dewater the construction site and provide a clean water diversion through the project work limits to maintain flows.

BIO-6: Protect water quality and prevent erosion and sedimentation in aquatic habitats.

Construction Best Management Practices that are consistent with the most recent Caltrans manuals, including the Construction Site Best Management Practices manual, the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan manual, and the Water Pollution Control Program manual, will be developed for the project and will be implemented throughout construction to avoid or reduce adverse effects to water quality.

Construction Best Management Practices associated with an erosion control plan will be prepared to avoid the discharge of pollutants from vehicle/equipment cleaning into aquatic and other sensitive habitats. Caltrans personnel and the contractor will perform routine inspections of the construction areas to verify that Construction Best Management Practices are being properly implemented, maintained, and operating as designed. A water quality inspector will inspect sites before and after a rain event to ensure that Stormwater Best Management Practices are adequate.

- Stockpiling materials and storing equipment (including portable equipment), vehicles, and supplies will be restricted to designated construction staging areas.

- Vehicle and equipment fueling and maintenance operations will occur at least 50 feet away from water features, except at established commercial gas stations or vehicle maintenance facilities. All equipment will be maintained such that there will be no leaks of automotive fluids such as gasoline, oils, or solvents.

- Water trucks and dust palliatives will be used to control dust in excavation and fill areas and for covering temporary stockpiles of dirt or other loose construction materials when required by weather conditions.

BIO-7: Recontour and revegetate disturbed areas.

To control erosion and restore habitat value, all areas within the work areas that are disturbed during construction will be recontoured if necessary and stabilized as soon as possible following the completion of construction. Roadside areas will be revegetated with a Caltrans-approved, appropriate weed-free and noninvasive plant seed mixture.

BIO-8: Compensate for permanent impacts to Waters of the U.S. and Waters of the State.

To compensate for the permanent loss of up to 0.005 acre of Waters of the U.S. and Waters of the State associated with culvert rehabilitation activities, Caltrans will purchase the appropriate aquatic resource credits at an approved mitigation bank or contribute to an agency-approved in-lieu fee program to ensure no net loss of functions and values of aquatic resources. The compensation ratio will be a minimum of a 1-to-1 ratio (1 acre of aquatic resource habitat credit for every 1 acre of impact) to ensure no net loss of habitat functions and values.

BIO-9: Avoid and minimize potential disturbance of woody vegetation.

Caltrans will avoid and minimize potential disturbance of woody vegetation in riparian and oak woodland communities by implementing the following measures:

- The need for tree removal will be reduced, to the most feasible extent, by adjusting guardrail locations within the preestablished permanent impact area to avoid trees and their root systems.

- The potential for long-term loss of woody vegetation will be minimized by trimming vegetation rather than removing entire trees or shrubs in areas where complete removal is not required. Trees or shrubs that need to be trimmed will be cut at least 1 foot above ground level to leave the root systems intact and allow for more rapid regeneration. Cutting will be limited to the minimum area necessary within the construction zone. To protect nesting birds, Caltrans will not allow pruning or removal of woody vegetation between February 1 and September 30 without preconstruction surveys. An arborist will be retained to monitor any necessary pruning or root cutting of retained trees, as necessary.

- The areas that undergo vegetative pruning and tree removal will be inspected immediately before construction, immediately after construction, and 1 year after construction to determine the amount of existing vegetative cover, cover that has been removed, and cover that resprouts. After 1 year, if these areas have not resprouted sufficiently to return the cover to the pre-project level, Caltrans will replant the areas with appropriate native species to reestablish the cover to the pre-project condition.

BIO-10: Compensate for loss of riparian habitat.

Caltrans will compensate for construction-related effects and loss of riparian habitat at a minimum 1-to-1 ratio (1 acre or 1-inch diameter at breast height of mitigation for every 1 acre or 1-inch diameter at breast height of riparian habitat removed). Final compensation ratios will be based on site-specific information and determined through coordination with the appropriate agencies during the permitting process. Caltrans will implement onsite and, if

necessary, offsite restoration measures and/or purchase mitigation bank credits to compensate for temporary and permanent losses of riparian habitat. Onsite restoration will be used to the maximum extent practicable. If onsite or offsite restoration/enhancement is not feasible, Caltrans will purchase mitigation bank credits at a locally approved bank if one is available.

BIO-11: Conduct preconstruction special-status plant surveys and minimize impacts on special-status plants.

Before project activities, Caltrans will retain a qualified botanist to conduct blooming-period surveys for the presence of special-status plants identified as potentially occurring in the Biological Study Area, as listed in Table 3-2 of the Natural Environment Study. Botanical surveys should occur within 1 year of construction and will include both spring and summer surveys to capture the blooming period of all special-status plants with suitable habitat present in the project footprints.

If special-status plants are documented within the project area during botanical surveys, individual plants or groups of plants will be flagged and location data collected using the Global Positioning System so that these areas can be added to the final construction drawings. To the extent feasible, Caltrans will install exclusion fencing or flagging, consistent with *BIO-2: Install Fencing and/or Flagging to Protect Sensitive Biological Resources,* around known areas of special-status plants to avoid direct impacts (i.e., removal or crushing). If impacts on special-status plants cannot be avoided, based on California Fish and Game Code Section 1913(c) requirements for public agency activities where endangered or rare plants are known to be present, Caltrans will provide a courtesy notification to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife as soon as possible and no less than 10 days in advance of ground-disturbing activities to allow the California Department of Fish and Wildlife an opportunity to salvage the affected special-status plants.

BIO-12: Avoid potential indirect impacts on habitat for vernal pool branchiopods and other vernal pool species.

The following avoidance and minimization efforts will be implemented before and during construction to protect habitat for the vernal pool fairy shrimp, vernal pool tadpole shrimp, and other vernal pool species outside the area of proposed ground disturbance.

- Construction activities within 250 feet of suitable vernal pool habitat (locations CAL-26-9.54 and CAL-26-9.91) will be avoided from the first day of the first significant rain (1 inch or greater) until June 1, or until suitable wetlands remain dry for 72 hours and no significant rain is forecast on the day construction is proposed.

- Before the start of work at culvert locations CAL-26-9.54 and CAL-26-9.91, a qualified biologist will inspect the work areas to ensure that they are dry and that Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing is installed at the limits of the temporary work area around the inlet structures, consistent with *Measure BIO-2: Install Fencing and/or Flagging To Protect Sensitive Biological Resources*. A qualified biologist will also inspect the work areas to ensure that erosion control materials (such as burlap-wrapped fiber rolls) are installed between the work area and the vernal pools, consistent with *Measure BIO-4: Protect Water Quality and Prevent Erosion and Sedimentation in Aquatic Habitat.*

- Consistent with *Measure BIO-3: Retain an Agency-Approved Biologist To Conduct Periodic Monitoring During Construction in Sensitive Habitats*, a qualified biologist will monitor all ground-disturbing activities at culvert locations CAL-26-9.54 and CAL-26-9.91 to ensure that avoidance and minimization efforts and all relevant permit conditions are properly implemented during construction to prevent adverse impacts on nearby vernal pool habitats.

- No herbicide will be used within 100 feet of aquatic habitat.

BIO-13: Retain a qualified biologist to conduct preconstruction surveys for the California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, and western spadefoot toad.

Qualified biologist(s) will conduct visual encounter preconstruction surveys of each site no more than 14 days before the start of ground-disturbing activities (including vegetation removal and equipment staging) within suitable habitat for the California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, and western spadefoot toad at culvert locations along State Route 12 (CAL-12-2.44, CAL-12-2.80, CAL12-9.65), along State Route 26 (CAL-26-9.91, CAL-26-9.54, CAL-26-9.44, CAL-26-9.22, CAL-26-6.95, CAL-26-6.68, CAL-26-5.86, CAL-26-5.63, CAL-26-5.59, CAL-26-5.46, CAL-26-5.24, CAL-26-4.75, and CAL-26-4.59), and State Route 120 (TUO-120-3.39 and TUO-120-14.14).

The surveys will pay particular attention to detecting any burrows, crevices, and other cover sites that could be used as refugia by the species. If any burrows are discovered, they will be flagged or otherwise marked and avoided. Any sightings of California tiger salamanders, California red-legged frogs, or western spadefoot toads will be immediately reported to Caltrans, and construction will not start at that location until the species have voluntarily moved out of the work area and the appropriate agencies are consulted on the need for additional protection measures.

BIO-14: Install exclusion fencing between the work area and suitable habitat for the California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, and western spadefoot toad.

To prevent California tiger salamanders, California red-legged frogs, and western spadefoot toads from entering the active work area during construction at culvert locations along State Route 12 (CAL-12-2.44, CAL-12-2.80, CAL12-9.65), along State Route 26 (CAL-26-9.91, CAL-26-9.54, CAL-26-9.44, CAL-26-9.22, CAL-26-6.95, CAL-26-6.68, CAL-26-5.86, CAL-26-5.63, CAL-26-5.59, CAL-26-5.46, CAL-26-5.24, CAL-26-4.75, and CAL-26-4.59), and State Route 120 (TUO-120-3.39 and TUO-120-14.14), Caltrans will install wildlife exclusion fencing between the designated work limits and nearby suitable habitat (open grasslands).

Exclusion fencing will not be installed when the work area abuts developed residential or commercial areas (e.g., along the east side of State Route 26). Exclusion fencing will be at least 3 feet tall, and the lower 6 inches of the fence will be buried in the ground to prevent animals from crawling under. The remaining 2.5 feet will be left above ground to serve as a barrier for animals moving on the ground surface. Exclusion fencing will be pulled tight at each support to prevent folds or snags. Exclusion fencing will be installed and maintained in good condition during all construction activities. Such fencing will be inspected and maintained daily until the completion of the work at the site.

BIO-15: Check for animals under construction equipment and vehicles before moving.

Before being moved, vehicles and equipment will be checked for any California tiger salamanders, California red-legged frogs, or other sensitive wildlife sheltering underneath them. If an animal is seen, the vehicles and/or equipment will not be moved until the individual has voluntarily left the area.

BIO-16: Install escape ramps in holes or trenches measuring more than 6 feet deep.

To prevent the inadvertent entrapment of California tiger salamanders, California red-legged frogs, or other animals during construction, any excavations, steep-walled holes, or trenches measuring more than 6 inches deep will be covered at the close of each working day using plywood or similar materials (without openings) or will be provided with one or more escape ramps built out of earth fill or wooden planks in the event that the holes/trenches cannot be fully covered. All holes or trenches will be checked daily for trapped wildlife; they will also be thoroughly inspected before being filled. If at any time a trapped animal is discovered, the qualified biologist(s) will install escape ramps or other appropriate structures (if not already in place) to enable the individual the opportunity to escape on its own.

BIO-17: Limit the use of artificial lighting.

The use of temporary, artificial lighting onsite will be limited except when necessary for construction or driver and pedestrian safety. Any artificial lighting used during construction will be confined to areas within the construction footprint and directed away from surrounding habitats.

BIO-18: Properly dispose of food-related trash and remove it from the project site daily.

All food-related trash items, such as wrappers, cans, bottles, and food scraps generated by project-related activities and personnel, will be disposed of in closed containers and removed daily from the project site to reduce the potential for attracting predator species.

BIO-19: Prohibit pets and firearms from being brought to the project site.

To eliminate the potential for disturbance, injury to, or death of, any species resulting from the presence of pets and firearms, neither (with the exception of firearms carried by authorized law enforcement officials) will be allowed on the project site.

BIO-20: Retain a qualified biologist to conduct preconstruction surveys for Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs and monitor ground-disturbing activities in suitable habitats.

Qualified biologist(s) will conduct visual encounter preconstruction surveys for Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs no more than 14 days before the start of ground-disturbing activities (including vegetation removal and equipment staging) within suitable habitat for the species at culvert locations TUO-108-63.49 and TUO-108-64.00. The surveys will pay particular attention to detecting crevices and cover sites under rocks and vegetation that could be used as refugia by the species. Any sightings of Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs will be immediately reported to Caltrans, and construction will not start at that location until the species has voluntarily moved out of the work area and the appropriate agencies are consulted on the need for additional protection measures.

Consistent with *Measure BIO-3: Retain an Agency-Approved Biologist To Conduct Periodic Monitoring During Construction in Sensitive Habitats,* a qualified biologist will monitor all ground-disturbing activities at locations TUO-108-63.49 and TUO-108-64.00 to ensure that protection measures are properly implemented and that Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs are not harmed by construction activities.

BIO-21: Install exclusion fencing between the work area and suitable habitat for the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog.

To prevent Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs from entering the active work area during construction at culvert locations TUO-108-63.49 and TUO-108-

64.00, Caltrans will install wildlife exclusion fencing between the designated work limits and Deadman Creek. Exclusion fencing will be at least 3 feet tall, and the lower 6 inches of the fence will be buried in the ground to prevent animals from crawling under. The remaining 2.5 feet will be left above ground to serve as a barrier for animals moving on the ground surface. The exclusion fencing will be pulled tight at each support to prevent folds or snags. Fencing will be installed and maintained in good condition during all construction activities. Such fencing will be inspected and maintained daily until the completion of the work at the site.

BIO-22: Conduct preconstruction surveys for nesting migratory birds and raptors, including special-status species, and establish protective buffers.

Caltrans will retain a qualified wildlife biologist to conduct nesting bird surveys if construction occurs between February 1 and September 30. These nesting bird surveys will include a minimum of two separate surveys to look for active nests of migratory birds, including raptors. Surveys will include a search of all trees and shrubs and ruderal areas that provide suitable nesting habitat for birds within 100 feet of construction disturbance. In addition, a 0.5-mile area from the Biological Study Area will be surveyed for nesting raptors to identify raptors that might be affected by construction disturbances, particularly special-status raptors (i.e., northern goshawk, great gray owl, and California spotted owl).

The biologists conducting the surveys should have experience with all special-status birds that could potentially nest within the survey area. In areas where access is not permitted, the surveyors will use binoculars and spotting scopes to inspect any potential nest trees, particularly large trees and snags. Surveys should occur during the height of the breeding season (March 1 to June 1), with one survey occurring within 1 week before the start of construction.

As deemed necessary by Caltrans, additional surveys may be conducted during the appropriate period to document special-status raptors. These surveys will include vocalization playback calls according to established survey protocols for the great gray owl (Beck and Winter 2000), northern goshawk (U.S. Forest Service 2002), and California spotted owl (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2012). The need for these types of surveys will be determined by a Caltrans biologist in coordination with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife during the spring and/or summer before the start of construction to inform project construction personnel of the potential for these species to be present in or near culvert locations. Full protocol surveys may not be warranted, and focused surveys may include a variation on the full protocol surveys. Positive detections may necessitate additional nest search surveys as determined by Caltrans.

If no special-status raptor species or active nests are detected during these surveys, no additional measures will be required. If an active nest is found in the survey area, a no-disturbance buffer will be established to avoid disturbance or destruction of the nest site until the end of the breeding season (September 30) or after a qualified wildlife biologist determines that the young have fledged and moved out of the construction area (this date varies by species). The extent of these buffers will be determined by a Caltrans designated biologist in coordination with any applicable agencies (as determined by species) and will depend on the level of noise or construction disturbance taking place, line of sight between the nest and the disturbance, ambient levels of noise and other non-project disturbances, and other topographical or artificial barriers. Suitable buffer distances may vary between species; however, a minimum of 50 feet for songbirds and 300 feet for raptors is typical.

BIO-23: Retain a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction mammal survey and monitor ground-disturbing activities in suitable habitats.

Qualified biologist(s) will conduct visual encounter preconstruction surveys to identify special-status mammal nests or dens within the Biological Study Area no more than 14 days before the start of ground-disturbing activities (including vegetation removal and equipment staging) within suitable habitat for the Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare at culvert locations TUO-108-28.46 and TUO-108-35.60 and within suitable habitat for the Sierra Nevada red fox at culvert locations TUO-108-63.49 and TUO-108-64.00. For surveys in inaccessible areas, the biologist will use binoculars to scan any suitable denning substrate for potential individuals, nests, and/or dens.

If an active special-status mammal nest and/or den is identified within the Biological Study Area, a no-disturbance buffer will be established around the nest and/or den to avoid disturbance of the nesting and/or denning mammal until a qualified biologist determines that the young have dispersed. The extent of these buffers will be determined by the Caltrans biologist in coordination with applicable wildlife agencies and will depend on the species identified, level of noise or construction disturbance, line of sight between the nest and/or den and the disturbance, ambient levels of noise and other disturbances, and other topographical or artificial barriers.

If any mammal species are seen in the active construction area, the individual(s) will be allowed to voluntarily move out of harm's way. Observations of the Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare or the Sierra Nevada red fox within or near the work area will be immediately reported to Caltrans.

Consistent with *Measure BIO-3: Retain an Agency-Approved Biologist To Conduct Periodic Monitoring During Construction in Sensitive Habitats,* a qualified biologist will monitor all ground-disturbing activities at locations TUO-108-28.46, TUO-108-35.60, TUO-108-63.49, and TUO-108-64.00 to ensure

that protection measures are properly implemented and that the Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare and the Sierra Nevada red fox are not harmed by construction activities.

BIO-24: Avoid and minimize the spread of invasive plant species during project construction.

Caltrans will be responsible for avoiding and minimizing the introduction of new invasive plants and the spread of invasive plants previously documented in the Biological Study Area. The following Best Management Practices will be written into the construction specifications and implemented during project construction.

- Retain all excavated soil material onsite or dispose of excess soil in a permitted offsite location to prevent the spread of invasive plants to uninfested areas next to the project footprint.
- Use a weed-free source for project materials (e.g., straw wattles for erosion control that are weed-free or contain less than 1 percent weed seed).
- Prevent invasive plant contamination of project materials during transport and when stockpiling (e.g., by covering soil stockpiles with a heavy-duty, contractor-grade tarpaulin).
- Use sterile grass seed and native plant stock during revegetation.
- Restore temporarily disturbed areas to pre-project conditions or better. Revegetate or mulch disturbed soils within 30 days of completing ground-disturbing activities to reduce the likelihood of invasive plant establishment.

2.1.5 Cultural Resources

Considering the information in the Archaeological Survey Report dated December 2021 and Historic Property Survey Report dated December 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?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	**No Impact**

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

Affected Environment

The following discussion is based on the Archaeological Survey Report dated December 2021 and Historical Property Survey Report dated December 2021. Instructions on how to obtain copies of the studies are at the end of this document.

The archaeological survey area encompasses about 6.04 acres within a Caltrans right-of-way of all proposed culvert locations. The project area lies in regions that were important gold mining areas. One built environment resource was identified next to the area of potential effect. Research on sensitivity for buried archaeological deposits is 37 percent for low sensitivity and 63 percent for very low sensitivity. No previously identified or unidentified cultural resources are within the area of potential effect.

Culvert TUO-120-32.20 is next to Hotel Charlotte, which is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. This location is in the small town of Groveland and is known for its historic community with connections to both California's Gold Rush and Yosemite National Park.

Environmental Consequences

No prehistoric and/or historic archaeological sites potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources were identified within the archaeological survey area. Hotel Charlotte is a property within the area of potential effect that was previously determined eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Project activities will occur next to this resource, but with Measure CUL-2 implemented, Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing will be used to minimize and avoid impacts to the hotel. In pursuant to Section 106 PA Stipulation X.B.1.a/b, Caltrans has determined a Finding of No Adverse Effect with Standard Conditions Environmental Sensitive Area. Measure CUL-1 will be implemented if previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

CUL-1: If previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction, it is Caltrans' policy that work be stopped in that area until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find. Additional archaeological surveys will be needed if the project limits extend beyond the present survey limits.

CUL-2: Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing will be in place to minimize and avoid impacts to Hotel Charlotte.

2.1.6 Energy

Considering the information in the project scope and the information in the Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference pulled in January 2022, 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?	**No Impact**
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	**No Impact**

2.1.7 Geology and Soils

Considering the information in the California Department of Conservation Earthquake Zone Map dated January 2022 and the California Department of Conservation Landslide Map dated January 2022, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: 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.	**No Impact**
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	**No Impact**
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	**No Impact**
iv) Landslides?	**No Impact**
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	**No Impact**

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils
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?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	**No Impact**
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	**No Impact**

2.1.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Considering the information in the Climate Change/Greenhouse Gas Analysis dated March 2022, 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?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	**No Impact**

Affected Environment

The project is in rural, nonmetropolitan areas characterized by a population generally dispersed throughout small-town communities of mixed-use development surrounded by large areas of open expanses consisting of native vegetation and low-density development. The Tuolumne County Transportation Council and the Calaveras Council of Governments' Regional Transportation Plan guide transportation development in the project areas. The 2019 Calaveras County General Plan, the 2018 Tuolumne County General Plan Transportation Element (Chapter 4), and Climate Change Element (Chapter 18) address greenhouse gases in the project area.

Environmental Consequences

The project will not increase operational emissions. Temporary carbon dioxide emissions generated from construction equipment were estimated using the Caltrans Construction Emissions Tool. The estimated carbon dioxide emissions for the project will be 131 tons during the 90 working days.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following measures will be implemented in the project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the project:

AQ-1: Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-9.02, Air Pollution Control, requires contractors to comply with all air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes.

AQ-2: Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 10-5, for a Dust Control Plan.

GHG-1: Idling will be limited to five minutes for delivery and dump trucks and other diesel-powered equipment.

GHG-2: The contractor will seek to operate construction equipment with improved fuel efficiency by:

- Properly tuning and maintaining equipment
- Using the right sized equipment for the job
- Using equipment with new technologies

The project will not conflict with any applicable greenhouse gas reduction plan, policy, or regulation. In compliance with Caltrans policy and Executive Order B-30-15, the project will use the measures noted above to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the project to meet statewide and agency goals.

2.1.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Considering the information in the Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment dated March 2021 and updated in December 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	**No Impact**

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials
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?	**No Impact**
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 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?	**No Impact**
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	**No Impact**
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	**No Impact**

2.1.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

Considering the information in the Water Compliance Study dated January 2021 and updated in October 2021, and the Hydraulics Recommendation Memorandum dated October 2021, 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?	**No Impact**
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	**No Impact**
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;	**No Impact**
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding onsite or offsite;	**No Impact**
(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	**No Impact**
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	**No Impact**
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	**No Impact**
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	**No Impact**

2.1.11 Land Use and Planning

Considering the information in the Tuolumne and Calaveras County General Plan, 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?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**

2.1.12 Mineral Resources

Considering the information in the Tuolumne County General Plan and Calaveras County General Plan, 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?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**

2.1.13 Noise

Considering the information in the Noise Compliance Study dated October 2021, 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?	**No Impact**
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	**No Impact**

Question—Would the project result in:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Noise
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 2 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?	**No Impact**

2.1.14 Population and Housing

Considering the scope and location of the project, the following significance determinations have been made:

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)?	**No Impact**
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	**No Impact**

2.1.15 Public Services

Considering that the project will not affect any government facilities or trigger the need for new facilities or government services and the fact that the road will be open during construction, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Public Services
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?	**No Impact**
Police protection?	**No Impact**
Schools?	**No Impact**
Parks?	**No Impact**
Other public facilities?	**No Impact**

2.1.16 Recreation

Considering that the project will not affect parks or recreational facilities or trigger the need for more recreational facilities to be built, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Recreation
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?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**

2.1.17 Transportation

Considering the information in the Regional Transportation Plan for the Tuolumne County Transportation Council and the Calaveras Council of Governments, which guide transportation development in the project areas,

and the 2019 Calaveras County General Plan and the 2018 Tuolumne County General Plan Transportation Element, the following significance determinations have been made:

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?	**No Impact**
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	**No Impact**
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	**No Impact**
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	**No Impact**

2.1.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

Considering the information in the Archaeological Survey Report dated December 2021, 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	**No Impact**

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Tribal Cultural Resources
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.	**No Impact**

2.1.19 Utilities and Service Systems

Considering that the project is a culvert rehabilitation project and will not trigger the need for utilities and service systems, the following significance determinations have been made:

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 stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	**No Impact**
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	**No Impact**

2.1.20 Wildfire

Considering the information in the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps, 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?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**
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?	**No Impact**

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?	**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated**
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.)	**No Impact**
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	**No Impact**

Affected Environment

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to install or rehabilitate existing culverts and storm drains in various locations on State Routes 26 and 12 in Calaveras County and State Routes 108 and 120 in Tuolumne County. These culverts and storm drains protect against flooding. Most of these culverts have exceeded their design life expectancy, have deteriorated and corroded, have damaged inverts, shape loss, and joint separations. Project activities will include excavating up to 8 feet, jacking for deeper culverts, backfill, concrete casing, and paving, placing rock slope protection at outlets, repairing or replacing headwalls, and restriping. Work off the paved roadway is also expected.

Based on the Natural Environment Study and Aquatic Resources Delineation Report, the Biological Study Area encompasses the project's limits of disturbance. The existing biological environment in the Biological Study Area

includes natural communities of special concern, common natural communities, and unnatural communities, as discussed in Section 2.1.4.

Environmental Consequences

The project will impact special-status species of concern, riparian habitat, and Waters of the U.S. and Waters of the State, as discussed in Section 2.1.4; however, with the implementation of standard special provisions and avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures, the effects will be less than significant.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

With the implementation of avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures discussed in this document, the project will have a less than significant impact on the environment. All other impacts will be minimized through the implementation of Caltrans' Best Management Practices, Standard Specifications, and Standard Special Provisions. Therefore, the project will not have a significant, cumulatively considerable impact on human beings or the environment.

Appendix A Title VI Policy Statement

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY Gavin Newsom, Governor

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

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 14th 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.

Toks Omishakin
Director

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

Appendix B Comment Letters and Responses

[Appendix B Comment Letters and Responses has been added since the draft environmental document was circulated.] This appendix contains the comments received during the public circulation and comment period from June 16, 2022, to July 18, 2022, retyped for readability. The comment letters are stated verbatim as submitted, with acronyms, abbreviations, and any original grammatical or typographical errors included. A Caltrans response follows each comment presented. Copies of the original comment letters and documents can be found in Volume 2 of this document.

Comment from Winnie Jiang, East Bay Municipal Utility District

Comment 1:

Hi Jaycee,

Can you provide maps or addresses of proposed projects under the State Route 120 Tuolumne Drainage System? The Vicinity Map in the Initial Study does not show the project sites/ extent of project limits that we need to evaluate impacts to East Bay Municipal Utility District.

Thanks,

Winnie Jiang (she/her)
Assistant Engineer| Water Distribution Planning Division | EBMUD
510.287.1064 | winnie.jiang@ebmud.com | MS 701

Response to comment 1: Thank you for your comment and interest in this project. Caltrans has sent a response email with mappings attached.

List of Technical Studies Bound Separately (Volume 2)

Air Quality Report

Noise Compliance Study

Water Compliance Memorandum

Natural Environment Study

Biological Assessment

Aquatic Resources Delineation Report

Hydraulic Recommendation Memorandum

Historic Property Survey Report

Archaeological Survey Report

Hazardous Waste Reports

Initial Site Assessment

Scenic Resource Evaluation/Visual Assessment

Climate Change Memorandum

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

Jaycee Azevedo
District 10 Environmental Division
California Department of Transportation
1976 East Doctor Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard, Stockton, California 95205

Or send your request via email to: jaycee.azevedo@dot.ca.gov
Or call: 209-992-9824

Please provide the following information in your request:

Project title: State Route 120 Tuolumne Drainage System

General location information: In Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties along State Routes 12, 26, 108, and 120

District number-county code-route-post mile: 10-CAL/TUO-12, 26, 108, 120-PM Various

Project ID number: 1017000179